

# Ovid: The Poems Of Exile (Tristia, Ex Ponto, Ibis)



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## Tristia Book I

*'laeta fere laetus cecini, cano tristia tristis:  
happy, I once sang happy things, sad things  
I sing in sadness:'*

Ex Ponto III:IX:35

### Book TI.I:1-68 The Poet to His Book: Its Nature

Little book, go without me – I don't begrudge it – to the city.

Ah, alas, that your master's not allowed to go!

Go, but without ornament, as is fitting for an exile's:  
sad one, wear the clothing of these times.

You'll not be cloaked, dyed with hyacinthine purple –  
that's no fitting colour to go mourning –

no vermilion tittle, no cedar-oiled paper,  
no white bosses, 'horns' to your dark 'brow'.

Happier books are decorated with these things:  
you instead should keep my fate in mind.

No brittle pumice to polish your two edges,  
so you're seen ragged, with straggling hair.

No shame at your blots: he who sees them  
will know they were caused by my tears.

Go, book, greet the dear places, with my words:  
I'll walk among them on what 'feet' I can.

If, in the crowd, there's one who's not forgot me,  
if there's one, perhaps, who asks how I am,  
say I'm alive, but deny that I am well:  
that I'm even alive is [a gift](#) from a god.  
Otherwise, be silent – let him who wants more read –  
beware of saying by chance what isn't needed!  
The reader, prompted, will soon recall my guilt,  
the crowd's voice make me a common criminal.  
Beware of defending me, despite the biting words:  
a poor case will prove too much for advocacy.  
Find someone who sighs about my exile,  
and reads your verses with wet eyes,  
and silently wishes, unheard by enemies,  
my punishment lightened by a [gentler Caesar](#).  
For myself, I wish whomever it is no ill,  
who asks the gods to be kind to suffering:  
what he wishes, let that be: the Leader's anger done,  
grant me the right to die in my native country.  
Though you obey, book, you may still be blamed,  
and called inferior to the flower of my genius.  
The judge's duty is to search out time  
and circumstance. You're safe regarding time.  
Fine-spun verses come from a tranquil mind:  
my days are clouded by sudden miseries.  
Verse asks for a writer with leisure and privacy:  
I'm tossed by winter gales, the storms, the sea.  
Every fear harms verse: I'm lost and always  
afraid of a sword slicing at my throat.  
Even what I've created, will amaze just critics:

they'll read it, whatever it is, with indulgence.  
Set Homer, the [Maeonian](#), in such danger,  
his genius would fail among such troubles.  
Go then, book, untroubled by fame,  
don't be ashamed to displease the reader.  
Fortune's not so kind to me now  
for you to take account of any praise.  
Secure, I was touched by desire for fame,  
and I burned with ardour to win a name.  
Enough now if I don't hate those studies, verses  
that [hurt me](#), so that wit brought me exile.  
You go for me, you, who can, gaze at Rome.  
If the gods could grant now that I were my book!  
And because you're a foreigner in a mighty city  
don't think you come as a stranger to the crowd.  
Though you lack a title, they'll know the style:  
though wishing to deceive, it's clear you're mine.  
But enter quietly so my verse won't hurt you,  
it's not as popular as once it was.  
If anyone thinks you shouldn't be read  
because you're mine, and thrusts you away,  
say: 'Look at the title: I'm not love's master:  
that work's already got what it deserved.'

## Book TI.I:70-128 The Poet to His Book: His Works

Perhaps you're wondering if I'll send you  
to the high Palatine, to climb to [Caesar](#)'s house.  
That august place and that place's gods forgive me!  
A lightning bolt from that summit fell on my head.  
I know there are merciful powers on those heights  
but I still fear the gods who bring us harm.  
Hawks, the smallest sound of wings brings terror  
to the doves your talons wounded.  
Nor does the lamb dare stray far from the fold  
once torn from the jaws of a hungry wolf.  
If [Phaethon](#) lived he'd avoid the sky, refuse  
to touch the horses he chose, foolishly.  
I too confess, I fear what I felt, Jove's weapon:  
I think the hostile lightning seeks me when it thunders.  
Every Greek who escaped the [Capherean](#) rocks  
always turned away from [Euboean](#) waters:  
and my vessel, shattered by a mighty storm,  
dreads to near the place where it was wrecked.  
So beware, book, look around with timid mind,  
be content to be read by the middle orders.  
Seeking too great a height on fragile wings  
[Icarus](#) gave his name to the salt waters.  
It's hard to say from here, though, whether to use  
oars or breeze: take advice from the time and place.  
If you can be handed in when he's at leisure, if  
you see all's calm, if his anger's lost its bite,

if, while you're hesitating, scared to go near,  
someone will hand you in, with a brief word, go.  
On a good day and with better luck than your master  
may you land there and ease my distress.  
Either no one can help, or in Achilles's fashion,  
only [that man](#) can help who wounded me.  
Only see you don't do harm, while you've power to help –  
since my hope is less than my fear –  
beware, while that angry emotion's quiet don't rouse it,  
don't you be a second cause for punishment!  
Yet when you're admitted to my inner sanctum,  
and reach your own house, the curved bookcase,  
you'll see your brothers there ranged in order,  
all, whom the same careful study crafted.  
The rest of the crowd will show their titles openly,  
carrying their names on their exposed faces:  
but you'll see [three](#) hide far off in dark places –  
and still, as all know, they teach how to love.  
Avoid them, or if you've the nerve, call them  
parricides, like [Oedipus](#), and [Telegonus](#).  
I warn you, if you've any care for your father,  
don't love any of those three, though it taught you.  
There are also [fifteen](#) books on changing forms,  
songs saved just now from my funeral rites.  
Tell them the face of my own fortunes  
can be reckoned among those Metamorphoses.  
Now that face is suddenly altered from before,  
a cause of weeping now, though, once, of joy.  
I've more orders for you if you ask me,

but I fear to be any reason for delay:  
and, book, if you carried everything I think of,  
you'd be a heavy burden to the bearer.  
Quick, it's a long way! I'll be alive here at the end  
of the earth, in a land that's far away from my land.



## Book TI.II:1-74 The Journey: Storm at Sea

Gods of the sea and sky – since what is left but prayer? –  
don't shatter the ribs of our storm-tossed ship,  
don't, I beg you, add to great [Caesar](#)'s anger!  
Often when one god presses, another brings help.  
[Mulciber](#) was against [Troy](#), [Apollo](#) for her:  
[Venus](#) was friendly to [Trojans](#), [Pallas](#) hostile.  
[Saturnia](#) hated [Aeneas](#), supported [Turnus](#):  
yet he was safe through Venus's power.  
Fierce [Neptune](#) often challenged the cunning [Ulysses](#):  
[Minerva](#) often saved him from her uncle.  
And however different I am from them,  
who denies a power to me, against the angry god?  
A wretch, I'm wasting idle words in vain.  
My mouth that speaks is drenched by heavy waves,  
and fearful [Notus](#) hurls my words away,  
and won't let my prayers reach the gods.  
So the same winds drive my sails and prayers  
who knows where, so I'm doubly punished.  
Ah me! What mountains of water churn!  
Now, now you think they'll touch the highest stars.  
What abysses sink beneath the yawning flood!  
Now, now you think they'll touch black [Tartarus](#).  
Wherever I look there's nothing but sea or air,  
here swollen waves, there threatening cloud,  
between, the roar and humming of the winds.  
The ocean waves don't know what lord to obey.  
Now [Eurus](#) storms in power from the purple east,

now [Zephyrus](#) rushes in from late evening,  
Now frozen [Boreas](#) raves from dry [polar stars](#),  
now [Notus](#) wars with his opposing brow.  
The helmsman's unsure of what to shun or where  
to steer for: his art is baffled by uncertain evils.  
Surely we're done for, there's no hope of safety,  
while I speak the waves drench my face.  
The breakers will crush this life of mine, with lips  
praying in vain, I'll swallow the fatal waters.  
But my loyal [wife](#) grieves only for my exile:  
it's the only ill of mine she knows, and groans at.  
She doesn't see me hurled through the vast seas,  
pursued by the winds, she doesn't see death nearing.  
It's good that I didn't allow her to ship with me,  
or I, poor wretch, would endure a double death!  
Now, though I die, since she is free from danger,  
at least the other half of me will survive.  
Ah! What a swift flame flashes from the cloud!  
What a mighty crash resounds from the ether!  
The blow on her planks from the waves is no less  
than a siege-gun's heavy thud against the walls.  
Here comes a wave that overtops them all:  
after the ninth and before the eleventh.  
I don't fear dying: but this way of dying's wretched.  
Save me from drowning, and death will be a blessing.  
A natural death or dying under the blade, at least  
your body rests on the solid ground, as you ebb,  
and there are requests to others, and hope of a tomb,  
not to be food for the fishes in the ocean.

Assume I deserve such a death, I'm not the only  
traveller here. Why does my sentence drown the innocent?  
Gods above, and you of the green flood, who rule the seas,  
both crowds of you, desist from your threats:  
an unhappy man, let me carry the life that's granted  
by Caesar's relenting anger, to the chosen place.  
If you wish to punish me with the sentence I merit,  
my [fault](#), even to my judge, does not deserve death.

If [Caesar](#) had wished to send me to [Stygian](#) waters,  
he wouldn't have needed your help in this.  
He has a power, not to be grudged, over my life:  
he'll take away what he's given, when he wishes.  
You, I pray, whom surely no offence of mine  
has wounded, be content now with my troubles.  
Yet, if you're all willing to save this wretch,  
the life that's ruined can't now be saved.  
Though the seas quieten, and kind winds blow,  
though you spare me, I'll be no less an exile.

## Book TI.II:75-110 The Journey: The Destination

I don't plough the open sea to trade my goods  
greedy to acquire wealth without end,  
nor to reach [Athens](#), I once sought as a student,  
nor the Asian cities, nor places I've seen,  
nor do I sail to [Alexander](#)'s famous city,  
to see your pleasures, happy [Nile](#).  
I ask for favourable winds – who would credit it? –  
to set my sails for the [Sarmatian](#) land.  
I'm forced to touch the wild left shore of [Pontus](#):  
I complain my flight from my native land's too slow.  
I pray for the journey to be shorter,  
to see the people of [Tomis](#) in their unknown world.  
If you love me, hold back these breakers,  
and let your powers favour the ship:  
or if you hate me deeply, drive me to the land assigned,  
part of my [punishment](#) is in the place.  
Drive my body on swiftly, winds – why linger here? –  
Why do my sails desire [Italy](#)'s shores?  
Caesar does not want this. Why hold one he expels?  
Let the land of Pontus see my face.  
He orders it, I deserve it: nor do I think it pious  
or lawful to defend a guilt he condemns.  
Yet if mortal actions never deceive the gods,  
you know that crime was absent from my fault.

Ah, if you know it, if my [error](#) has misled me,  
if my thought was foolish, but not wicked,  
if as the humblest may I've favoured that House,  
if Augustus's statutory law was enough for me,  
if I've sung of the happy age with him as Leader,  
and offered incense for Caesar and the Caesars –  
if such was my intent, spare me, gods!  
If not, may a towering wave drown my life!  
Am I wrong, or do heavy clouds begin to vanish.  
is the wave of the changing sea defeated, humbled?  
No accident, but you, called as witness,  
whom we cannot deceive, bring me this aid.

## **Book TI.III:1-46 The Final Night in Rome: Preparation**

When the saddest memory comes to mind,  
of that night, my last hour in the city,  
when I recall that night when I left so much  
so dear to me, even now tears fall from my eyes.  
The day was already here that Caesar ordered  
for my departure beyond Italy's furthest shores.  
There wasn't time or desire enough to prepare  
what was fitting, my heart was numb with long delay.  
I'd not thought about slaves or companions,  
the clothing or the other needs of an exile.  
I was as dazed as a man struck by Jove's lightning,  
who lives, whose life's unknown to the man himself.  
But when grief itself cleared my clouded mind,  
and at last my senses began to revive,  
I spoke to my sad [friends](#) at the end on leaving,  
the one or two, of so many once, who remained.  
As I wept my loving [wife](#) wept more bitterly in my arms,  
tears falling endlessly over her guiltless cheeks.  
My [daughter](#) was far away on the [Libyan](#) shore,  
and couldn't be informed of my fate.  
Wherever you chanced, grief and mourning sounded,  
and inside was the semblance of a noisy funeral.  
Women and men, children too, cried at my obsequies,  
and every corner of home had its tears.  
If one might use a great example for a lesser,  
this was the face of [Troy](#) when she was taken.

Now the cries of men and dogs grew silent:  
the [Moon](#) on high steered her midnight horses.  
Gazing at her, and, by her light, the [Capitol](#),  
close to my house, though that was no use to me,  
I prayed: 'You powers that own these sites nearby,  
you temples my eyes will never see again,  
gods who possess this great city of [Quirinus](#),  
I relinquish, receive my salutation, for all time.  
And though I take up the shield too late, wounded,  
free this banishment from the burden of hate,  
and explain to that man-god what [error](#) misled me,  
so that he doesn't think my fault a crime,  
so my pain's author knows what you know, too.  
If the god is content I can't be wretched.'  
I spoke to the gods in prayer like this,  
my wife more so, sobs choking her half-heard cries.  
She threw herself before the [Lares](#), hair unbound,  
touching the cold hearth with trembling lips,  
poured out words to the [Penates](#), before her,  
not destined to help the husband she mourned.



## **Book TI.III:47-102 The Final Night in Rome: Departure**

Now vanishing night denied me more delay,  
and the [Arcadian Bear](#) had turned about her axle.  
What could I do? Sweet love of country held me,  
but this was the last night before my decreed exile.  
Ah! How often I spoke as someone hastened by:  
‘Why hurry? Think where and whence you’re hurrying.’  
Ah! How often I said, deceptively, I’d a set time,  
an appropriate one for my intended journey.  
I touched the threshold three times, was called back  
three times, even my feet slow to match my intent.  
Often, having said ‘Farewell’, I spoke again at length,  
and, as if I was going, I gave the last kisses.  
Often I gave the same orders, and deceived myself,  
eyes turning back towards my dear ones.  
At last I said: ‘Why hurry? I’m off to [Scythia](#),  
I’m leaving [Rome](#). Both are good reasons for delay.  
Living, my living wife’s denied to me forever,  
my house, and the sweet ones in that faithful home,  
and the friends that I’ve loved like brothers,  
O hearts joined to me by [Thesean](#) loyalty!  
I’ll hug you while I can: perhaps I’ll never again  
be allowed to. This hour given me is so much gained.’  
No more delay, I left my words unfinished,  
and embraced each one dear to my heart.  
While I spoke and we wept, [Lucifer](#) had risen,

brightest in the high heavens, baleful star to me.  
I was torn, as though I had left my limbs behind,  
and half seemed severed from my body.  
So [Mettus](#) grieved when, punishing his treachery,  
the horses were driven in different directions.  
Then truly the groans and cries of my people rose,  
and grieving hands beat on naked breasts.  
Then truly my wife, clinging to me at parting,  
mingled these sad words amongst my tears:  
'I can't be separated. Together, we'll go together.  
I'll follow you and be an exile's wife in exile.  
There's a path for me too, the far off land will take me:  
my going will add little weight to your fleeing ship.  
Caesar's anger drives you to leave your country,  
loyalty orders me. Loyalty will be my Caesar.'  
So she tried, as she had tried before,  
and, with difficulty, ceased trying for my sake.  
I went, like one carried off before his funeral,  
bedraggled, hair straggling over unshaven cheeks.  
Maddened by grief they say she was overcome  
by darkness, and fell half-dead in the midst of the room,  
and when she rose, hair fouled with filthy dust,  
and lifted her body from the cold ground,  
she wept for herself, and the deserted [Penates](#),  
and often called her lost husband's name,  
groaning no less than if she'd seen the bodies  
of her daughter and me, on the stacked pyre,  
and wanted to die, to end those feelings by dying,  
yet out of care for me she did not die.

May she live, and, since the fates have willed my absence,  
live so as always to help me with her aid.

## Book TI.IV:1-28 Troubled Waters

[Bootes](#), the guardian of the [Erymanthian](#) Bear, touches the Ocean and stirs the salt-waters with his stars.

[I](#) still plough the [Ionian](#) Sea, not by my will, but forced to bravery through my fear.

Ah me! What winds swell the waves, and throw up boiling sand from the deep!

The breaker leaps mountain-high on prow and curving stern, and strikes the painted gods.

The pine planks echo, the rigging's whipped by the wind, and the keel itself groans with my troubles.

The sailor, confessing cold fear by his pallor, defeated, obeys his boat, doesn't guide it by skill.

As a weak rider lets the useless reins, fall loosely on his horse's stubborn neck, so, I see, our charioteer has given the ship her head, where the wave's force drives, not where he wishes.

Unless [Aeolus](#) alters the winds he's sent I'll be carried to a place I must not visit.

Now [Illyria](#)'s shores are far behind, to larboard, and forbidden Italy shows herself to me.

I pray the wind ends its effort towards a land denied me, and obeys, with me, a mighty god.

While I speak, fearful and yet eager to be driven back, with what power the waves pound at her sides!

Mercy, you gods of the blue-green sea, mercy, let it be enough that [Jove](#) is angry with me.

Rescue my weary spirit from a cruel death,

if one already lost may be un-lost.

## Book TI.V:1-44 Loyalty in Friendship

O [you](#) who'll always be named the first among my friends,  
you above all who thought it right to make my fate your  
own

who were the first, *carissime*, the most dear, I remember  
to dare to sustain me with words when the bolt struck,  
who gave me the calm advice to go on living  
when my wretched heart was filled with desire for death,  
truly you know whom I mean, by these tokens of your  
name,

nor are you unaware, friend, of the service you rendered.  
These things will always be fixed in my very marrow,  
and I'll be an eternal debtor for the life that's mine,  
and my spirit will melt away in the empty air,  
leaving my ashes on the cooling pyre,  
before the memory of your merit leaves my mind.  
and loyalty fades away through the long years.

May the gods favour you, grant you good fortune  
never to be in need, a fate dissimilar to mine.

Still, if this ship were borne on a favourable breeze,  
perhaps your faithfulness would go unacknowledged.

[Pirithous](#) would not have felt [Theseus](#)'s friendship  
as deeply, if he'd not gone down to the infernal waters.

That Phocian [Pylades](#) was an instance of true love  
was due to the [Furies](#), sad [Orestes](#).

If [Euryalus](#) had not fallen among the [Rutulian](#) host,

Hyrtacian [Nisus](#) would have found no fame.

Just as red gold is assessed in the flames,

faithfulness is tested by hard times.  
While Fortune helps us, a smile on her calm face,  
all things follow our undiminished powers:  
But they flee with the thunder, and no one knows him,  
who a moment ago was circled by crowds of friends.  
And this, which I once knew from old examples,  
I know now to be true from my own troubles.  
You, barely two or three of so many friends, are left me:  
the rest were [Fortune](#)'s crew, not mine.  
So, O few, aid my wounded state all the more,  
and grant a safe strand for my wreckage.  
And don't be anxious with false fears, trembling,  
lest this faithfulness offends the god!  
Often [Caesar](#) praises loyalty among enemy troops:  
he loves it in his own, approves it in opponents.  
My case is better, since I was no armed opponent  
of his, but earned this exile through [naivety](#).  
So keep watch on my affairs, I pray you,  
in case the wrath of the god can be lessened.

## Book TI.V:45-84 His Odyssey

If anyone wishes to know all my misfortunes,  
he asks for more than circumstance allows.  
I've endured as many evils as stars in the sky,  
or as many tiny specks as the dry dust holds:  
suffered many greater than you'd credit,  
that won't be believed, though they happened.  
One part of it, even, ought to perish with me,  
and I wish it could be veiled in concealment.  
If I'd an untiring voice, lungs stronger than brass,  
and many mouths with many tongues,  
I still couldn't compass all my ills in words,  
the content is greater than my powers.  
Wise poets, write of my troubles not [Ulysses](#):  
I've suffered more than the [Neritian](#).  
He wandered a narrow space for many years,  
between the palaces of [Ithaca](#) and [Troy](#):  
after crossing seas whole constellations apart  
I'm carried by fate to [Getic](#), and [Sarmatian](#) shores.  
He had a faithful crew and true companions:  
I, in my flight, am deserted by my friends.  
Joyful in victory, he sought his native land:  
I fled mine, defeated and an exile.  
My home's not Dulichium, Ithaca or [Same](#),  
absence from which is no great punishment,  
but [Rome](#), that sees the world from her seven hills,  
Rome, the place of Empire and the gods.  
He had a tough body, enduring toil:



[my powers](#) are delicate and slight.  
He was always engaged in savage warfare,  
I was used to gentler pursuits.  
A god crushed me, and no one eased my pain:  
[Minerva](#) the war-goddess brought him aid.  
And as the king of the swollen waves is less than Jove,  
[Jupiter](#)'s anger oppressed me, [Neptune](#)'s him.  
And, the most part of his toil is fiction,  
there's no mythology in my troubles.  
Finally, he found the [household](#) he sought,  
reaching the fields he'd aimed at, for so long.  
But my native soil's denied to me forever,  
unless the wounded god's anger lessens.

## Book TI.VI:1-36 His Wife: Her Immortality

[Lyde](#) was not so dear to [Antimachus](#),  
nor [Bittis](#) so loved by her [Philetas](#),  
as you, my wife, clinging to my heart,  
worthy of a happier, not truer husband.  
You're the support on which my ruins rest,  
if I'm still anyone, it's all your gift.  
It's your doing that I'm not despoiled, stripped bare  
by those who sought the planks from my shipwreck.  
As a wolf raging with the goad of hunger,  
eager for blood, catches the fold unguarded,  
or as a greedy vulture peers around  
to see if it can find an unburied corpse,  
so someone, faithless, in my bitter trouble,  
would have come into my wealth, if you'd let them.  
Your courage, with our friends, drove them off, bravely,  
friends I can never thank as they deserve.  
So you're proven, by one who's as true as he's wretched,  
if such a witness carries any weight.  
Neither [Andromache](#), nor [Laodamia](#), companion  
of her husband in death, exceeds you in probity.  
If you'd been assigned to [Homer](#), the [Maonian](#) bard,  
[Penelope](#)'s fame would be second to yours:  
either you owe it to your own self, not being taught loyalty  
by some teacher, but through the character granted you at  
birth,  
or, if it's allowed to compare the small and great,  
[Livia](#), first lady, honoured by you all those years,

teaches you to be the model of a good wife,  
becoming like her, through long-acquired habit.

Alas, my poetry has no great powers,  
my lips are inadequate to sing your worth! –  
if I had any inborn vigour long ago,  
it's extinct, quenched by enduring sorrows! –  
or you'd be first among the sacred heroines,  
seen to be first, for the virtues of your heart.  
Yet in so far as my praise has any power,  
you will still live, for all time, in my verse.

## Book TI.VII:1-40 His Portrait: The Metamorphoses

Whoever has a likeness, an image of my face,  
take the ivy, [Bacchus](#)'s crown, from my hair:  
such tokens of fortune suit happy poets,  
a wreath is not becoming to my brow.  
Hide it, yet know it, I say this to you, [best friend](#),  
who fetch and carry me on your finger,  
clasping my semblance in the yellow gold,  
seeing all you can of the [exile](#), his dear face.  
Perhaps, when you gaze, it will prompt you to say:  
'How far away our friend [Ovid](#) is from us!'  
Your love is a comfort. Yet my verses are a better  
likeness, I ask you to read them such as they are,  
[verses](#) that speak about altered human forms,  
the work cut short by it's author's sad flight.  
Leaving, mournful, I threw it on the fire, myself,  
along with so many other things of mine.  
As [Althaea](#), they say, burning the brand, burned  
her son, and proved a better sister than a mother,  
so I threw the innocent books, that had to die with me,  
my vital parts, on the devouring pyre:  
because I detested the [Muses](#), my accusers,  
or because the poem was rough and still unfinished.  
The verses were not totally destroyed: they survive –  
several copies of the writings, I think, were made –  
Now I pray they live, and with industrious leisure  
delight the reader, serve as a reminder of me.  
Yet they can't be read patiently by anyone

whose unaware they lack the final touch.  
That work was won from me while on the anvil  
and the writing lacks the last rasp of the file.  
I ask forgiveness not praise, I'll be praised in full,  
if you don't despise me, reader.  
Have these six lines too, if you think they're worth  
placing at the very front of those books:  
'Whoever touches these volumes, bereft of their author,  
at least let them have a place in your city,  
a greater favour, since he didn't publish them,  
but they were almost snatched from his funeral.  
So whatever weakness this rough work may have,  
I'd have amended it, if I'd been allowed.'

## **Book TI.VIII:1-50 A Friend's Treachery**

From the sea, deep rivers will flow backwards  
to their source: the hurrying [Sun](#) reverse his wheeling  
team,  
earth will bear stars, and skies be cut by the plough,  
water yield flames, and fire yield water:  
all things will move against the natural laws,  
no part of the universe will hold its course:  
now all things will be, that I denied could be,  
and there'll be nothing that you can't believe.  
This I prophesy since I've been betrayed by [one](#)  
whom I thought would bring me help in misery.  
Traitor, did you forget me so completely,  
or were so afraid to come near my disaster, cruel one,  
that you'd no regard, or solace for my downfall,  
not even to follow in my funeral train?  
Does that sacred and honoured name of friend  
lie beneath your feet, a worthless thing?  
What effort to visit a comrade, crushed by a mighty blow,  
and comfort him, you also, with your words,  
and if not to shed a tear at my misfortune  
still to offer a few words of feigned distress,  
and, at least, say something, as even strangers do,  
follow the common speech, public phrases –  
see my mournful features, never to be seen again,  
while you could, on that final day,  
and hear, and return to me, in the same tone,  
the never to be repeated, forever, 'Farewell'?

Others, bound to me by no ties, did this,  
and shed tears in token of their feelings.  
What, weren't there powerful reasons for our friendship  
in our mutual life and our continuing love?  
What, didn't you share so many of my serious  
and trivial moments, and didn't I share yours?  
What, didn't you not only know me in [Rome](#),  
but in so many sorts of foreign places?  
Was it all in vain, lost in the ocean winds?  
Is it all gone, drowned in [Lethe](#)'s waters?  
I don't think of you as born in [Quirinus](#)'s tranquil city,  
the city my feet must never more re-enter,  
but on cliffs, that this sinister [Black Sea](#) raises,  
or in the wild [Scythian](#) or [Sarmatian](#) hills,  
and your heart circled with veins of flint,  
and iron seeded in your rigid breast,  
and your nurse a tigress, once, offering  
full udders to be drained by your tender throat,  
or you'd think my ills less alien to you now,  
and wouldn't stand accused by me of harshness.  
But since it is added to my fatal loss,  
that those youthful times are discounted, now  
endeavour to make me forget this failing, and praise  
your efforts with these lips with which I complain.



## Book TI.IX:1-66 A Faithful Friend

You who read this work of mine without malice,  
may you reach life's goal without hindrance.  
And may my prayers that failed to reach the harsh gods,  
on my own behalf, have power for you!  
You'll have many friends while you're fortunate:  
when the weather's cloudy, you'll be alone.  
See how the doves fly to a whitened dovecote,  
but a weathered turret never attracts the birds.  
Ants never head for an empty granary:  
no friends gather round when your wealth is gone.  
As a shadow trails those passing through the sun,  
and flies when it's hidden, weighed down by the cloud,  
so the fickle crowd chases the glow of Fortune:  
when it's clothed in night's veil, the crowd is gone.  
I pray this might always prove false for you:  
yet it's truth must be admitted from my case.  
While I stood firm, my house was crowded enough,  
indeed, well known, though it wasn't ostentatious.  
But when the blow came, they all feared its downfall,  
and discreetly turned away, in shared flight.  
No surprise, since they fear the savage lightning  
whose fires often blast everything nearby.  
But [Caesar](#) approves of a friend who stays loyal  
in hard times, however he hates him as an enemy.  
and is never angered – no one shows greater restraint –  
when someone loves, in adversity, what they loved.  
They say even [Thoas](#) approved of [Pylades](#),

hearing the tale about [Orestes](#)'s friend.  
[Patroclus](#)'s constant loyalty to [Achilles](#)  
was often praised by [Hector](#)'s lips.  
When faithful [Theseus](#) went with his friend to the [Shades](#),  
they say [Pluto](#), god of [Tartarus](#), was grieved.  
Told of the loyalty of [Euryalus](#) and [Nisus](#),  
[Turnus](#), we credit your cheeks were wet with tears.  
There's faith even for the miserable, approved even in a  
foe.  
Ah me! How few of you my words can move!  
Such is my state, such is my fortune now,  
there should be no limit to my tears.  
Yet my heart, though grieving at my own disaster,  
has been made calmer by your own success.  
I knew it would happen, dear friend, far back,  
when the wind then drove your sail less swiftly.  
If there's a prize for character, or a faultless life,  
no one could be more highly valued:  
or if anyone's climbed high through the liberal arts –  
well, every cause is made good by your eloquence.  
Straightaway, feeling this, I said to you:  
'My friend, a great stage awaits your talents.'  
No sheep's liver, thunder on the left, or the cry  
or the flight of some bird I observed, taught it me:  
it was augury, a future prediction, based on reason:  
that's how I divined it, and gained my knowledge.  
Now it's true, I congratulate you with all my heart,  
and myself, that your genius is not hidden.  
If only mine had been buried in deep darkness!

It would have been best if light had failed my studies.  
Just as the serious arts serve you, eloquent one,  
so dissimilar [arts](#) have injured me.  
Yet my life's known to you. You know their author's  
conduct held those same arts at a distance:  
you know those verses were the fun of my youth:  
though not worth praising, they were still witty.  
So, I think, though my offence can't be defended  
by eloquence, such an excuse for it can be found.  
Make that excuse, as far as you can, don't abandon  
a friend's cause: always go on as well as you've begun.

## Book TLX:1-50 Ovid's Journey to Tomis

Golden-haired [Minerva](#)'s protection's mine, and will be,  
I pray, and the ship's name's from her painted helm.  
Under sail, she runs well before the lightest wind,  
if oars are used, the rowers speed her onward.  
She's not content to beat her peers in winged course,  
she overhauls boats that set out long before.  
She weathers the tides and the leaping billows,  
not drenched, or overwhelmed, by wild seas.  
I [first](#) joined her at [Corinthian Cenchrae](#), and she  
was the loyal friend, and guide, of my anxious flight,  
made safe by the divine powers of [Pallas](#),  
through all event, through waves struck by the wind.  
Now, I pray, she may also cleave the gates of wide [Pontus](#),  
and reach the waters she seeks, by the [Getic](#) shore.  
As soon as she brought me into [Aeolian Helle](#)'s sea,  
and reached the long passage through the narrows,  
we changed tack to larboard, and from [Hector](#)'s city  
came to your port, [Imbrian](#) land, from where  
we reached the [Zerynthian](#) shore with a light breeze,  
as our wearied keel touched [Samothrace](#).  
It's only a short leap from there for someone seeking  
[Tempyra](#) opposite: and as far as she took me.  
Now I chose to travel the [Bistonian](#) land on foot:  
while she sailed back through the [Hellespont](#)'s waves  
seeking [Dardania](#), named from its founder,  
and you, [Lampsacus](#), protected by the rural god, [Priapus](#),

and virgin [Helle](#)'s straits, she carried in flight so insecurely,  
that separate [Sestos](#) from [Abydos](#)' town,  
and [Cyzicos](#) clinging to [Propontis](#)'s shore,  
nobly founded by the [Haemonian](#) people,  
and [Byzantium](#)'s shores that guard the jaws of [Pontus](#),  
the giant gateway between the twin seas.  
I pray she wins by them, and driven on a strong [southerly](#)  
may she quickly pass the [clashing rocks](#),  
the [Thynian](#) bay and from there hold her course  
past [Apollonia](#) and [Anchialus](#)'s high walls.  
Then [Mesembria](#)'s harbour, and [Odesos](#),  
and the citadel of [Dionysopolis](#), yours [Bacchus](#),  
and the exiles from [Alcathous](#)'s walls  
who, they say, set their [gods](#) down in this place.  
From there may she sail in safety to the [Milesian](#) city,  
[Tomis](#), where the anger of an injured god has sent me.  
If that comes to pass, a lamb will fall, deservedly, to  
[Minerva](#),  
my resources won't stretch to a larger sacrifice.  
You too, [Tyndaridae](#), the Gemini, this [island](#) honours,  
I beg you, guard our separate paths with gentle powers!  
One ship's ready to thread the narrow [Symplegades](#),  
mine to plough through the [Bistonian](#) waters.  
Though we take different routes, let the one  
find favourable winds, no less than the other.

## Book TI.XI:1-44 Ovid's Apology for the Work

Every letter you've read in this entire volume,  
was composed in the troubled days of my journey.  
Either the [Adriatic](#) saw me scribbling these words  
in the midst of the waves, shivering in icy [December](#),  
or the verses I wrote to the wild roaring of the sea,  
astonished the Aegean [Cyclades](#), I suspect,  
when I'd passed the Isthmus and its two gulfs on my way,  
and boarded the second ship of my exile's path.  
I marvel myself my skill didn't fail me  
in such a turmoil of seas and feelings,  
Whether numbness or madness is the name for such  
efforts,  
all my troubles were eased by these troubles.  
Often I was tossed, precariously, by the stormy [Kids](#):  
often the sea was menacing under the [Pleiades](#),  
or the day was darkened by [Bootes](#), the [Bear](#)-herd,  
or a [southerly](#) drew wintry rain from the [Hyades](#):  
Often the sea broke over the ship: still I spun  
my verse, such as it is, with shaking hand.  
Now the rigging shrieks, taut in a [north](#) wind,  
and the curving breaker rises like a hillside.  
The helmsman himself raises his hands aloft,  
begging help, in prayer, forgetting his skills.  
Wherever I look, nothing but the shadow of a death  
I fear with anxious mind, and pray for in my fear.  
If I reach harbour, the harbour itself will scare me:  
the land has more terrors than the hostile sea.

I endure the deceptions of waves and men,  
and sword and sea double my fears.  
The one, by my blood, hopes for plunder, I'm afraid,  
the other wants to win notice by my death.  
A barbarous coast to port, used to savage rapine,  
always full of bloodshed, murder, war,  
and though the ocean's stirred by wintry waves,  
my heart is more turbulent than the sea.  
So grant them greater forgiveness, honest reader,  
if these verses are less than you hoped for, as they are.  
They weren't [written](#) in my garden, as once they were,  
or while you, my familiar couch, supported me.  
I'm tossed on the stormy deep, on a wintry day,  
and the paper itself is exposed to the dark waters.  
Let the storm defeat the man! Yet, at the same time,  
let him halt the music of his songs, as I do mine.

## **The End of Tristia Book I**

## Tristia Book II

### Book TII:1-43 His Plea: His Poetry

What are you to me, my books, unhappy labour,  
me, a wretch, ruined by my own talent?  
Why return to the newly condemned [Muses](#), my reproach?  
Isn't one well-deserved punishment enough?  
Poetry made men and women want to know me,  
but that was no happy omen for me.  
Poetry made [Caesar](#) condemn me, and my ways,  
through my *Ars Amatoria*: only now is it banned.  
Take my work away, and you take the accusation  
against me away, also: I charge [the verse](#) with guilt.  
Here's the reward for my care, and my sleepless toil,  
a punishment's been devised for my wit.  
Were I wise I'd rightly hate the learned [Sisters](#),  
goddesses ruinous to their own devotee.  
But now – madness is such a friend of my disease –  
I'm turning my sad feet to those heights again:  
as the defeated gladiator seeks out the arena,  
and the beached ship returns to the surging sea.  
Perhaps, like [Telephus](#) who ruled the Teuthrantian land,  
the same weapon will both wound and cure me,  
and the [Muse](#) who stirred the anger also calm it:  
song often influences the great gods. [Caesar](#) himself  
ordered the mothers and daughters of [Italy](#)  
to chant the hymns to turreted [Ops](#).  
He did the same for [Apollo](#) at the [Secular Games](#)



those that each age sees only once.  
Merciful Caesar, [I plead](#) these as my precedents:  
let my skill soften your anger.  
It's justified indeed: I don't deny I deserve it –  
shame hasn't completely fled my cheeks –  
But unless I've sinned, how can you forgive?  
My fate has given you the chance for mercy.  
If [Jupiter](#) hurled his lightning, every time men sinned,  
it wouldn't be long before he was weapon-less.  
When he's thundered, and scared the world with noise,  
he scatters the rain-clouds and clears the air.  
So it's right to call him the father and ruler of the gods,  
it's right the wide world owns nothing greater than Jove.  
[You](#) also, since you're called father and ruler of the land,  
should follow the ways of the god with the same title.

## **Book TII:43-76 His Plea: His Loyalty**

And you do: no one has ever been able to hold  
the reins of power with greater moderation.  
You've often granted mercy to a defeated enemy  
that he'd not have granted to you if he'd been victor.  
I've often seen those you've enriched by wealth  
or honours take up weapons against you:  
the day that ends the war ends its anger, for you,  
and both sides bring their gifts to the temple together:  
even as your soldiers rejoice at beating the enemy,  
the enemy's a reason to rejoice at his own defeat.  
My case is stronger: no one says I've followed  
weapons or hostile forces opposed to you.  
By earth, by sea, by heaven's third power, I swear,  
and by you, a present and a visible god,  
this heart supported you, greatest of men,  
and what I could be alone, I was: yours in spirit.  
I prayed you might seek the celestial stars, but not soon:  
was a humble member of a crowd that wished the same:  
and piously offered incense for you, and one with the rest  
aided the common prayers with mine as well.  
Do I need to say that even the books that accuse me  
are filled with your name in a thousand places?  
Examine the major [work](#), that's still left unfinished,  
of bodies changed in unimaginable ways:  
you'll come upon praise of your name there,  
you'll find many pledges of my feeling.  
Your glory's not increased by poetry, nor has it

any means of growing to make it greater.

Jove has fame in excess: still he enjoys his deeds  
being retold, and for himself to be the theme of verse,  
and when the battles are [sung](#), of his war with the [Giants](#),  
it may well be he's happy with his praise.

Others celebrate you, as you should be sung,  
and sing your praise with richer wit than mine:  
but as a god's won by red blood of a hundred bulls,  
so he's won by the smallest offering of incense.

## Book TII:77-120 His Plea: His 'Fault'

Ah! He was fiercest, cruellest, of all my enemies,  
who read my witticisms aloud to you,  
so that the verse that honours you in my books  
could not be judged more justly.  
Who could be my friend if you were angry?  
I was scarcely less than an enemy to myself.  
When a shattered house begins to settle,  
the whole weight falls on the parts that lean,  
and when chance forms a crack, it all gapes open,  
and dragged down by its mass, falls to ruin.  
So my poetry has earned people's dislike,  
as is right, the crowd copied your views.  
Yet, I recall, you approved me, and my ways,  
when [I paraded](#) before you, on the horse you gave.  
If that's no use, and no glory follows the honour  
at least I suffered no accusation.  
Nor was the fate of those on trial wrongly granted  
to [my care](#), nor the cases examined by the *centumvirs*.  
I also settled private issues, without criticism, as arbiter,  
and even the losers admitted my good faith.  
Ah me! If I'd not been damaged by recent events,  
I'd be many times secure in your judgement.  
These last events destroy me: one storm blast drowns  
the ship, so many times unharmed, in the ocean depths.  
It's no small weight of water that harms me,  
but all the ocean flood falls on my head.  
Why did [I see](#) anything? Why make my eyes guilty?

Why was a mischief, unwittingly, known to me?  
[Actaeon](#), unaware, saw [Diana](#) unclothed:  
none the less he became his own hounds' prey.  
Even fate must be atoned for, among the powers that be,  
to a wounded god chance is no excuse.  
On that day, when my unlucky error misled me,  
my house, humble, without stain, was destroyed.  
humble, yet they say, in our ancestors' time  
distinguished, inferior in excellence to none,  
and noted neither for wealth nor poverty,  
so its knights are not conspicuous either way.  
But even if my house is lowly in means and origin,  
at least my genius renders it not unknown:  
though my practice might have seemed too impetuous,  
still my name is great throughout the world,  
and the cultured crowd know Ovid well,  
and dare count him one not to be despised.

## Book TII:120-154 His Plea: The Sentence

So my house, though pleasing to the [Muses](#), has fallen,  
sunk by a single charge though no small one:  
yet its fall is such that it can rise again,  
if only time will mellow Caesar's anger,  
whose mercy in punishing me is such  
that the outcome's better than I feared.  
My life was spared, your anger stopped short of death,  
O Prince, how sparingly you used your powers!  
Then, as if life were too slight a gift, added,  
since you didn't subtract it, my family wealth.  
You didn't condemn my action by Senate decree,  
nor was my banishment ordered by special court.  
With stern invective – worthy of a prince –  
you yourself, as is right, avenged the offence.  
More, the [edict](#), though harsh and threatening,  
was still mild when naming my sentence:  
since in it I'm called *relegatus* and not exile,  
and special words cover my possessions.  
There's no punishment worse to anyone  
in his right senses, than a great man's displeasure,  
but a god's sometimes known to be appeased:  
it's known for clouds to scatter, the day grow bright.  
I've seen an elm weighed down with vine leaves,  
that's been struck by savage [Jupiter](#)'s lightning.  
Though you yourself forbid hope, I'll still hope:  
that's one thing can be done that you deny me.  
Great hope fills me, gazing at you, most merciful prince,

and fails me when I gaze at what I've done.  
As there's no steady rage, no constant fury,  
in the winds that agitate the air,  
but they subside to intermittent silence,  
and you'd think they'd set aside their power:  
so my fears vanish, change, return,  
give, or deny me hope of pleasing you.



## Book TII:155-206 His Plea: His Prayer

So by the gods, who grant and will grant you long life,  
if only they love the name of Roman,  
by our country, of which I was just now part,  
one of the crowd safe and secure in your care –  
so I pray, by a grateful city, may the debt of love  
be paid you that your acts and spirit constantly deserve,  
may [Livia](#), joined with you, complete her years,  
worthy of no other husband but you,  
if not for her meant for unmarried life,  
there was no other you could have married:  
may your son, [Tiberius](#), be safe, with you in safety,  
and rule this Empire when old, with one older,  
and may [Germanicus](#) and [Drusus](#), your grandsons,  
glory of youth, emulate your and your father's deeds,  
may [Victory](#), always accustomed to your camp,  
be present now, seeking the familiar standards,  
wings hovering as ever over the Italian leader,  
setting the laurel on the shining hair of [him](#)  
in whose person you battle and wage [war](#),  
to whom you entrust the high auspices and the gods,  
and so are half-present, watching over the city,  
and also far-off conducting savage war:  
may he return to you victor over a defeated enemy,  
shine out high on his wreathed chariot –  
spare me, I pray, hide your lightning bolt, cruel weapon,  
a weapon, ah, too well known to wretched me!  
Spare me, father of the country, don't take away

all hope of placating you, forgetful of my name!  
I don't beg to return, though we believe the great gods  
have often granted more than that prayer.  
If you granted me a milder, closer place of exile  
a large part of my punishment would be eased.  
Thrust among enemies, patiently I suffer the extremes,  
no exile's more distant from his native land.  
I'm the only one sent to seven-mouthed [Hister](#)'s delta,  
I'm crushed beneath virgin [Callisto](#)'s icy pole –  
the [Ciziges](#), the [Colchi](#), the hordes of [Teretei](#) and [Getae](#),  
are barely held back by the deep flood of the [Danube](#) –  
and while others have been banished with greater cause,  
no one's assigned a remoter place than mine.  
There's nothing further than this, except frost and foes,  
and the sea closed by the binding cold.  
So far north [Rome](#) extends, west of the [Euxine](#) Sea:  
the [Basternae](#) and the [Sarmatians](#) hold the nearby region.  
This is the furthest land subject to Italian law,  
barely clinging to the edges of your Empire.  
So, a suppliant, I beg you to banish me somewhere safe,  
so that peace as well as my home aren't taken from me,  
so as not to fear the tribes the Danube scarcely checks,  
so your subject can't be captured by the enemy.  
Justice forbids any man of Roman blood  
to suffer barbarian chains while Caesars live.

## Book TII:207-252 His Plea: ‘Carmen et Error’

Though two charges, *carmen et error*, a poem and an error,  
ruined me, I must be silent about the second fault:  
I’m not important enough to re-open your wound, Caesar,  
it’s more than sufficient you should be troubled once.  
The first, then: that [I’m accused](#) of being a teacher  
of obscene adultery, by means of a vile poem.  
So, it’s possible somehow for divine minds to be wrong,  
indeed there are many things beneath their notice.  
As Jove, who watches over the gods, as well as  
the high heavens, hasn’t time to notice lesser things,  
so as you gaze round the world that depends on you,  
inferior matters escape your care.  
Should you, the Empire’s prince, leave your post  
and read poetry I’ve set going on limping feet?  
The weight of Rome’s name is not so light,  
pressing its burden on your shoulders,  
that you can turn your power to foolish games,  
examining my idle things with your own eyes.  
Now [Pannonia](#), now the [Illyrian](#) coast’s to be [subdued](#),  
now [Raetia](#) and the war in [Thrace](#) concerns you,  
now Armenia seeks peace, now the [Parthian](#) Horse  
with timid hand offer their bows and captured standards,  
now Germany, through [Tiberius](#), feels your vigour,  
and a Caesar wages war for a mighty Caesar.  
Truly there’s no weak part in the body of Empire  
though nothing so vast has ever existed.

The city and the guardianship of your laws, also,  
wearies you, and morality you desire to be as yours.  
Nor is that peace yours, that you grant the nations,  
since you wage many restless wars.  
So, should I wonder if, weighed down by so many things,  
you've never unrolled my witticisms?  
Yet if, by chance, as I wish, you'd had the time  
you'd have read nothing criminal in my 'Art'.  
I confess the poem was written without a serious  
face, unworthy of being read by so great a prince:  
but that doesn't render it contrary to established law,  
or destined to teach the daughters of Rome.  
And so you can't doubt whom I wrote it for,  
one of the [three books](#) has these four lines:  
'Far away from here, you badges of modesty,  
the thin headband, the ankle-covering dress.  
I sing *what is lawful*, permissible intrigue,  
and there'll be nothing sinful in my song.'  
Haven't I rigidly excluded from this 'Art'  
all whom the wife's headband and dress deny?

## Book TII:253-312 His Plea: His Defence

‘But,’ you may say, ‘the wife can use others’ art,  
have what she takes from it, without being taught.’  
Let a wife read nothing then, since she can learn  
about how to do wrong from every poem.  
If she’s partial to what’s perverse, then she’ll equip  
her character for sin, whatever she touches.  
Let her take the [Annals](#) – nothing’s coarser than them –  
she’ll surely read who made [Ilia](#) pregnant.  
Let her take [Lucretius](#), she’ll ask straight away  
by whom kindly [Venus](#) became [Aeneas](#)’s mother.  
If I’m allowed to present it in order, I’ll show, below,  
the mind can be harmed by every sort of poem.  
Yet every book’s not guilty because of it:  
nothing’s useful, that can’t also wound.  
What’s more useful than fire? Yet whoever sets out  
to commit arson, arms his bold hands with fire.  
Medicine sometimes grants health, sometimes destroy it,  
showing which plants are helpful, which do harm.  
The robber and cautious traveller both wear a sword:  
one for ambush, the other for defence.  
Eloquence is learnt to plead just causes:  
it protects the guilty, crushes the innocent.  
So with verse, read with a virtuous mind  
it’ll be established nothing of mine will harm.  
But I ‘corrupt some’? Whoever thinks so, errs,  
and claims too much for my writings.  
Even if I’d confessed it, the games also sow

seeds of iniquity: order the theatres closed!  
Many have often found an excuse for sin  
when the hard earth's covered with Mars's sand!  
Close the Circus! The Circus's freedom isn't safe:  
here a girl sits close to an unknown man.  
Why's any portico open, since certain girls  
stroll there, to meet a lover in the place?  
What location's more 'august' than a temple?  
She's to avoid them too, if she's clever in sinning.  
When she stands in [Jove](#)'s shrine, it'll come to her,  
shrined, how many mothers that god has made:  
as she enters [Juno](#)'s temple in adoration,  
how many rivals caused the goddess pain.  
Seeing [Pallas](#) she'll ask why the virgin  
raised [Erichonius](#), the child of sin.  
If she enters your gift, the temple of [Mars](#), [Venus](#)  
stands joined to the Avenger, the husband's outside the  
door.  
Sitting in [Isis](#)'s shrine, she'll ask why [Juno](#) drove her  
over the [Ionian](#) Sea and the [Bosphorus](#).  
It'll be [Anchises](#) reminds her of [Venus](#),  
[Endymion](#) of [Luna](#), [Iasion](#) of [Ceres](#).  
Anything can corrupt a perverted mind:  
everything's harmless in its proper place.  
The first page of my 'Art', a book [written](#) only  
for courtesans, warns noblewomen's hands away.  
Any woman who bursts in, where a priest forbids,  
taking his guilt away, is herself the sinner.  
Yet it's no crime to unroll sweet verse: the chaste

read many things they shouldn't be doing.  
Often grave-browed women consider  
naked girls positioned for every kind of lust.  
And Vestals' eyes see prostitutes' bodies:  
that's no reason for punishing their owners.

## Book TII:313-360 His Plea: His Character

But why is my [Muse](#) so wildly wanton,  
why does my book tempt one to love?  
Nothing for it but to confess my sin and my  
open fault: I'm sorry for my wit and taste.  
Why didn't I attack [Troy](#) again in my poems,  
that fell before the power of the Greeks?  
Why silent on [Thebes](#), [Eteocles](#), [Polynices](#),  
mutual wounds, heroes at the seven gates?  
Warring Rome didn't deny me matter,  
it's virtuous work to tell one's country's tale.  
Lastly, since you've filled the world with deeds,  
some part of it all was mine to sing,  
as the sun's radiant light attracts the eye  
so your exploits should have drawn my spirit.  
I'm undeservedly blamed. Narrow the furrow I plough:  
while that was a great and fertile theme.  
A little boat shouldn't trust itself to the waves  
because it dares to fool about in a tiny pond.  
Perhaps – and I should even question this – I'm fit  
for lighter verse, adequate for humble music:  
but if you order me to sing of the [Giants](#), beaten  
by [Jove](#)'s lightning, the weight will cripple me if I try.  
It's a rich mind can tell of Caesar's mighty deeds,  
if the content's not to overpower the work.  
Still I was daring: but [I thought](#) I detracted from it,  
and what was worse, it harmed your authority.  
I returned to my light labours, the songs of youth,



stirring my feelings with imaginary desires.  
I wish I hadn't. But destiny drew me on,  
and my cleverness punished me.  
Ah, that I ever studied! Why did my parents  
educate me, or letters entertain my eyes?  
This lewdness made you hate me, for the arts,  
you were sure, troubled sacred marriage-beds.  
But no bride learned deception from my teaching,  
no one can teach what he scarcely knows.  
I made sweet pleasurable songs in such a way  
that no scandal ever touched my name.  
There's no husband even in the lower ranks,  
who doubts his paternity through my offence.  
Believe me, my character's other than my verse –  
my life is modest, my Muse is playful –  
and most of my work, deceptive and fictitious,  
is more permissive than its author.  
A book's not evidence of a life, but a true impulse  
bringing many things to delight the ear.  
Or [Accius](#) would be cruel, [Terence](#) a reveller,  
and those who sing of war belligerent.

## Book TII:361-420 His Plea: Greek Precedents

I'm not alone in having sung tender love-songs:  
but I'm the one punished for singing of love.  
What did old [Anacreon](#)'s lyric [Muse](#) teach  
but a mixture of love and plenty of wine?  
What did [Sappho](#), the [Lesbian](#), teach the girls, but love?  
Yet Sappho was acceptable, and so was he.  
It didn't harm you, [Callimachus](#), who often confessed  
your pleasures to the reader, in poetry.  
No plot of playful [Menander](#)'s is free of love,  
yet he's commonly read by boys and girls.  
The [Iliad](#) itself, what's that but an adulteress  
over whom a husband and a lover fought?  
What's first in it but a passion for [Briseis](#),  
and how her abduction made the leaders quarrel?  
What's the [Odyssey](#) but [Penelope](#) wooed by many suitors  
while her husband's away, for the sake of love?  
Who but [Homer](#) tells of [Mars](#) and [Venus](#)  
their bodies snared in a flagrant act?  
On whose evidence but great [Homer](#)'s do we know  
of [Calypso](#) and [Circe](#), goddesses burning for a guest?  
All forms of writing are surpassed in seriousness by  
tragedy,  
yet this too always deals with matters of love.  
What's in the [Hippolytus](#) but [Phaedra](#)'s blind passion?  
[Canace](#)'s famed for love of her brother.  
Again, didn't ivory-shouldered [Pelops](#), with [Phrygian](#)  
steeds

abduct the [Pisan](#) girl, while [Cupid](#) drove?  
[Medea](#), who dipped her sword in her children's blood,  
 was roused to do it by the pain of slighted love.  
 Passion suddenly changed King [Tereus](#), [Philomela](#),  
 and [Procne](#), the mother still mourning her [Itys](#), to birds.  
 If [Thyestes](#), her wicked brother, hadn't loved [Aerope](#)  
 we'd not read about the swerving horses of the [Sun](#).  
 Impious [Scylla](#) would never have touched tragedy  
 if she hadn't shorn her father's hair, through love.  
 Who reads of [Electra](#) and maddened [Orestes](#),  
 reads of [Aegisthus](#)'s and [Clytemnestra](#)'s crime.  
 Why tell of [Bellerephon](#), who defeated the [Chimaera](#),  
 whom a deceitful woman brought near to death?  
 Why speak of [Hermione](#), or you, virgin [Atalanta](#),  
 or you [Cassandra](#), [Apollo](#)'s priestess, loved by  
[Agamemnon](#)?  
 Or of [Danae](#), [Andromeda](#), of [Semele](#) mother of [Bacchus](#),  
 of [Haemon](#), or [Alcmena](#) for whom two nights were one?  
 Why tell of [Admetus](#), [Theseus](#), [Protesilaus](#)  
 first of the [Greeks](#) to touch the Trojan shore?  
 Add [Iole](#), and [Deidamia](#), [Deianira](#) [Hercules](#)'s wife,  
[Hylas](#) and [Ganymede](#) the [Trojan](#) boy.  
 Time will fade if I repeat all the passions of tragedy,  
 and my book will scarcely hold the naked names.  
 There's 'tragedy' too, involving obscene laughter,  
 with many exceedingly shameful words:  
 it didn't harm one author to show an effeminate  
[Achilles](#), belittling brave actions with his verse.  
[Aristides](#) associated himself with [Milesian](#) vice,

but Aristides wasn't driven from his city.  
[Eubius](#) wasn't exiled, writer of a vile story,  
who described the abortion of an embryo,  
nor [Hemitheon](#) who's just written *Sybaritica*,  
nor those who've not concealed their adventures.  
These things are shelved with records of learned men,  
and are open to the public through our [leaders](#)' gifts.

## Book TII:421-470 His Plea: Roman Precedents

I'll not defend myself with so many foreign weapons,  
Roman books too have plenty of frivolous matter.  
Though [Ennius](#) sang of war, with grave speech –  
Ennius great in talent, primitive in his art –  
though [Lucretius](#) explains the cause of impetuous fire,  
and predicts the triple death of earth, water, air,  
yet wanton [Catullus](#) often sang of his girl,  
she whom, deceptively, he called [Lesbia](#):  
not content with her, he broadcast many love poems,  
in which he confessed to his own affairs.  
Equal and similar licence from little [Calvus](#)  
who revealed his intrigues in various metres.  
Why speak of [Ticidas](#)' or [Memmius](#)' verse  
in which things are named, and shameful things?  
[Cinna](#) belongs with them, [Anser](#) bolder than Cinna,  
and the light things of [Cornificus](#) and [Cato](#),  
and others, in whose books she who was disguised  
as [Perilla](#) is now called by your name, [Metella](#).  
[Varro](#), too, who guided [Argo](#) to the waves of [Phasis](#),  
couldn't keep silent about his own affairs.  
[Hortensius](#)' and [Servius](#)' poems are no less perverse.  
Who'd hesitate to follow such great names?  
[Sisenna](#) did [Aristides](#) and wasn't harmed  
for weaving vile jokes into the tale.  
It was no disgrace to [Gallus](#) that he wrote about [Lycoris](#),  
that came from his indulgence in too much wine.  
[Tibullus](#) thinks it's hard to believe his girl's denials,

when she swears the same about him, to her husband.  
He also admits to teaching her how to cheat her guards,  
saying, the wretch, that he's checked by his own arts.  
Often he recalls how he touched her hand  
as if appraising the gem in his girl's ring:  
and tells how he often signalled by nods, or fingers,  
and traced silent letters on the table's surface:  
and he teaches what juices erase the bruise  
that the imprint of a love-bite often makes:  
finally he begs her more than careless husband  
to keep watch too, so she'll sin a little less.  
He knows who's barked at, when someone prowls  
outside, why there's so much coughing by the door.  
He teaches many maxims for such affairs,  
and by what arts a wife can cheat her spouse.  
It didn't do him harm, Tibullus is read and pleases,  
and he was known when [you](#) were first called prince.  
You'll find the same maxims in charming [Propertius](#):  
yet he's not censured in the slightest way.  
I succeeded them, since honesty forbids me  
to reveal the names of well-known living men.  
I confess I'd no fear that where so many sailed,  
one would be wrecked, and all the rest unharmed.

## **Book TII:471-496 His Plea: Dubious Entertainments**

Others have written about the art of playing dice –  
to our ancestors that was no light sin –  
how to tally the bones, what throw scores the most,  
and how to avoid the ruinous ‘dogs’:  
how the dice count, when a side is challenged  
how one should throw, and move given the throw:  
how a multi-coloured piece attacks in a straight line,  
when a piece between two enemy pieces is lost,  
how to pursue with force, and then recall  
the piece in front, and retreat again safely, in company:  
how a small board’s set with three ‘stones’ a side,  
and winning rests in keeping them together:  
and those other games – I’ll not describe them all  
that tend to waste that precious thing, our time.  
Look, this man tells of various kinds of ball-game,  
that one teaches swimming, this, bowling hoops.  
others have written works on painting with cosmetics:  
that one the etiquette for dinner-parties:  
another shows the clay from which pots are moulded,  
or teaches what storage jar’s best for clear wine.  
Such things are toyed with, in December’s smoky month,  
but nobody was damned for writing them.  
Misled by these I made poems, without gravity,  
but a grave punishment has followed my jests.  
In the end I’ve not seen one of all those many writers  
who’s been ruined by his [Muse](#) – they picked on me.

## Book TII:497-546 His Plea: The Other Arts

What if I'd written lewd and obscene mimes,  
that always show the sin of forbidden love,  
in which a smart seducer constantly appears,  
and the skilful wife cons her stupid husband?  
They're seen by nubile girls, wives, husbands,  
sons, indeed most of the Senate attend.  
It's not enough your ears are burned by sinful words:  
your eyes get used to many shameful things:  
and when the lover's newly tricked the husband,  
he's applauded, given a prize, to vast acclaim:  
because it's common, theatre's profitable for poets,  
and the *praetor* pays for sin at no small price.  
Check the cost of your own games, [Augustus](#),  
you'll scan many pricey items like these.  
You've seen them yourself and often shown them others –  
your greatness is so generous everywhere –  
and with your eyes, that the whole world employs,  
you've calmly watched these staged adulteries.  
If it's right to scribble mimes that copy vice,  
a smaller punishment is due my matter.  
Or is this kind of writing safe on stage, where  
it's allowed, and theatre grants licence to the mime?  
Well my poems have often been danced to, publicly,  
often they've even detained your eyes.  
As images of the bodies of ancient heroes,  
some hand has painted, glow in our houses,  
so isn't there a little painting too in some place



showing the various forms and acts of love.  
Not only does [Ajax](#) sit there, his look betraying wrath,  
and savage [Medea](#), a mother with sin in her face,  
but [Venus](#), damp, too, wringing wet hair in her fingers,  
rising, scarce decent, from her natal waves.  
Some sing the noise of war, its blood-stained weapons,  
some of your actions, some of your ancestors'.  
Nature, grudgingly, shut me in a narrow space,  
gave my ingenuity slender powers.  
Yet [Virgil](#), the happy author of your *Aeneid*,  
brought the man and his arms to a [Tyrian](#) bed,  
and no part of the whole work's more read  
than that love joined in an improper union.  
Before, in youthful pastoral music, the same poet  
played out the passions of [Phyllis](#) and sweet [Amaryllis](#).  
I too, long ago, sinned with that kind of writing:  
a fault that's not new earns new punishment:  
I'd published those songs when I passed before you,  
so many times, a faultless knight, as you reviewed our  
sins.  
So the writing I thought, in my youth, would never hurt  
me,  
scarcely foreseeing it, hurts me now I'm old.  
Late vengeance in excess for those early books,  
remote the penalty from the time of guilt.

## Book TII:547-578 His Plea: Last Defence and Prayer

Still, don't think that all my work's remiss,  
I've often launched my boat under full sail.  
I've [written](#) six of the *Fasti* in as many books,  
each volume ending with its own month's end.  
I wrote it recently Caesar, under your name,  
but my fate interrupted work dedicated to you.  
And [I gave](#) a royal poem to the tragic stage,  
in the heavy style that tragedy demands.  
And [I also sang](#) bodies changed to new forms,  
though my efforts lacked the final touch.  
If only you might calm your anger for a while  
and order some of it read while you're at leisure,  
a few lines, where having started from the world's  
first origin, I bring the work, [Caesar](#), to your times!  
You'll see how much you yourself have inspired my spirit,  
how in song my mind favours you, and yours.  
I've never hurt anyone with caustic verse,  
my poetry's never accused anyone.  
I've openly avoided wit steeped in venom,  
not a single letter's stained with poisonous jest.  
Among so many thousands of our people,  
so much writing, I'm the one my [Calliope](#) wounds.  
So I'm sure there's no citizen who delights  
in my misfortune, but there are many of them who grieve:  
I don't believe there's one who jeers at my fall,  
if there's any regard at all for an open heart.  
I pray this, and other things, might move your will,

O father, O guardian, and salvation of the land!  
Not that I should return to Italy, unless some day  
perhaps you'll be swayed by my long punishment,  
but a safer, more peaceful place of exile, I beg for,  
so my punishment might match the offence.

## **The End of Tristia Book II**

## **Tristia Book III**

### **Book TIII.I:1-46 His Book Arrives in Rome**

'I come in fear, an exile's book, sent to this city:  
kind reader, give me a gentle hand, in my weariness:  
don't shun me in fear, in case I bring you shame:  
not a line of this paper teaches about love.  
Such is my author's fate he shouldn't try,  
the wretch, to hide it with any kind of wit.  
Even that unlucky work that amused him  
in his youth, too late alas, he condemns and hates!  
See what I bring: you'll find nothing here  
but sadness, poetry fitting circumstance.  
If the crippled couplets limp in alternate lines,  
it's the elegiac metre, the long journey:  
If I'm not golden with cedar-oil, smoothed with pumice,  
I'd blush to be better turned out than my author:  
if the writing's streaked with blotted erasures,  
the poet marred his own work with his tears.  
If any phrase might not seem good Latin,  
it was a land of barbarians he wrote in.  
If it's no trouble, readers, tell me what place,  
what house to seek, a book strange to this city.'  
Speaking like this, covertly, with anxious speech,  
I found one, eventually, to show me the way.  
'May the gods grant, what they denied our poet,  
to be able to live in peace in your native land.

Lead on! I'll follow now, though, weary, I come  
by land and sea from a distant world.'  
He obeyed, and guiding me, said: 'This is Caesar's  
Forum, this is the [Sacred Way](#) named from the rites,  
here's [Vesta](#)'s temple, guarding the [Palladium](#)  
and the fire, here was old [Numa](#)'s tiny palace.'  
Then, turning right, here's the gate to the [Palatine](#),  
here's [Jupiter](#) Stator, [Rome](#) was first founded here.  
Gazing around, I saw prominent doorposts hung  
with gleaming weapons, and a house fit for a god.  
'And is this Jove's house?' I said, a wreath of oak  
prompting that thought in my mind.  
When I learnt its owner, 'No error there,' I said,  
this is truly the house of mighty [Jove](#).'  
But why do laurels veil the door in front,  
their dark leaves circling the august ones?  
Is it because this house earned unending triumph,  
or because it's loved by [Apollo](#) of [Actium](#) forever?  
Is it because it's joyful, and makes all things joyful?  
Is it a mark of the peace it's given the world?  
Does it possess everlasting glory, as the laurel  
is evergreen, without a single withered leaf to gather?

## Book TIII.I:47-82 His Books Are Banned

The writing gives the reason for the coronal wreath:  
it says that by his efforts citizens were saved.  
Best of fathers, add one more citizen to them,  
driven away, and hidden at the world's end,  
the cause of whose punishment, which he confesses  
[he deserved](#), lay in nothing that he did, but in an error.  
Ah me! I dread the place, I dread the man of power,  
and my writing wavers with the tremor of fear.  
Can you see the paper's colour, bloodless pale?  
Can you see each other footstep tremble?  
I pray, that, some day, your house makes peace with him  
who authored me, and, under the same masters, greets  
him!  
Then I was led up the high stairway's even steps,  
to the sublime, shining temple of unshorn [Apollo](#),  
where statues alternate with exotic pillars,  
[Danaids](#), and their savage father with naked sword:  
and all that men of old and new times thought,  
with learned minds, is open to inspection by the reader.  
I searched for my brothers, except those indeed  
their author wishes he had never written.  
As I looked in vain, the guard, from that house  
that commands the holy place, ordered me to go.  
I tried another temple, joined to a nearby theatre:  
that too couldn't be entered by these feet.  
Nor did [Liberty](#) allow me in her temple,  
the first that was open to learned books.

Our wretched author's fate engulfs his children,  
and from birth we suffer the exile he endures.  
Perhaps one day Caesar, aware of the long years,  
will be less harsh to him and to us.

I pray, gods, or rather – since I shouldn't address  
the crowd – Caesar, greatest of them, hear my prayer!  
Meanwhile, since the public forum's closed to me,  
let me lie hidden in some private place.  
You too, ordinary hands, if it's allowed, take up  
my poetry, dismayed by the shame of its rejection.



## Book THII.11:1-30 The Weariness Of Exile

So it was in my destiny to visit [Scythia](#) too,  
and the land that lies under the [Lycaonian](#) pole:  
neither you, you crowd of learned [Muses](#),  
nor you [Apollo](#) have brought aid to your priest.  
It's no help to me I played about, without real sin,  
that my Muse was more wanton than my life,  
since I've suffered many dangers on land and sea,  
and [Pontus](#), seared by perpetual frost, holds me.  
I who fled from 'business', born for idle ease,  
I was tender, and incapable of labour,  
now I endure the extremes, no harbourless seas  
no far-flung journeys have had the power to kill me:  
my spirit matched my ills: my body borrowed  
strength from it to bear what's scarcely bearable.  
Still, while I was hurled, anxious, over land and sea,  
the effort masked my cares, and my sick heart:  
so, now the journey's done, the toil is over,  
and I've reached the country of my punishment,  
only grieving pleases, there's no less rain from my eyes  
than water from the melting snow in springtime.  
[Rome](#)'s in my thoughts, and home, and longed-for places,  
whatever of mine remains in the city I've lost.  
Ah, how often I've knocked at the door of my own tomb  
and yet it has never opened to me!  
Why have I escaped so many swords, so many  
storms that threatened to overwhelm an ill-starred life?  
Gods, I've found too constant in cruelty,

sharers of the anger one god feels,  
I beg you, drive my slow fate onwards  
forbid the doors of death to close!

### **Book TIII.III:1-46 Longing For His Wife**

If you're wondering perhaps why my letter  
is written in another's hand, I'm ill.  
Ill in the furthest region of an unknown land,  
and almost unsure that I'll be better.  
How do you think I feel, lying here  
in a vile place, among [Getae](#) and [Sarmatians](#)?  
I can't stand the climate, I'm not used to the water,  
and the land itself, I don't know why, displeases.  
There's no house here suitable for a patient, no food  
that's any use, no one to ease his pain with [Apollo](#)'s art,  
no friend here to bring comfort, no one  
to beguile with talk the slowly moving hours.  
I'm weary lying here among distant peoples, places,  
in sickness now thoughts come to me, of what's not here.  
Though I think of everything, still you above all, wife,  
it's you who occupy most of my thoughts.  
Absent, I speak to you: you alone my voice names:  
there no night for me without you, and no day.  
They even say when I babbled disjointed things,  
your name was on my delirious lips.  
If I were failing now, and my tongue stuck to my palate  
could barely be revived by a little wine,  
let someone say my lady's come, I'll rise,  
hope of you the reason for my vigour.  
So, maybe, while I'm anxious for my life,  
do you pass happy hours there forgetting me?  
Not you, I know it. Dearest, it's clear to me

without me you have no hour that isn't sad.  
Still if my fate's fulfilled its destined years,  
and the end of my life's here, so quickly,  
how difficult was it, O great gods, to spare the dying,  
so I might have been covered by my native earth?  
If sentence might have been delayed till the hour of death,  
or swift death might have anticipated exile.  
I could easily have renounced the light, just now,  
when I was whole, now life's given me to die in exile.  
So I'll die far away then, on a foreign shore,  
and my fate will be desolate as the place itself:  
my body won't grow weak on a familiar couch,  
at my death there'll be no-one there to weep:  
nor will my lady's tears be falling on my lips,  
adding a few brief moments to my life:  
no parting instructions, no last lament  
as a friendly hand closes my failing eyes:  
but with no funeral rites, without honour of a tomb,  
my head will bow, un-mourned, in a barbarous land!

### Book TIII.III:47-88 His Epitaph

Hearing this won't your whole heart be shaken  
won't you strike your faithful breast with trembling hand?  
Won't you stretch your arms in vain in my direction,  
and call on your wretched husband's empty name?  
Don't lacerate your cheeks or tear your hair,  
it's not now, for a first time, I'm taken from you, *mea lux*.  
Think that I perished when I lost my native land:  
that was an earlier and a deeper death.  
Now if you can – but you can't, best of wives –  
be glad that so many of my ills end with my death.  
This you can do, ease the woes by suffering them  
with a brave heart, those you've known for a long time.  
If only our souls might vanish with the body,  
so no part of me escapes [the greedy pyre](#)!  
Since if the deathless spirit flies on high in the empty air,  
and old [Pythagoras](#) of [Samos](#)'s words are true,  
a Roman will wander among [Sarmatian](#) shades,  
a stranger forever among the savage dead.  
But make sure my bones are brought back in a little urn:  
so I'll not be an exile still in death.  
No one forbids that: [Theban Antigone](#) buried  
her brother's body under the earth, despite the king.  
and, mixing leaves and nard with my bones,  
bury them in ground near the city:  
and carve these lines in fine letters on the marble  
for the hurried eyes of passers-by to read:

**I LIE HERE, WHO TOYED WITH TENDER LOVE,  
OVID THE POET BETRAYED BY MY GENIUS:  
BE NOT SEVERE, LOVER, AS YOU PASS BY,  
SAY 'EASY MAY THE BONES OF OVID LIE'**

That suffices for an epitaph. In fact my books  
are a greater and a lasting monument,  
those, I know, though they've injured him  
will give their author fame and enduring life.  
But you, forever, bring funeral gifts to the dead  
and wreaths that are soaked with your tears.  
Though the fire transforms my body to ash,  
the sorrowing dust will know your faithful care.  
I'd write more: but my voice, tired of speech,  
and my dry tongue, deny power to dictate it.  
Accept the last words perhaps my lips will utter,  
what he who sends them to you cannot do: 'Fare well.'

## Book TIII.IV:1-46 A Warning

O you who were always [dear](#) to me, but truly known  
in hard times, after my hopes collapsed,  
if you believe anything from a friend whom life has  
taught,  
live for yourself, and keep far away from the great.  
Live for yourself, as far as you can, avoid the bright light:  
it's a fierce lightning bolt that falls from that bright  
citadel.

Though only the powerful can help us,  
it's no use if they choose to harm us.  
The lowered yard escapes the winter storm,  
broad sails bring more risk than the narrow.  
See how the light cork bobs on the waves,  
while its own weight sinks the heavy net.  
If I who warn you had once been warned myself,  
perhaps I'd be in that city where I ought to be.  
While I lived with you, while the light breeze bore me,  
this boat of mine sailed on through calm water,  
He who falls on level ground – it scarcely happens –  
falls to rise again from the earth he touched,  
but poor [Elpenor](#) who tumbled from the high roof  
met his king again as a cripple and a shade.  
Why is it that [Daedalus](#) beat his wings in safety  
while [Icarus](#) gave his name to the endless waves?  
Why because Icarus flew high, the other lower:  
yet both flew on wings that were not their own.  
Believe me, who lives quietly lives well,



and every man should be happy with his lot.  
[Eumedes](#) would not have lost his child, if [Dolon](#),  
his foolish son, hadn't yearned for [Achilles](#)' horses.  
[Merops](#) would not have seen his son on fire, his daughters  
trees, if he'd sufficed [Phaethon](#) as a father.  
You too, always fear what is too high,  
and narrow the sails of your intentions.  
Since you ought to run life's course on sound feet,  
and enjoy a brighter destiny than mine.  
You deserve my prayers for you, by your kind  
affection, and that loyalty that clings to me always.  
I saw you grieving for my fate, with such a look  
as I believe my own face must have showed.  
I saw your tears falling on my lips,  
tears that I drank with your faithful words.  
Even now you defend your exiled friend zealously,  
easing the pain that can scarcely be eased.  
Live unenvied, pass sweet years, unknown,  
form friendships equal to your own,  
and love the name of Ovid, the only part of him  
not exiled: the rest [Scythian Pontus](#) holds.  
The land near the stars of the [Erymanthian Bear](#)  
imprisons me, earth gripped with freezing cold.  
The [Bosphorus](#), [Don](#), the [Scythian](#) marshes lie beyond it,  
a handful of names in a region scarcely known.  
Further there's nothing but uninhabitable cold.  
Ah how near I am to the ends of the earth!  
And my country's far away, my dear wife's far away,  
and everything that, after them, was sweet.

Even so they're still present, though I cannot  
touch them: everything's alive in my mind.  
My home's before my eyes, the city, the image of places,  
every event that happened in each place.  
My [wife](#)'s form is before my eyes, as if she were here,  
She makes my misfortunes darker: she lightens them:  
darkens them by her absence, lightens them by her gift  
of love, and her strength in enduring the load she bears.  
You too cling to my heart, my friends,  
whom I'd like to mention each by name,  
but cautious fear inhibits that service, and I think  
you wouldn't want a place in my verse.  
You did before: it was like an honour, deserving thanks,  
for your names to be read in my poems.  
Since it's dangerous now, I'll speak to you, each  
in my heart, and be a source of fear to none.  
My verse gives no hints that drag my friends from hiding.  
Let him who loved me, love in secret still.  
But though I'm absent, far away in a distant place,  
know you're always present in my heart.  
And in whatever way each can, ease my pain somehow,  
don't refuse an outcast a loyal hand.  
So may good fortune stay with you, and may you never,  
touched by a like fate, have to make the same request.

### **Book TIII.V:1-56 His Error and its Nature**

My friendship with you was recent, so you  
could have concealed it without trouble,  
yet you couldn't have embraced me more closely  
if my ship had been running, by chance, before the wind.  
When I fell and everyone ran in fear from my ruin,  
turning their backs against my friendship,  
you dared to touch the body [Jove](#)'s lightning struck,  
and touch the threshold of a house despaired of.  
You, a new friend, not one known by long usage, in my  
pain,  
gave me what scarcely two or three of my old friends did.  
I saw your expression of grief, noted your face,  
wet with tears and more pallid than my own.  
And seeing your tears falling at every word,  
drinking the tears with my lips, the words in my ears,  
I felt your encircling arms clasp my neck,  
and your kisses mingled with the sound of sobbing.  
I've also felt your strong defence of [me](#), in my absence –  
dear friend, you know that '[dear](#)' might stand for your true  
name –  
and I possess many clear signs of your affection,  
as well, that will not be absent from my heart.  
May the gods always grant you power to defend your own,  
and aid them in more fortunate circumstances.  
If you ask meanwhile – and I believe, of you,  
that you do – how I am, a ruined man, on these shores,  
I'm led on by the slight hope: don't remove it from me,

that the desolating will of the god can be mollified.  
Whether my hope is rash, or whether I touch on what is possible,  
may you set out to prove, I beg, that what I wish *is* possible,  
Whatever eloquence you have apply to this,  
to showing that my prayer might be effective.  
The greater a man the more his anger can be placated,  
and a noble mind has generous impulses.  
It's enough for the great lion to bring down his quarry:  
when his enemy's fallen the battle's at an end:  
but wolves and lowly bears will worry the dying,  
as will every creature of the lower orders.  
Who can we show at [Troy](#) greater than brave [Achilles](#)?  
But he couldn't suffer aged [Dardanian Priam](#)'s tears.  
[Porus](#) and the funeral rites of [Darius](#),  
display [Emathian Alexander](#)'s mercy, to us.  
And to show not merely human anger turned to mildness,  
[Juno](#)'s former enemy [Hercules](#) is now her son-in-law.  
So it's impossible for me not to hope of salvation,  
since the cause of my punishment's not stained with blood.  
[I never tried](#) to ruin everything by attacking  
Caesar's life, which is the life of the world:  
I've said nothing: a pure tongue has spoken,  
no impious words poured out with too much wine:  
I'm punished because my unknowing eyes  
saw an offence, my sin's that of possessing sight.  
True I can't entirely defend myself from blame,

but one of my offences was an error.  
So hope remains that he might bring himself to ease  
my punishment by changing the terms of its location.  
Might such a dawn as that be brought to me, by bright  
[Lucifer](#) with swift horses, herald of the shining [Sun](#)!

## Book TIII.VI:1-38 His Error: The Fatal Evil

[Dearest](#) friend, you neither wish to hide the bond of our friendship, nor, if you did wish so, have you the power. Since, while it was right, no other was dearer to me, no one in the whole city closer to you than me: that love was so truly witnessed by the crowd it was almost better known than you or I were: and your openness of heart to your dear friends – is well known to [the man](#) you cultivate.

You concealed nothing I was not aware of, and entrusted many hidden things, to my heart:

[I told](#) whatever secrets I had to you except that one that ruined me.

If you'd known that too, my friend, you'd be enjoying your companions safety, I'd be safe through your advice.

But my fate was dragging me surely to punishment: it closed off every road that led to good.

Whether with care I might have avoided this evil, or whether there's no way to overcome fate,

Oh, you, closest to me through long friendship, you whom I miss almost the most of all, remember me still, and, if favour grants you power, prove it on my behalf, I beg you,

lessen the anger of the injured god, and lessen my punishment by a change of place, and that because there's no wickedness in my heart, an error was the cause of my offence.

What chance it was, through which my eyes were witness

to a fatal evil, it's not safe or brief to tell.  
As if from its own wound, my mind shrinks  
from that time, and thinking of it is new shame,  
and whatever is able to bring us such shame  
should be veiled and hidden in the blind night.  
So I'll say nothing but that I sinned,  
though I sought no advantage from that sin,  
and my offence should be called foolishness,  
if you want to give a true name to what I did.  
If it's not so, find a more distant place:  
call this a country too near [Rome](#) for me.

## Book THII.VII:1-54 To Perilla: The Delights of the Mind

Go, greet [Perilla](#), hastily written letter,  
and be the faithful servant of speech.  
You'll find her sitting with her sweet mother,  
or among her books, and the [Muses](#).  
Wherever she's doing when she knows you've come  
she'll stop, and ask you quickly how I am.  
Say I live, but so that I'd rather not live,  
my ills not eased by any length of time:  
and still I return to the Muses though they harmed me,  
forcing words to fit with alternating feet.  
Say: 'Do you still cling to our shared studies,  
write learned verse, though not in your father's style?  
Since nature and fate gave you modest  
manners, and the rare gift of imagination.  
I was the first to lead you to [Pegasus](#)'s spring  
lest that precious rill of water be lost:  
I first discerned it, in your girlhood's tender years,  
when I was your friend and guide, father to daughter.  
And if the same fire still burns in your heart,  
only [Sappho](#) of [Lesbos](#)'s work outshines you.  
But I fear lest my fate holds you back,  
and that since my misfortune your mind is idle.  
I often used to read your verses to me, while I could,  
and mine to you, often your critic, often your teacher:  
giving ear to the poems you had made,  
causing you to blush when you fell silent.



From the example, perhaps, of how books hurt me,  
you too have been harmed by my punishment.  
Have no fear, Perilla: only let no man or woman  
learn from your writings how to love.  
So, learned girl, reject every reason for idleness,  
return to the true arts and your sacred calling.  
[The long years](#) will spoil those precious looks,  
and time's wrinkles mar your furrowed brow,  
Ruinous age that comes with noiseless step  
will take possession of all your beauty:  
you'll grieve when someone says: "She was lovely",  
and you'll complain that your mirror lies.  
You have a modest fortune, though worth a great one,  
but imagine yours the equal of immense wealth,  
still fortune gives and takes away as she pleases:  
suddenly he's [Irus](#) the beggar, who was [Croesus](#).  
In short, we've nothing that isn't mortal,  
except the benefits of heart and mind.  
Look at me, my country lost, you two, and my home,  
and everything, that could be, taken from me.  
still I follow and delight in my genius:  
Caesar has no power over that.  
[Let whoever will](#) end this life with a cruel blade,  
yet my fame will survive when I am dead,  
and I'll be read as long as warlike Rome  
looks, in victory, from her hills, on all the world.  
You also: may a happier use of art await you,  
in whatever way you can, evade the future's flame!'

## Book TIII.VIII:1-42 His Desire for a Change of Place

[Now I'd wish](#) to drive [Trioletum](#)'s chariot,  
he who scattered fresh seed on uncultivated soil:  
now I'd wish to bridle [Medea](#)'s dragons,  
she fled with from your citadel, [Corinth](#):  
now I'd wish for wings to beat in flight,  
either yours [Perseus](#), or yours [Daedalus](#):  
so the gentle air might fall beneath my swiftness  
and suddenly, I'd see my country's sweet earth,  
and the faces in the house I left, true friends,  
and above all my dear wife's features.  
Foolish, why utter childish prayers for them in vain,  
things which no day brings, or could bring?  
If you can only pray, worship the divine Augustus,  
and petition the god you've known, in the proper way.  
He can bring you feathers and winged chariots:  
let him grant your return and you'll have wings at once.  
If I pray for this – and there's nothing I ask more –  
I fear only lest my prayer might be immodest.  
Perhaps, sometime, when his anger's sated,  
I need to pray then with a still anxious mind.  
Meanwhile something less, but a great gift to me,  
would be to order me somewhere away from here.  
Sky, and water, earth and air don't suit me:  
ah me! A perpetual weakness grips my body!  
Whether the disease of an ill mind drains my limbs,  
or this region is the cause of my misfortune,  
I'm vexed by insomnia since I reached [Pontus](#),

my flesh scarce covers bone, food barely finds my lips:  
my skin has the colours of the autumn leaves,  
struck by the first frost, when winter spoils them,  
and no strength of body brings relief,  
and I never lack the cause of grievous pain.  
I'm no fitter in mind than body, rather both  
are ill and I endure a double ache.  
The nature of that fate I must view clings to me,  
and stands before my eyes like a visible form:  
and when I consider this place, the customs, dress,  
the language of the people, what I am and what I was,  
my love of death is such, I complain of Caesar's anger,  
who did not avenge his wrongs with the sword.  
But as he's exercised a mild displeasure, once,  
let him ease my exile now, by a change of place.

## Book THII.IX:1-34 The Origins of Tomis

So there are Greek cities here – who'd believe it? –  
among the place-names of the savage barbarians:  
here too colonists came, sent by the [Miletians](#),  
to found Greek holdings among the [Getae](#).  
But its ancient name, older than the city's founding,  
was derived for it from [Absyrtus](#)'s murder.  
Since wicked [Medea](#), fleeing the father she'd left,  
in the [Argo](#), that ship built with the protection  
of warlike [Minerva](#), and first to course through  
these unknown seas, rested its oars in these shallows.  
A look-out on a high hill saw [Aeetes](#) ship far-off,  
and said: 'A guest from [Colchis](#), I know the sail.'  
While the [Argonauts](#) rushed to loose the cables,  
while the anchor was raised swiftly by ready hands,  
the Colchian struck her breast, knowing her guilt,  
with a hand that dared and would dare much evil,  
and though her mind retained its great courage,  
there was a pallor over the girl's troubled face.  
So, watching the approaching sail, she cried:  
'We're caught: my father must be delayed by some trick.'  
While she thought what to do, gazing around her,  
her eyes fell, by chance, on her brother.  
Aware now of his presence, she said: 'I have it:  
his death will be the means of my salvation.'  
While he was unsuspecting, fearing no such attack,  
she quickly stabbed his innocent heart with a sword.  
Then she tore him apart, and scattered his limbs

through the fields, to be found in many places.  
And lest her father did not realise, high on a rock,  
she set the bloodless hands, and blood-stained head,  
so her father would be delayed by this new grief,  
gathering those lifeless fragments, on a sad trail.  
So this place was called [Tomis](#), because they say  
it was here the sister *cut up* her brother's body.

## Book TIII.X:1-40 Winter in Tomis

If anyone there still remembers exiled Ovid,  
if my name's alive in the city now I'm gone,  
let him know that, beneath the stars that never  
touch the sea, I live among the barbarian races.  
The [Sarmatians](#), a wild tribe, surround me, the [Bessi](#)  
and the [Getae](#), names unworthy of my wit!  
While the warm winds still blow, the [Danube](#) between  
defends us: with his flood he prevents war.  
And when dark winter shows its icy face,  
and the earth is white with marbled frost,  
when [Boreas](#) and the snow constrain life under the [Bears](#),  
those tribes must be hard-pressed by the shivering sky.  
Snow falls, and, once fallen, no rain or sunlight melts it,  
since the north wind, freezing, makes it permanent.  
So another fall comes before the first has melted,  
and in many parts it lingers there two years.  
The power of [Aquilo](#)'s northern gales is such  
it razes high towers, and blows away the roofs.  
Men keep out the dreadful cold with sewn trousers  
and furs: the face alone appears of the whole body.  
Often their hair tinkles with hanging icicles,  
and their beards gleam white with a coat of frost.  
Wine stands exposed, holding the shape of the jar,  
and they don't drink draughts of mead, but frozen lumps.  
Shall I speak of solid rivers, frozen by cold,  
and water dug out brittle from the pools?  
The Danube itself, no narrower than lotus-bearing Nile,

mingling with deep water through many mouths,  
congeals, the winds hardening its dark flow,  
and winds its way to the sea below the ice:  
Feet cross now, where boats went before,  
and horses' hooves beat on waters hard with cold:  
and across this new bridge over the sliding flood  
barbarous wagons are pulled by [Sarmatian](#) oxen.  
I'll scarcely be believed, but since there's no prize  
for deceit, the witness should be given due credit:  
I've seen the vast waters frozen with ice,  
a slippery shell gripping the unmoving deep.  
Seeing was not enough: I walked the frozen sea,  
dry-shod, with the surface under my feet.

## Book TIII.X:41-78 Barbarian Incursions

If [such waters](#) had once been yours, [Leander](#),  
those straits would not be guilty of your death.  
Since the dolphins can't hurl themselves into the air,  
harsh winter holds them back if they try:  
and though [Boreas](#) roars and thrashes his wings,  
there's no wave on the besieged waters.  
The ships stand locked in frozen marble,  
and no oar can cut the solid wave.  
I've seen fish stuck fast held by the ice,  
and some of them were alive even then.  
Whether the savage power of wild Boreas  
freezes the sea-water or the flowing river,  
as soon as the [Danube](#)'s levelled by dry winds,  
the barbarian host attack on swift horses:  
strong in horses and strong in far-flung arrows  
laying waste the neighbouring lands far and wide.  
Some men flee: and, with their fields unguarded,  
their undefended wealth is plundered,  
the scant wealth of the country, herds  
and creaking carts, whatever a poor farmer has.  
Some, hands tied, are driven off as captives,  
looking back in vain at their farms and homes.  
some die wretchedly pierced by barbed arrows,  
since there's a touch of venom on the flying steel.  
They destroy what they can't carry, or lead away,  
and enemy flames burn the innocent houses.  
Even at peace, they tremble on the edge of war,



and no man ploughs the soil with curving blade.  
This place sees the enemy, or fears him unseen:  
the earth lies idle, abandoned to harsh neglect.

No sweet grapes are hidden in leafy shade,  
no frothing must fills the deep wine-vats.  
This land's denied fruit, nor would [Acontius](#) have  
an apple to write words on for [Cydippe](#) to read.  
You can see naked fields without crops or trees:  
a region, ah, that no happy man should enter.  
This then, though the great world stretches wide,  
is the place invented for my punishment!

## Book TIII.XI:1-38 A Detractor

Cruel, whoever you are, you who exult in my misfortunes,  
bloodthirsty, endlessly using the law against me,  
born of the rock, nursed on the milk of wild beasts,  
and, I'll swear, your heart is made of stone.  
What further reach is left to which your ire might stretch?  
What do you seek that's missing from my ills?  
A barbarous land, the unfriendly coast of [Pontus](#),  
the Maenalian [Bear](#), and her [Boreas](#) gaze at me.  
I have no commerce, in speech, with the wild tribes:  
every place fills me with anxiety and fear.  
Like a timid deer trapped by hungry bears,  
or a stricken lamb circled by mountain wolves,  
so I'm in terror of belligerent races, hedged in  
on all sides, the enemy almost at my flank.  
If it were a slight penalty to be deprived  
of my dear wife, my country, those I love:  
if I endured no anger but Caesar's naked anger,  
then is our Caesar's naked anger not enough?  
Yet still there's one who'll re-open my raw wounds,  
and attack my character in eloquent speeches.  
Anyone can be eloquent when the brief is easy,  
and the least strength shatters what's already broken.  
It's brave to take citadels and standing walls:  
any coward can crush what's already down.  
I am not what I was. Why trample an empty shadow?  
Why attack my tomb, my ashes, with your stones?  
[Hector](#) existed while he fought the war: but that

was not Hector, dragged behind [Achilles](#)' horses.  
I too, remember, whom you once knew, do not exist:  
only the ghost, here, of that man remains.  
Why attack a ghost with bitter words, so cruelly?  
I beg you, cease to trouble my shade.  
Imagine [my crimes](#) were all real, nothing  
you might think of as an error not a sin,  
then, as a fugitive – let this be enough for you – I still  
pay a heavy penalty, by exile, and my place of exile.  
My fate might seem sad enough to a hangman:  
but it's still not profound enough for a judge.

## Book TIII.XI:39-74 Exile As Torture

You're fiercer than cruel [Busiris](#), fiercer than [Perillus](#)  
who heated the brazen bull in the slow fires,  
and gave that bull to [Phalaris](#), tyrant of [Sicily](#),  
commending his work of art in these words:  
'There's greater worth in my gift than it seems, my king,  
not only the form of my work deserves your praise.  
Do you not see the bull's right flank can be opened?  
You can thrust a man in here, whom you would destroy.  
Shut him in at once, and roast him over slow coals:  
he'll bellow, and it will sound like a real bull.  
Give me a prize, I pray, worthy of my genius,  
reward me gift for gift, for this invention.'  
So he spoke, But Phalaris replied: 'You marvellous  
creator of torments, try out your work in person,'  
At once, roasting in the fires he'd prepared,  
Perillus made double sounds with groaning lips.  
Between [Scythians](#) and [Getae](#) why speak of Sicilians?  
My complaint returns to you, whoever you are.  
If you can sate your thirst for blood on this,  
enjoy what pleasure you can in your greedy heart:  
I've suffered so many evils in flight by land and sea  
I think even you, hearing them, might feel the pain.  
Believe me, if [Ulysses](#) is compared to me,  
[Neptune](#)'s anger was much slighter than [Jove](#)'s.  
So, whoever you are, rescind the charge against me,  
take your unfeeling hands from my deep wound,  
and allow a scar to form, over my actions,

so forgetfulness might lessen knowledge of my fault:  
remember mortal fate that lifts a man and crushes him,  
and fear the uncertainties of change yourself.

And since, though I'd never have thought it possible,  
you take the greatest of interest in my affairs,  
you've nothing to fear: my fate's most miserable,  
Caesar's anger brings with it every ill.  
And so it's clear, and I'm not thought a liar,  
I'd like you to try my punishment yourself.

## Book TIII.XII:1-54 Spring in Tomis

[Zephyrus](#) lessens the cold, now the past year's done,  
a [Black Sea](#) winter that seemed longer than those of old,  
and the Ram that failed to carry [Helle](#) on its back,  
makes the hours of night and day equal now.  
Now laughing boys and girls gather the violets  
that grow, un-sown, born of the countryside:  
and the meadows bloom with many flowers,  
and the song-birds welcome spring, untaught:  
and the swallow, denying the name of wicked [Procne](#),  
builds her nest with its little roof under the eaves:  
and the shoots that lay hid, buried in the wheat furrows,  
show through, unfurl their tender tips from the earth.  
Wherever the vine grows, buds break from the stem:  
but vines grow far away from these [Getic](#) shores:  
wherever there's a tree, the tree's twigs are bursting,  
but trees grow far away from these Getic lands.  
It's a time of ease [there](#), and a string of festive days  
succeed the noisy battles of the wordy forum.  
Now they ride horses, practise with light weapons,  
play ball games, or with the swiftly circling hoops:  
now young men, when they're slick with slippery oil,  
soak their weary limbs in the flow of the [Aqua Virgo](#),  
The stage is alive, faction flares among separate parties,  
and the [three theatres](#) resound not the [three forums](#).  
O four times, O endlessly blessed that man  
who's not forbidden, and can enjoy, the city!  
But I only see snow that melts in the spring sun



and water that's not dug frozen from the pool.  
The sea's solid ice no longer, [Sarmatian](#) herdsmen  
don't drive creaking carts on the [Danube](#), as before.  
Ships will be starting to make their voyage here,  
and there'll be friendly prows on the [Pontic](#) shore.  
I'll go eagerly to meet the captain, and greet him:  
I'll ask why he comes, who he is and from where.  
It'll be strange if he's not from a neighbouring place,  
one who's not safely ploughed the local waters.  
It's rare for sailors to cross the deep sea from Italy,  
rare for them to come to this harbourless coast.  
Yet if he knows how to speak in Greek or Latin  
– and for sure the latter tongue would be more welcome –  
possibly someone too who's sailed with a steady southerly  
from far [Propontis](#), and the mouth of the straits,  
whoever he is he can recount the news he knows,  
and be the sharer and passer-on of rumour.  
[I hope](#) he can tell what he's heard of Caesar's triumphs,  
of prayers made to our Roman Jupiter, and that you  
rebellious Germany, at last, have bowed  
your sorrowful head beneath the [general](#)'s foot.  
He who tells me things, I'm sad I haven't seen,  
will be an instant guest in my house.  
Ah, is Ovid's house, now, in the [Scythian](#) world?  
Does my sentence assign the land, it specified, as [home](#)?  
Gods, let Caesar not will my hearth and home here,  
but only a temporary lodging as a punishment.

### Book TIII.XIII:1-28 Ovid's Birthday in Tomis

Behold, the god of my birth, comes, [on his day](#),  
uselessly – what was the point of my being born?  
Harsh one, why here, in the wretched years of exile?  
You should, instead, have put an end to them.  
If you had any care for me, or any shame,  
you'd not have followed me beyond my native country,  
and there, where you first knew this ill-fated child,  
you should have tried to know me for the last time,  
and like my friends, as I was leaving the city,  
you too should have said a sad 'Farewell.'  
What have you to do with [Pontus](#)? Did Caesar's anger  
send you, as well, to the farthest land of the icy world?  
I suppose you expect the usual kind of honours,  
a white robe hanging from my shoulders,  
a smoking altar circled by garlands,  
grains of incense crackling in the flames,  
myself to offer cakes to mark my birthday,  
and make propitious prayers with fine words?  
My situation and the times aren't such  
that I can be joyful at your arrival.  
A funeral altar covered with deathly cypress,  
fits me, a flame prepared for a tall pyre.  
I don't wish to offer incense to unresponsive gods,  
fine words don't rise to my lips in evil times.  
Yet, if I must ask something from this day,  
I beg you never to return to this place,  
not while this all but farthest stretch of the earth,

Pontus, falsely named Euxine, still holds *me*.

## Book TIII.XIV:1-52 To the Keeper of Books

[Keeper](#) and revered supporter of learned men,  
what are you doing, to befriend my wit at all?  
Just as you used to celebrate me when I was 'safe',  
do you still see to it, that I'm not wholly absent?  
Do you still protect my verse, excepting that poem  
about the 'Art', that did such harm to the artist?  
I beg, in so far as you can, connoisseur of new poets,  
do so, and keep my 'body' of work in the city.  
Exile was decreed for me, not for [my books](#):  
they didn't deserve their author's sentence.  
Often a father's exiled to a foreign shore,  
but his children are still allowed to live in the city.  
My poems were born of me, in the manner of [Pallas](#),  
without a mother: these are my blood-line, my children.  
I commend them to you, they who'll be a greater burden  
to you their guardian the longer they lack a father.  
Three of my offspring have caught my infection:  
let the rest of the flock be publicly in your care.  
There are also fifteen books of transmuted forms,  
verses snatched from their author's funeral rites.  
That work might have gained more certain fame  
from a final polish, if I'd not perished first,  
now it has reached peoples' lips un-revised,  
if anything of mine is on their lips.  
Add this something to my books, as well,  
this, that comes to you from a distant world.  
Whoever reads it - if anyone shall - let him first

remember the time and place that it was made.  
He'll be fair to writing that he knows  
was done in a time of exile, a barbarous place;  
and he'll be amazed I managed to persevere  
at verse at all, with sorrow's hand, in such adversity.  
My ills have weakened my talent, whose flow  
was scant before, and whose stream was meagre.  
But whatever it was, it has shrunk without nurture,  
and is lost, dried up, by a long neglect.  
I've no great supply of books here, to tempt  
and feed me: bows and armour rattle here instead.  
If I recite my verse, there's no one about,  
to ensure I receive an intelligent hearing:  
there's no secluded place. The guards on the wall,  
and closed gates keep out the hostile [Getae](#).  
I often search for a word, a name, a location,  
and there's no one I can ask, to be more certain.  
Often in trying to say something – shameful confession! –  
words fail me, and I've forgotten how to speak.  
[Thracian](#) and [Scythian](#) tongues sound round me,  
and I think I could almost write in [Getic](#) metres.  
Believe me, I'm afraid lest you read the words  
of [Pontus](#), in my writings, mixed with the Latin.  
So, whatever this book may be, think it worth your  
favour and pardon, given the nature of my fate.

### **The End of Tristia Book III**

## Tristia Book IV

### Book TIV.I:1-48 His Love of Poetry

Reader, if you find fault with my books, and you will,  
accept my excuse: this time when they were written.  
I'm an exile, and I looked for solace, not fame,  
lest my mind became too absorbed with misfortune.  
That's why the man in shackles, digging ditches,  
still eases his hard labour with unlearned song.  
And he who bows down to the sand and mud,  
dragging a slow barge against the current, sings:  
and he who draws flexed oars to his chest, together,  
striking a rhythm with his arms, as he beats the water.  
The tired shepherd, leaning on his crook, or sitting  
on a stone, soothes his flock with the reed pipe's tune.  
The slave girl, singing at her work, spinning the thread,  
diverts herself, and whiles away the hours of toil.  
They say that [Achilles](#), sad, when [Briseis](#) of Lyrnesus  
was stolen, eased his cares, with the [Thessalian](#) lyre.  
[Orpheus](#) mourned the wife twice lost to him,  
as he drew the trees and harsh rocks to his singing.  
The [Muse](#) helped me too, when I sailed to [Pontus](#)  
as ordered: she alone remained a friend to my flight:  
she alone was unafraid of ambush, or the blades  
of [Sintian](#) soldiers, storms, seas, and foreign shores.  
She knows too [the error](#) that misled me, when I was  
ruined,

that there was guilt, but not wickedness, in my actions.  
Surely she's good to me now because she harmed me  
before,  
when she was charged, with me, with a mutual crime.  
Since they were once destined to be dangerous,  
I might wish I'd never touched the [Pierian](#) rites.  
But what can I do, now? Their very power holds me,  
and, maddened, I love song, though song wounded me.  
So the strange lotus-flowers, [Odysseus](#)'s men tasted,  
gave pleasure by a flavour that did harm.  
Often a lover's aware of his own ruin, still he clings,  
chasing after the substance of his mistake.  
I too, I delight in books, though they harmed me,  
and I love the weapon that dealt my wound.  
Perhaps these studies might seem like madness,  
but the madness has a certain benefit.  
It stops the mind from always gazing at its woes,  
and makes it forget its present circumstance.  
Like a [Bacchante](#), possessed, feeling no wound,  
while the wild howling of the [Idaeon](#) rites numbs her,  
so, when my mind's inspired, stirred by the leafy [thyrsus](#),  
the spirit is lifted above mortal suffering.  
It feels no exile, no [Scythian](#) seashores,  
it's not aware of the angry gods.  
As if I were drinking soporific [Lethean](#) draughts,  
so the feeling of these hostile hours is absent.

## Book TIV.I:49-107 His Love of Poetry

So, it's right for me to revere the goddesses, who ease my  
ills,  
friends of my anxious flight, [Muses](#) of [Helicon](#),  
who now by sea and now by land, deigned to follow  
my traces, either aboard ship or on foot.  
I pray that they at least are good to me!  
Since the rest of the gods are of great Caesar's party,  
heaping as many as evils on me, as sand on the shore,  
fishes in the sea, or the very spawn of those same fish.  
You'd sooner count spring flowers, summer wheat,  
autumn fruit, or the wintry snowflakes,  
than the ills I endured, driven through the wide world,  
a wretch who sought the left-hand [Euxine](#) shore.  
But my evil fate's no easier since I arrived:  
misfortune has followed my track here too.  
Here too I recognise the threads spun at my birth,  
threads of a black fleece, twisted for me.  
To say nothing of ambush, or the risks to my life,  
real, but too serious for their reality to be believed,  
how wretched to be living among [Bessi](#) and [Getae](#),  
a man who was always there on people's lips!  
How wretched to defend my life, at gate and wall,  
scarcely protected by the strength of the place!  
[I avoided](#) harsh military contests when I was young,  
and only touched weapons with my hands in play:  
now I'm old I strap a sword to my side, a shield  
to my left arm, and place a helmet on my grey head.



When the lookout gives the signal for a raid  
from his tower, I quickly arm myself, my hands trembling.  
The enemy, with his bow, his arrows dipped in venom,  
circles the walls fiercely on his snorting steed:  
and as a ravening wolf carries off a sheep, outside  
the fold, and drags it through the woods and fields,  
so with anyone the barbarians find in the fields,  
who hasn't reached the protection of the gates:  
he either follows them, a captive, and accepts the chain  
round his neck, or dies by a venomous shaft.  
This is the anxious place, where I, a new colonist,  
am hidden away: ah, the lengthy days of my sentence!  
Yet still my Muse suffers me to return to poetry  
and the ancient rites, a guest despite misfortune.  
But there's no one to recite my verses to,  
none whose ears appreciate Latin words.  
I write, and read to myself – what else should I do?  
and my writing's safe in its own self-criticism.  
Still I often say: 'Who's it for, this careful labour?  
Will [Sarmatians](#) and [Getae](#) read my writings?'  
Often copious tears run down, too, as I write,  
the paper has been soaked by my weeping,  
and my heart feels the old wounds, like new,  
and the rain of sorrow trickles down my chest.  
When I think of what I am, and what I was, how fortune  
changes, from where to where my fate has carried me,  
often my hand, furiously, angered by its efforts,  
has hurled my verses into the fire, to burn.  
Since few of so many survived, see that you,

whoever you are, read them with forgiveness.  
And you too, Rome, denied me, take them  
in good part, songs no better than my fate.

## Book TIV.II:1-74 Tiberius's Triumph

Savage Germany, [defeated](#), may have already submitted,  
like the rest of the world, on bended knee, to the Caesars,  
and perhaps the high [Palatine](#) is clothed with garlands,  
and incense is crackling on the flames, staining the light,  
while dark blood spurts over the earth, from the throat  
of the bright sacrifice, struck by the axe-blow,  
the gifts promised to the temples of the benign gods,  
are being prepared for offering by both victorious [Caesars](#),  
and by young [Germanicus](#) and [Drusus](#), bearing that name,  
so that their house will rule the world for ever:  
and [Livia](#), with their fine wives, [Agrippina](#),  
and [Livilla](#), is offering gifts, as ever, for her son's safety,  
to the noble gods, and the women with her, and the sinless  
[Vestals](#), who serve the pure fires in eternal virginity:  
the loyal People, and the Senate with them, rejoice,  
and the knights, among whom I recently played my small  
part:  
but I miss the communal joy, I'm driven far away,  
and only faint rumour travels as far as this.  
So all the people will be able to watch the triumph,  
and read the names of leaders and captured towns,  
and see the captive kings with chains round their necks,  
marching in front of the garlanded horses,  
and behold some with down-turned faces, as is fitting,  
others, still terrible, indifferent to their fate.  
Some people will ask for histories, facts and names,  
others will answer, though they know little.

‘He, who shines on high in [Sidonian](#) purple,  
was leader in the war: this one next in command.  
That one now who fixes his wretched gaze on the ground,  
did not look so when he was carrying weapons.  
This fierce one, with hostile eyes still burning,  
was the instigator and planned the battles.  
That traitor, who hides his face in his shaggy hair,  
trapped our men in a treacherous place.  
They say the one who follows him was their priest,  
who sacrificed captives to their gods, gifts often refused.  
These floats: lakes, mountains, all the forts and rivers,  
filled with fierce slaughter, running with blood.  
[Drusus](#), the elder, once earned his name there,  
who was a fine son worthy of his father.  
This with broken horns badly covered with green sedge,  
is the [Rhine](#) himself discoloured with his blood.  
See even Germany is carried along with loosened hair,  
seated sorrowing at the feet of the undefeated leader.  
Offering her proud neck to the Roman axe  
she wears chains on the arms that carried weapons.’  
You’ll ride in the victory chariot, Caesar, high above,  
wearing purple for the people, according to custom,  
applauded by their clapping, all along the way,  
flowers falling everywhere to cover your route.  
Soldiers, their heads wreathed in [Apollo](#)’s laurel,  
will chant: ‘Hurrah, for the triumph’ in loud voices.  
Often you’ll see the four horses rearing at the noise  
of all the chanting, the applause, and the din.  
Then you’ll reach the citadel, and the shrines that favour

your prayers, and you'll offer the votive wreath to Jove.  
All this, I, the exile, will see with my mind, as I may:  
it still has a right to the place that was taken from me:  
it travels freely through immeasurable lands,  
and reaches the heavens on its swift way,  
leads my eyes into the middle of the city,  
not allowing them to lose so great a good:  
and my spirit will find a place to see the ivory car:  
and so for a short while I'll be in my native country.  
Yet the happy people will own the true spectacle,  
the joyful crowd will be there with their leader.  
And I will enjoy the fruits in imagination only,  
and far removed, in hearing, from it all,  
and there'll scarcely be anyone, sent so far from Italy  
to this distant world, to tell me what I long for.  
He'll tell of a late triumph, already out of date,  
still I'll be glad to hear of it, whenever.  
That day will come: I'll lay aside my gloom,  
and the public fate will outweigh the private.

## Book TIV.III:1-48 To His Wife: Death Would be Better

[Ursa Major](#) and Minor, one that guides the Greek  
the second [Phoenician](#) ships, both un-wet, since  
you see all from the heights of the northern pole,  
and never sink below the western waters,  
and your orbit, circling the celestial reaches  
stands clear of the earth it never touches,  
gaze at those walls that [Remus](#), [Ilia](#)'s son,  
leapt across, they say, to his undoing,  
and turn your bright face upon my lady,  
and tell me if she thinks of me or no.  
Ah, why should I fear? I seek what is clearly known.  
Why should my hope be mixed with anxious dread?  
Believe in what's as you wish, cease to doubt what's true,  
and have firm faith in that faith that's firm,  
and what the pole of the fixed fires cannot tell you,  
say to yourself in a voice that does not lie,  
she who's your greatest care, thinks of you,  
having with her all she has of you, your name.  
She clings to your features as if you were there,  
and if she lives, loves you, though far away.  
So, when her weary mind broods on her just grievance,  
does soft sleep leave her caring heart?  
Do cares rise, while you touch my place in the bed,  
that does not allow you to forget me,  
does anguish come, and the night seem endless,  
do the weary bones ache in your troubled body?  
I don't doubt these and other things occur,

that your love shows the marks of sorrow's pain,  
that you're tormented no less than [Andromache](#),  
seeing blood-stained [Hector](#) dragged by [Achilles](#)' chariot.  
I'm not sure what prayer to speak, I can't say  
what feelings I wish you to have in your mind.  
Are you sad? I'm troubled to be the cause of your grief:  
Not sad? I'd have you worthy of an exiled husband.  
Grieve truly for your loss, sweetest of wives,  
endure the sad season of our misfortune,  
weep for my fate: there's a release in weeping,  
grief is worked through, and relieved by tears.  
And I wish what you had to grieve for was my death  
and not my life, that you'd been left widowed, and alone!  
This spirit, with your help, would have issued out  
into its native air, loving tears would have wet my breast,  
my eyes, staring at the familiar sky, on my last day,  
would have been closed by your fingers,  
my ashes laid to rest in my ancestors' tomb,  
and the earth that bore me would have had my body:  
and, in short, I'd have been as sinless as I lived.  
Now my life is shamed by this punishment.

## Book TIV.III:49-84 To His Wife: He Asks For Her Help

I'm wretched if, when they call you an exile's wife,  
you turn your head away, and a blush comes to your  
cheeks!

I'm wretched, if you think it a disgrace to be married to  
me!

I'm wretched if you're ashamed to be mine!

Where is that time when you used to boast  
of your husband, and not hide his name?

Where is that time – unless you don't wish it recalled –  
when, I remember, you loved to be, and be called, mine?

Like a true woman you were pleased with my every gift,  
and your fond love added others to the real ones.

There were none you preferred – I seemed so great to you

—

no other man you wished for as a husband.

Don't be ashamed even now, that you married me:  
it should bring you grief, but never shame.

When reckless [Capaneus](#) died, at that sudden blow,  
did you read that [Evadne](#) blushed for her husband?

[Phaethon](#) was not abandoned by his sisters,  
because the [king](#) of the world quelled fire with fire.

[Semele](#) was not born of some other father than [Cadmus](#),  
because she was destroyed through her rash request.

Don't let the blush of shame redden your cheeks,  
because I've been struck by [Jupiter](#)'s fierce lightning.

But rise, in your faithfulness, to my defence, instead,  
be the example of a noble wife to me,



and drown a sad theme with your virtues:  
glory climbs the heights by dangerous paths.

Who would know of [Hector](#), if [Troy](#) had been happy?  
The road to virtue's paved with public ills.  
[Tiphys](#) the helmsman's art, is idle when the sea's calm:  
[Phoebus](#), your art of medicine is idle if men are well.  
The virtue that's hidden and remains unknown  
in good times, appears, asserts itself, in adversity.  
My fate grants you the opportunity for fame:  
now the loyalty you bear me can lift its head.  
Use this time, in which the chance is given,  
and the widest field lies open to your glory.

## Book TIV.IV:1-42 To [Messalinus](#): His Guilt

[O you](#), who are noble in ancestral titles,  
who outshine your tribe in nobility of character,  
whose mind mirrors your father's brilliance,  
yet does not lack a brilliance of its own,  
whose wit is eloquent in your father's tongue,  
bettered by no other in the Roman forum -  
little though I wish to do so, I address you  
with descriptions not names, forgive my praise of you.  
I've sinned in nothing: your known virtues betray you,  
and if what you are is revealed I'm free from blame.  
Nor does the tribute offered you by my verse  
have power to harm you, I think, with our just prince.  
The Father of the Country himself – and who is milder  
than him – tolerates being mentioned often in my verse,  
nor can he prevent it, since Caesar *is* the State,  
and a share of the common wealth is also mine.  
[Jupiter](#) adds his divinity to the poet's art,  
allowing himself to be glorified by every tongue.  
So your cause is safe, given these two deities,  
of whom one's seen to be, the other's thought, a god.  
Though I won't need to, I'll accept the blame,  
since this letter of mine wasn't prompted by you.  
And I commit no new offence in speaking to you,  
since I often spoke to you in happier days.  
Don't fear lest my friendship with you be a crime,  
if there's any harm its author can be blamed.  
I always honoured [your father](#) from my earliest days -

at least don't wish that fact to be concealed,  
and (you may remember) he approved my talent  
even more than, in my judgement, it deserved:  
he used to speak of my verse with that eloquence  
which was a part of his great nobility.  
If your house made me welcome, it was not you  
but your father before you was deceived.  
Yet, there was no deceit, believe me: and my life  
is worth defending in all its actions but the last.  
You would deny this fault too that ruined me  
is [a crime](#), if my sequence of ill luck was known to you.  
Either fear or error harmed me, above all error.  
Ah! Let me not remember my fate:  
Let me not touch and open those wounds  
that are not yet closed: rest itself will scarcely heal them.

## Book TIV.IV:43-88 To [Messalinus](#): His Sentence

So I'm rightly paying the penalty, but no  
act or stratagem is connected with my sin:  
this the god knows: so my life was not taken,  
nor my possessions appropriated by another.  
Perhaps, if I live, he might end this exile  
one day when time has softened his anger.  
For now I beg him to order me to another place,  
if my prayer is not without respect and humility.  
I pray for a milder place, a little nearer home,  
and one that's further from the savage enemy:  
and such is Augustus's clemency, if someone  
were to petition him for me, he might grant it.  
The frozen shores of the [Euxine](#), the 'hospitable', Sea  
hold me: called [Axenus](#), 'inhospitable', by men of old,  
since its waters are troubled by immoderate winds,  
and there are no quiet harbours for foreign ships.  
There are tribes round it, seeking plunder and mayhem,  
and the land's no less fearful than the hostile sea.  
Those you hear of, men delighting in human blood,  
live almost beneath the same starry sky as myself,  
and not far away from here is the dread [Tauric](#) altar  
of [Diana](#), goddess of the bow, stained with murder.  
They say this was once the kingdom of [Thoas](#),  
not envied by the evil, nor desired by the good.  
Here virgin [Iphigenia](#), for whom a deer was substituted,  
cared for the offerings, of whatever nature, to her goddess.  
Later, [Orestes](#) came here, either in piety or wickedness,

driven by the [Furies](#), his own conscience,  
and [Pylades](#) came, his friend, an example of true love:  
and they were a single mind in two bodies.  
They were brought straight to the sad altar  
that stood, blood-stained, before the double doors.  
yet neither of them feared death, but each  
grieved for the death that came to the other.  
The priestess had already taken her place, knife drawn,  
her Greek hair bound with barbarous sacred ribbons,  
when she recognised her brother by his speech,  
and Iphigenia gave him her embrace, not his death.  
Joyfully, she carried off the statue of the goddess  
who loathed those cruel rites, to a better home.  
Such is the region, nearly the earth's remotest,  
that men and gods shun, that's nearest mine:  
And near my land are those murderous rites,  
if a barbarian country can be Ovid's land.  
O let the winds, that carried Orestes home,  
fill my returning sails, and the god be appeased.

**Book TIV.V:1-34 To A Loyal Friend (Probably [Cotta](#))**

[O you](#) the foremost of my dear friends,  
who proved the sole altar for my fortunes,  
whose words of comfort revived this dying spirit,  
as the flame does at the touch of [Minerva](#)'s oil:  
you who loyally offered a safe harbour  
and a refuge to the ship blasted by lightning:  
through whose wealth I should not have wanted  
had Caesar stripped me of my inheritance,  
while force of feeling carries me on, forgetting myself,  
ah, how close I've come to revealing your name!  
You know it though, and, touched by desire for praise,  
wish you could say out loud: 'I am that man.'  
If you'd allow it, I'd certainly show you honour,  
and unite your rare loyalty with fame.  
But I fear my verse of thanks might harm you,  
an untimely honouring of your name might obstruct you.  
This you can do (and it's safe): delight in this inwardly,  
that I've remembered you and you've been loyal,  
and, as you have, bend your oars to bring me help,  
till there's a softer breeze and the god's appeased:  
and save a life that no one can save, unless  
he who drowned it lifts it from the [Stygian](#) depths:  
and do what is rare, devote yourself constantly  
to every act of undiminished friendship.  
So may your fortunes ever go forward,  
so may you need no help, and yet help your own:  
so may your wife equal her husband's endless kindness,

and your union meet with no complaints:  
and may that brother, who's of your blood,  
always love you, with the love of [Pollux](#) for [Castor](#):  
so may your young son be like you, and all  
recognise that he's yours by his character:  
so may your daughter's marriage-torch make you  
a father-in-law, and, soon, a grandfather, while you're  
young.

### **Book TIV.VI:1-50 Time Passing**

In time the ploughman's ox is made obedient to the  
plough,  
submitting its neck to the weight of the curving yoke:  
in time the fiery horse endures the pliant bridle,  
and takes the harsh bit in its gentle mouth:  
in time the rage of African lions is subdued,  
the fierceness they had is absent from their spirit:  
the Indian elephant, obeying its master's command,  
submits to servitude, conquered by time.  
Time makes the grapes swell on the burgeoning clusters,  
till they can barely hold the juice inside:  
time ripens the seed into white ears of wheat,  
and takes care that the fruits do not taste sour.  
It thins the ploughshare as it turns the soil,  
it wears away hard stone, and solid steel:  
it even softens fierce anger, little by little,  
it lessens sorrow, and eases the grieving heart.  
All can be lessened by time passing,



on its silent feet, except my troubles.  
Since I lost my native land, the threshing-floor's [twice](#)  
been  
smoothed for grain, the grapes twice trampled under naked  
feet.  
But the long space of time hasn't granted me patience,  
and my mind still feels the emotions of recent troubles.  
Indeed old bullocks often resist the yoke, it's true,  
and the horse that's broken-in often fights the bit.  
My current distress is harder than before: though still  
similar in nature, it's grown and deepened with time.  
My ills were not so well known to me as they are now:  
they weigh more heavily now I know them better.  
It's no little thing to apply powers still fresh to them,  
and not be exhausted beforehand by time's ills.  
The new wrestler, on the yellow sand, is stronger  
than the one whose arms are tired by long waiting.  
The unwounded gladiator, in shining armour, is better  
than the man with weapons stained by his own blood.  
A fresh built ship does well in a furious storm:  
even a little squall shatters an old one.  
I too once endured, what I now endure, more patiently:  
how my troubles have been multiplied by passing time!  
Believe me, I'm failing, and as far as I can see, given  
my bodily powers, there's little time left for these ills.  
I've neither the strength nor the colour I used to have:  
I've barely skin enough to cover my bones.  
My body's troubled, but my mind is worse,  
absorbed in contemplating its ills, endlessly.

The sight of the city's absent, my dear friends, absent,  
and my wife's absent, none dearer to me than her.

A mob of [Scythians](#) are present, crowds of trousered  
[Getae](#):

So what I can see, and what I can't see, moves me.  
There's only one hope that comforts me in all this,  
these troubles will not outlast my death.

## Book TIV.VII:1-26 Request for A Letter

The sun has twice drawn near me, after the icy winter cold,  
and twice completed his journey, [reaching Pisces](#).  
In all that time why hasn't your hand  
stirred itself to write me a few lines?  
Why has your loyalty ended, while those  
with whom I had little acquaintance have written?  
Why whenever I broke the seal on some letter  
have I hoped that it contained your name?  
The gods grant that you have indeed written, often,  
though not one letter has been delivered to me.  
I hope there's an obvious reason. I'd sooner believe  
that [Medusa](#)'s [Gorgon](#) face was wreathed in snaky hair,  
that virgin [Scylla](#) has dogs below her belly, that there's  
a [Chimaera](#), lioness and serpent segmented by fire,  
that there are four-hooved [Centaurs](#), with human breasts,  
three-bodied [Geryon](#), and triple-headed [Cerberus](#),  
[Sphinx](#), and [Harpies](#), and snake-footed [Giants](#),  
[Gyas](#) of the hundred hands, the [Minotaur](#), half man, half  
bull.  
I'd [rather believe](#) all this, than that you, [dearest friend](#),  
have changed, and abandoned your affection for me.  
There are innumerable mountains, between you and me,  
roads, and rivers, and plains and many seas.  
There are a thousand reasons why frequent letters,  
from you, should rarely reach my hands.  
But defeat those thousand reasons by writing often,

so I'm not always making excuses for you, my friend.

## Book TIV.VIII:1-52 The Onset of Age

My temples already take on the colour of swan's plumage,  
and white old age is bleaching my dark hair.

The years of frailty, and the inertia of age, already  
steal over me, and it's hard for me to endure my weakness.

Now's the time when, my labour ended,  
I should be living without troubling fears,  
to indulge in the leisure my mind always enjoyed,  
and to live at ease with my studies,  
keeping a humble house with its ancient [gods](#),  
and the fields I inherited, now lacking a master,  
growing old with my lady's devotion, dear friends,  
and at peace in my native country.

Youth once hoped for such a fulfilment:  
I deserved to spend my years like that.

The gods did not see it so, who have driven me  
over earth and sea, and landed me in [Sarmatia](#).

Shattered boats are drawn up in dry-dock,  
in case they fall apart in deep water.

The horse, that has won many races, grazes idly  
in the meadow, before he fails and dishonours his  
victories.

When the long-serving soldier is no longer useful  
he dedicates the weapons he carried to the ancient [Lares](#).

Since the slowness of old age is sapping my strength  
its time now for me to receive the gladiator's wooden  
sword.

It's time I no longer breathed foreign air,

or quenched my parched thirst at [Getic](#) fountains,  
but retired now to the sheltered gardens I owned,  
and enjoyed the sight of men, and the city, again.  
So, with a mind unaware of what the future would bring,  
I once prayed to be able to live peacefully when old,  
The Fates were hostile, bringing ease  
to my early years, pain to the later ones.  
Now after [half a century](#) without stain,  
I'm crushed, in the harshest years of life:  
not far from the winning post, I thought I'd reached,  
my chariot has been gravely wrecked.  
In my madness, did I drive him to hostile anger,  
the most gracious man in all the world?  
Has his mercy been quenched by my wrongdoings,  
yet my life has not been forfeit, for my error?  
I must spend it far from home, under the [Northern](#) pole,  
in the land to the sinister left of the [Euxine](#) Sea.  
If [Dodona](#) or [Delphi](#) itself had proclaimed it to me,  
both oracles would have seemed unbelievable.  
Nothing is strong enough, though bound with steel,  
to stand firm against [Jove](#)'s swift lightning:  
nothing's so high and reaches so far beyond danger,  
that it's not inferior, and subject, to a god.  
And [though I](#) brought a part of my trouble on myself,  
by my sin, I suffered more from the divine power's wrath.  
Be warned by my fate, too, to make yourselves worthy  
of that man who deserves to be equal to the gods.

## Book TIV.IX:1-32 To An Enemy

If it's right and you allow me, I'll keep your name  
and what you did quiet, consign the act to [Lethe](#)'s waters,  
and my clemency will be won by your late tears,  
if only you clearly have repented: if only  
you condemn yourself, and are eager to erase  
that moment of [Tisiphonean](#) madness from your life.  
If not, if your heart still burns with hatred for me,  
barren indignation will be driven to use its weapons.  
If I'm banished, as I am, to the edge of the earth,  
my anger will still reach out to you from here.  
If you don't know it, Caesar has left me all my rights,  
and my only [punishment](#) is to lose my country.  
My country: I even hope for that from him, if he lives:  
the oak blasted by [Jove](#)'s lightning often grows green  
again.  
And if I've no chance for revenge, in the end,  
the [Muses](#) will grant me strength and their weapons.  
Though I live far away on the shores of Scythia,  
with those stars visible that never touch the sea,  
my cry will go out to countless peoples,  
my complaint will be known throughout the world.  
What I relate will travel from sunrise to sunset,  
and the [East](#) bear witness to the [Western](#) voice.  
I'll be heard on land, and over the deep waters,  
and my lament will find a mighty voice in the future.  
It won't be your own age only, that will know it was you,  
you'll be guilty in the eyes of posterity forever.

I'm already charging, without raising my horns,  
and I wish I'd no reason to raise them at all.  
The [Circus](#) is still quiet: but the fierce bull scatters sand,  
and paws the earth, already, with its angry hoof.  
That too is more than I want. Sound the retreat, Muse,  
while that man's still able to hide his name.



## Book TIV.X:1-40 Ovid's Autobiography: Childhood, Boyhood

Listen Posterity, and find out who this 'I' was,  
this playful poet of tender passions you read.  
[Sulmo](#)'s my native place, rich in icy streams,  
and ninety miles distant from the City.  
There I was born: if you want to know [the date](#),  
it was when both Consuls died at Mutina.  
If it matters, I was heir to an ancient line,  
not a knight new-made by fortune's gift.  
I was not the first child: I'd an elder brother,  
who was born twelve months before me.  
The same [day](#) of the year saw both our birthdays:  
one day celebrated with both our offering of cakes,  
the first day stained with the blood of combat,  
in armed [Minerva](#)'s festival, the Quinquatrus.  
We began our education at a tender age, and, through  
our father's care, went to men distinguished in the city's  
arts.  
My brother tended towards oratory from his early years:  
he was born to the harsh weapons of the noisy forum:  
but even as a boy the heavenly rites delighted me,  
and the [Muse](#) was drawing me secretly to her work.  
My father often said: 'Why follow useless studies?'  
[Maeonian Homer](#) himself left no wealth behind.'  
Moved by his words, and leaving [Helicon](#) alone,  
I tried to write words that were free of metre.  
But verse came, of itself, in the right measures,

and whatever I tried to write was poetry.  
Meanwhile, as the silent-footed years slipped by,  
my brother and I assumed the freer adult *toga*:  
our shoulders carried the broad purple stripe,  
our studies remained what they were before.  
My brother had just doubled his first ten years of life,  
when he died, and I went on, part of myself lost.  
Still, I achieved tender youth's first honours,  
since at that time I was one of the *tresviri*.  
The Senate awaited me: I narrowed my purple stripe:  
it would have been an effort too great for my powers.  
I'd neither the strength of body, nor aptitude of mind  
for that vocation, and I shunned ambition's cares,  
and the [Aonian](#) Muses urged me on to seek  
that safe seclusion my tastes always loved.

## Book TIV.X:41-92 Ovid's Autobiography: Youth and Manhood

I cherished and cultivated the poets of those times,  
I thought the bards that existed so many gods.  
Often old [Macer](#) read to me about those birds of his,  
the snakes that harm you, and the herbs that heal.  
Often [Propertius](#) would tell about his passions,  
by right of that friendship by which we were united.  
[Ponticus](#), too, famous for epic, [Bassus](#) for iambics,  
were members of that mutual circle dear to me.  
And many-metered [Horace](#) captivated us,  
when he sang his polished songs to the [Italian](#) lyre.  
[Virgil](#) I only saw: and greedy fate granted  
[Tibullus](#) no time for my friendship.  
He came after you, [Gallus](#): [Propertius](#) after him:  
I was the fourth, after them, in order of time.  
And the younger poets cultivated me, as I the elder,  
since my Muse, [Thalia](#), was not slow to become known.  
When I first read my youthful efforts in public,  
my beard had only been shaved once or twice.  
She who was called [Corinna](#), by me, not her real name,  
she stirred my wit, she who was sung throughout the City.  
I wrote a good deal, but what I considered lacking  
I gave to the flames myself, for them to revise it.  
Even then, when I was leaving, I burnt certain things,  
that were pleasing, angry with my studies and my verse.  
Soft, and never safe from [Cupid](#)'s arrows,  
was my heart, that the slightest thing could move.

But though I was such, fired by the smallest spark,  
no scandal was associated with my name.  
I was given a worthless and useless wife when I was  
scarcely more than a boy: married to me for a brief while.  
A bride succeeded her, who, though she was blameless,  
was not destined to remain sharing my bed.  
Lastly she who remained with me till I was old,  
who's lived to be the bride of an exiled husband.  
My [daughter](#), twice a mother, by different husbands,  
when she was young, has made me a grandfather.  
And my father had already completed his fated time,  
after adding years to years till he was ninety.  
I wept for him as he would have wept for me  
if I had died. Next I bore my mother to her grave.  
Both lucky to have been buried at the right time,  
dying before the days of my punishment!  
And I'm fortunate my trouble wasn't while they lived,  
and that they never had to grieve for me!  
Yet if the dead are left something more than a name,  
if a slender ghost escapes the towering pyre,  
if news of me has reached you, spirits of my parents,  
and my guilt is proclaimed in the courts of [Styx](#),  
know, I beg you ( it would be a sin to deceive you)  
the cause of the exile decreed was an [error](#) not a crime.  
Let this suffice the shades: I turn again, to you,  
studious spirits, who wish to know the facts of my life.

## Book TIV.X:93-132 Ovid's Autobiography: Exile and Immortality

Already, white hairs had come, driving away  
my best years, flecking my ageing locks,  
and [ten times](#) since my birth, the victorious rider  
wreathed with olive, had carried off the [Olympic](#) prize,  
when a wounded prince's anger ordered me  
to [Tomis](#) on the left of the [Black Sea](#).

The [cause](#), too well known to all, of my ruin,  
is not to be revealed by any testimony of mine.  
Why tell of friends' wickedness and servants' harm?  
I suffered things no less evil than exile itself.

Yet my mind refused to succumb to misfortune,  
and proved invincible, relying on its own powers.

Forgetting myself and my life of leisure  
I grasped the unaccustomed weapons of that time:  
and I suffered as many troubles on sea or land  
as stars between the visible and hidden poles.

At length, driven through long wanderings, I reached  
that shore, where [Sarmatians](#) and [Getic](#) bowmen unite.

Here, though the noise of weapons surrounds me,  
I ease my sad fate with such song as I can.

Though there's no one to listen to me,  
still this is the way I pass, and deceive, the days.

So the fact that I live, and struggle against harsh suffering,  
not filled with weariness by the anxious days,  
is thanks to you, my [Muse](#): you grant me solace,  
you come as a rest from, and a cure for, care.

You are both guide and friend, who spirit me  
from the [Danube](#) to a place in the midst of [Helicon](#):  
you've given me, something rare, while still alive,  
the honoured name fame only grants us when we're dead.  
Nor has [Envy](#), that belittles present things,  
attacked any work of mine with malignant teeth.  
Though this age of ours has produced great poets,  
fame has not been unkind to my gifts,  
and though I set many above myself, people say  
I'm not inferior, and I'm the most widely read of all.  
So, [if there's truth](#) in poet's prophecies,  
I'll not be yours, earth, though I die today.  
Whether I've won fame through fashion or through  
poetry itself, it's right that I thank you, honest reader.

### **The End of Tristia Book IV**

## Tristia Book V

### Book TV.I:1-48 To The Reader: His Theme

Devoted reader, add this book, now, to the four  
that I've already sent from the [Getic](#) shore.  
This one too will be like its poet's fate:  
no sweetness will visit its whole song.  
As my state is mournful so is my verse,  
the writing's appropriate to the theme.  
Untouched and happy I toyed with youth  
and happiness, now I regret I wrote about them.  
Since I fell I've been the crier of sudden doom,  
and the author himself is his own theme.  
As the swans of [Cayster](#), they say, along its banks,  
mourn their own death with a fading cry,  
so I, exiled far off on the [Sarmatian](#) shore,  
take care my funeral will not pass in silence.  
If anyone seeks the delights of wanton verse,  
that's not what this writing is charged with.  
[Gallus](#) would be better, or smooth-tongued [Propertius](#),  
[Tibullus](#), with his winning nature, would be better.  
Ah, why was my [Muse](#) ever playful?  
But I pay the penalty, in [Scythian Danube](#)'s lands,  
the player with [Love](#)'s quiver is exiled.  
I've turned people's thoughts now to public verse,  
and instructed them to remember my name.  
And if any of you ask why I sing so many

sad things: I've suffered many sad things.  
I don't compose them with wit or skill,  
the content's inspired by its own misfortunes.  
And how little of this fate is in my poetry.  
Happy the man who can count his sufferings!  
As the forest's branches, as [Tiber](#)'s yellow sand,  
as the tender grasses in the [Field of Mars](#),  
so the ills I've suffered without cure, or rest,  
except in the study and practise of the [Muses](#).  
'What end will there be to these sad songs, Ovid,' you ask:  
the same end that there'll be to this misfortune.  
It feeds me from a full fountain, of complaint,  
nor are the words mine, they are my fate's.  
But if you restore me to my country, and my dear wife,  
my face will be joyful, I'll be what I was.  
If invincible Caesar's anger were milder to me,  
then I'd give you poetry filled with delight.  
But my verse will never play as it once played:  
enough that it once ran riot with my wit.  
If only a part of my sentence be reduced, I'll sing  
what he'll approve, free of fierce [Getae](#) and barbarism.  
Meanwhile what should my books be: but sad?  
Such is the piping that befits my funeral rites.



## Book TV.I:49-80 To The Reader: The Quality of His Work

‘But you’d endure your troubles better in silence,’  
you say, ‘by mutely concealing your situation.’  
Do you require torture without a cry:  
forbid tears when a deep wound’s been suffered?  
Even [Phalaris](#) let [Perillus](#), inside the bronze,  
bellow and moan through the bull’s mouth.  
Though [Priam](#)’s weeping did not offend [Achilles](#),  
do you, crueller than an enemy, prevent my tears?  
Though [Latona](#)’s children made [Niobe](#) childless,  
they still did not order that her cheeks be dry.  
To ease a deadly pain with words, is something:  
it created [Procne](#)’s and [Halcyone](#)’s lament.  
That was why [Philoctetes](#), son of Poeas, in his  
cold cave, wearied the [Lemnian](#) rocks with his cries.  
A grief suppressed chokes us, and seethes inside,  
multiplying its own strength under pressure.  
Reader, indulge me, or dispense with all  
my books, if what benefits me harms you.  
But it won’t harm you: my writings were never  
pernicious: hurt no one except their author.  
‘But it’s poor stuff.’ I admit it. Who forces you to read,  
or, if you feel cheated, stops you putting it aside?  
I don’t alter it, let it be read as written:  
it’s no more barbarous than this place.  
[Rome](#) should not compare me with her poets:  
it’s among the [Sarmatians](#) that I’m a talent.

In short, I don't seek glory, or that fame  
which is commonly the spur to genius: even so,  
I don't wish my mind to dissolve in endless cares,  
that break in upon me where they're forbidden.  
I've explained my writing. You ask why I send it?  
I wish to be with you, by any means I can.

## Book TV.II:1-44 To His Wife: A Complaint

When another letter reaches you from [Pontus](#),  
do you grow pale, open it with anxious fingers?  
Don't worry, I'm well: my body that was weak  
before, and unable to endure any effort, bears up,  
hardened by its own afflictions. Or is it more  
that I'm not granted the luxury of being unwell?  
Yet my mind's ill, it gains no strength from time,  
and the effect on my spirits remains what it was.  
The wounds I thought would close, in due course,  
hurt me as if they'd been freshly made.  
It's true: small troubles are lightened by the years:  
the pain of great ones increases with time.  
For ten years [Philoctetes](#) nursed the foul wound  
dealt him by that snake swollen with venom.  
[Telephus](#) would have died, wasted by unending sickness,  
if the hand that wounded him had not brought relief.  
If I've committed no crime, I pray the one  
who made my wounds, might ease what he's made.  
and satisfied at last by a measure of suffering,  
drain a little saltwater from this brimming sea.  
Though he takes much, much bitterness will remain,  
and a part of my sentence is as bad as the whole.  
As shells the sand, as flowers a rich rose-garden,  
as the host of seeds the soporific poppy owns,  
as creatures the forest shelters, or fishes that swim the  
waves,  
or the feathers with which a bird beats the gentle air,

so I'm burdened with sorrows: if I tried to count them,  
say I'd tried to number the water-drops in the [Icarian](#) Sea.  
To say nothing of the journey's danger, the bitter perils  
of the sea, or the hands raised against my person,  
a barbarous land holds me, the most alien in all  
the wide world, a place encircled by cruel enemies.  
Since my offence was bloodless, I could be transferred  
from here, if your love for me were as it ought to be.  
That god, in whom [Rome](#)'s power is rooted,  
was often merciful to his enemy in victory.  
Why hesitate, why fear what's harmless? Go, and ask him:  
the great globe has no one kinder than Caesar.  
Ah! What will I do, if those closest abandon me?  
Do you draw your neck from the shattered yoke as well?  
Where can I turn? Where seek solace for my weariness?  
Not a single anchor tethers my vessel now.  
Do it! Though I'm hated, I'll have recourse  
to the sacred altar: the altar rejects no one's hands.

## Book TV.II:45-79 His Prayer to Augustus

A distant suppliant, I address a distant god,  
if it's allowed for mortals to address [Jupiter](#).  
Imperial judge, through whom the security  
of all the gods of the [Roman](#) people is assured,  
O glory, O symbol of the country that prospers  
through you, O hero equal to that world you rule –  
so may you live on earth, and heaven long for you,  
so may you pass at length, as promised, to the stars –  
spare me, I beg of you, and reduce the lightning-bolt's  
effect a little! The punishment that's left will be enough.  
Indeed your anger *is* moderated, you grant me life,  
[I'm not](#) deprived of a citizen's name or rights,  
my possessions have not been given to others,  
I'm not called an '*exul*' by the terms of your decree.  
And I feared these things because I knew I'd earned them:  
yet your anger is lighter than my offence.  
You ordered me to view [Pontus](#)' fields as a '*relegatus*',  
cutting the [Scythian](#) waves in a fleeing vessel.  
As commanded, I've reached the featureless shores  
of the [Euxine](#) Sea – this land beneath the frozen pole –  
yet I'm not so much tormented by this weather, never  
free of cold, this soil always hardened by white frost,  
these barbarian tongues ignorant of the Latin language,  
this Greek speech submerged in the sounds of [Getic](#),  
as by the fact that I'm encircled, and shut in on all sides  
by nearby [conflict](#): a thin wall scarcely keeps the enemy  
out.

While there's peace at times, there's no reliance on peace:  
so the place now endures attack, and now fears it.

If only I could transfer from here, let Zanclean [Charybdis](#)  
swallow me, and send me down to [Styx](#) in her waves,  
or let me suffer the flames, in the fires of greedy [Etna](#),  
or be thrown in the ocean deep, offered to the [Leucadian](#)  
god.

What I ask is punishment: truly, I don't evade suffering,  
but I beg that I might suffer somewhere safer.

### **Book TV.III:1-58 His Prayer to the God Bacchus**

This is [the day](#), [Bacchus](#), that the poets are accustomed  
to celebrate you, if only I've not got the date wrong,  
wreathing scented garlands round their foreheads,  
and singing your praises to the wine you gave us.  
I remember how, while my fortunes still allowed it,  
I often took part, among them, and didn't displease you,  
I who am now subjected to the stars of the [Little Bear](#),  
held fast to the [Sarmatian](#) shore of the savage [Getae](#).  
I, who led a life of ease, free of labour,  
in my studies, among the [Pierian](#) choir,  
after many sufferings on sea and land, I'm surrounded  
by the noise of Getic weapons, and far from home.  
Whether chance or the anger of the gods caused it,  
or whether a dark [Fate](#) attended my birth,  
you, at least, with divine power, should have aided  
one of the worshippers of your sacred ivy.  
Or is it that what the Sisters, the Mistresses of Fate,

ordain is no longer wholly in the god's power?  
You yourself were admitted to the heavens, on merit,  
to which one makes one's way with no little toil.  
You did not live in your native land, but went  
all the way to snowy [Strymon](#), and the warlike Getae,  
to Persia, and the wide-flowing River [Ganges](#),  
and all the waters the dusky Indian drinks.  
This was the destiny for sure that the Parcae, who spun  
the fatal thread, twice ordained for you, at your double  
birth.  
I too, if it's right to take the gods as examples,  
am crushed by a difficult, an iron fate in life.  
I've fallen no less heavily than [Capaneus](#), whom [Jupiter](#)  
drove, for his pride, from [Thebes](#)' walls, with lightning.  
And when you heard a poet had been struck by fire,  
you might have remembered your mother, [Semele](#),  
and had sympathy, and gazing at the bards round your  
altar,  
have said: 'One of my worshippers is missing.'  
Help me, good [Liber](#): and may another vine burden the  
elm,  
and the grapes be filled with the imprisoned juice,  
may the [Bacchae](#) and the vigorous young [Satyrs](#)  
be here, and their cries of inspiration not be silent,  
may the bones of [Lycurgus](#) the axe-bearer be crushed,  
and [Pentheus](#)' impious shade never free of torment,  
may your [Ariadne](#)'s crown glitter brightly in the sky,  
and shine more brilliantly than the neighbouring stars:  
be here, and ease my fate, loveliest of the gods,

remembering that I am one of your own.  
The gods traffic between themselves. Bacchus,  
try to influence Caesar's power with your own.  
You too, loyal crowd of poets who share my studies,  
drink the neat wine, and make the same request.  
And one of you, mentioning Ovid's name,  
pledge him in a cup mixed with your own tears,  
and when you've gazed around you, say in memory  
of me: 'Where's Ovid, who was lately one of our choir?'  
This only if I've earned your approval by my honesty,  
and never a book's been wounded by my criticism:  
if, though I revere the noble writings of ancient men,  
I still think the recent ones to be worth no less.  
So, as you may make songs empowered by [Apollo](#),  
keep my name fresh among you, as is right.



## Book TV.IV:1-50 Letter To A True Friend

A letter of Ovid's, I come from the [Euxine](#) shore,  
wearied by the sea-lanes, wearied by the roads,  
to whom, weeping, he said: 'You, go look on Rome,  
who can do so. Ah, how much better your fate than mine!'   
He wrote me weeping, too, and he lifted the gem  
I was sealed with to his wet cheeks, first, not his lips.  
Whoever seeks to know the cause of his sadness,  
must need to have the sun pointed out to him,  
is unable to see the leaves in the woods, soft grass  
in the open meadow, or water in the overflowing river:  
he'll wonder why [Priam](#) grieved when [Hector](#) was taken,  
and why [Philoctetes](#) groaned at the serpent's bite.  
May the gods grant such circumstances for Ovid  
that he has no cause of sorrow to make him grieve!  
Yet he endures bitter trouble patiently, as he should,  
and doesn't shy at the bit like an unbroken horse.  
He hopes the god's anger won't last forever  
conscious there was no evil in his offence.  
Often he remembers how great the god's mercy is,  
accustomed, too, to treat himself as an example:  
[since he keeps](#) his family possessions, and the name  
of citizen, in short it's a gift of the god that he's alive.  
Yet [you](#) (oh, if you trust me in anything, dearer to him  
than all) you he keeps always in the depths of his heart.  
He calls you his [Patroclus](#): [Pylades](#) to his [Orestes](#):  
he calls you his [Theseus](#), and his [Euryalus](#).  
He misses his country and the many things

in his country whose absence he feels,  
no less than your face and eyes, O you, sweeter  
than the honey the [Attic](#) bee stores in the hive.  
Often he remembers, as he laments that time,  
grieving it was not prevented by his death,  
when others fled the contagion of his sudden downfall,  
unwilling to approach the threshold of a stricken house,  
remembers how you and a few others stayed loyal,  
if one might call two or three others a few.  
Though stunned, he was conscious of it all, that you  
grieved at his misfortune no less than he did.  
He often recalls your words, your face, your cries,  
and his own chest, soaked by your tears:  
how you supported him, with what help you consoled  
your friend, though you yourself needed comfort.  
Because of it he assures you he'll remember and be true,  
whether he sees the day, or is covered by the earth,  
swearing it on his own life, and on yours,  
that I know he holds no less dear than his own.  
Full thanks will be rendered for so many fine deeds:  
he'll not allow your oxen to plough the sands.  
Only do you, endlessly, protect the exile: what he  
who knows you well does not ask, I ask.

## Book TV.V:1-26 His Wife's Birthday: His Greeting

My wife's birthday, returning, demands its customary honour: my hands go perform affection's holy rites.  
So [Ulysses](#), the hero, at the ends of the earth perhaps, once spent *his* lady's day of celebration.  
Let that tongue be graced, forgetful of my troubles, that I think, by now, has unlearned propitious speech: and let me wear the clothes I wear only once a year, of shining white so different in colour to my fate: let them erect a green altar of grassy turf, and veil the warm hearth with a woven garland, Boy, give me incense that delivers a rich flame, and wine that hisses, poured on the sacred fire.  
Brightest of birthday spirits, so unlike my own, I beg you, though I'm far away, be radiantly here, and if any sad hurt threatens my lady, may it be annulled by my troubles: and may the vessel that was more than shaken by the recent storm, and survived, sail safely on.  
May she enjoy her home, her daughter and her country - enough that they've been snatched from me alone - and since she's not blessed with her dear husband, let the rest of her life be free of dark clouds.  
May she live, and love her husband, though forced to be parted from him, and, at length, fulfil her days. I'd add mine to hers, but I fear lest a contagion might spread from my fate to poison hers as well.

## Book TV.V:27-64 His Wife's Birthday: His Wish

Nothing's certain for humankind. Who'd have thought  
that I'd be performing these rites among the [Getae](#)?  
Yet see how the wind blows the smoke that rises  
from the altar towards Italy, and the fortunate lands.  
So there's meaning in the fumes the fire emits:  
[Pontus](#), they flee your skies with a purpose.  
Purposefully, when the joint offering's made  
on the altar, to [the brothers](#) who killed each other,  
the discordant ashes, as if at their command,  
separate darkly into two distinct heaps.  
I remember I once said it was impossible,  
and, in my opinion, [Callimachus](#) was mistaken:  
now I believe it implicitly, since you wise vapours  
turn from the [Bears](#) and search out Italy.  
So this is the day, and if it had not dawned  
there would have been no festive day for me.  
It engendered a character equal to those heroines,  
[Eetion](#)'s [Andromache](#), and [Icarius](#)'s [Penelope](#).  
On this day chastity was born, courage and loyalty,  
but no joys were born on this day, rather effort  
and trouble, a fate your character didn't deserve,  
and all too justified a complaint over your empty bed.  
Truly virtue schooled in adversity offers  
a theme for praise in the saddest times.  
If tough [Ulysses](#) had seen no misfortunes  
[Penelope](#) would have been happy not famous.  
If her husband, [Capaneus](#), had entered [Thebes](#) in triumph,

perhaps [Evadne](#) would have been unknown in her land.  
Though [Pelias](#) had many daughters, why's [Alcestis](#) well-  
known? Surely because she married the ill-starred  
[Admetus](#).

Let another have touched the sands of [Troy](#) first  
and there'd be no reason to remember [Laodamia](#).  
And your loyalty would be hidden, as you'd wish,  
if favourable winds failed my sails.

Yet, you gods, and Caesar, destined to be a god,  
but only when your days have equalled [Nestor](#)'s,  
spare her who grieves without deserving grief,  
not me, who confess I deserved your punishment.

## Book TV.VI:1-46 A Plea For Loyalty

Do you too, once the mainstay of my fortunes,  
who were my refuge, who were my harbour,  
do you too cease to care for the friend you protected,  
and shrug off duty's honest charge so speedily?  
I'm a burden, I confess, but you shouldn't have taken it  
up.

if you were going to drop it at a difficult time for me.  
Do you abandon ship, [Palinurus](#), in mid-ocean?  
Don't go: don't let your loyalty be less than your skill.  
Did [Automedon](#) lose faith and in the fierceness of battle  
did he abandon the horses of [Achilles](#)?

Once [Podalirius](#) had accepted a case, he never  
failed to bring the sick the help he'd promised.  
It's worse to eject a guest than not receive them:  
let the altar I can reach be steady in my hands.  
At first you were only saving me: but now  
support your judgement and myself as well,  
so long as there's no new fault to find in me,  
and my guilt's not suddenly altered your loyalty.  
This I wish, that my breath, that I breathe ill  
in the [Scythian](#) air, might leave my body,  
before your heart's wounded through my fault,  
and I seem to be rightly worth less to you.

I'm not so wholly crushed by fate's adversity  
that my mind's disturbed by my enduring troubles.  
But suppose it is disturbed, don't you think [Orestes](#)  
[Agamemnon](#)'s son, often cursed [Pylades](#)?

It's not far from the truth to say he struck him:  
yet his friend remained no less firm in his friendship.  
It's the one thing that links the wretched and the blessed,  
that it's usual to offer courtesy to both: we give way  
to the blind, and those for whom the purple stripe,  
and the *lictors'* rods and cries, [demand](#) reverence.  
If you won't consider me, you should consider my fate:  
there's no place for any indignation against me.  
Select the very least of all my woes, the smallest,  
and that will be greater than you would imagine.  
as many as the reeds that shroud the sodden ditches,  
as many as the bees that flowery [Hybla](#) knows,  
or the ants that carry the grains of wheat they find  
down little trails to their granaries underground,  
so dense is the crowd of evils that surrounds me.  
Believe me, what I complain of is less than the truth.  
Whoever's dissatisfied with them is one who'd add  
sand to the shore, wheat to the fields, water to the waves.  
So check the swell of anger, it's inappropriate,  
don't desert our ship in the midst of the sea.

## Book TV.VII:1-68 Among The Getae

The letter you're reading comes to you from that land  
where the wide [Danube](#) adds its waters to the sea.  
If you are still alive and have sweet health,  
one part of my fate retains its brightness.  
[Dearest](#) friend, you're doubtless asking yourself  
how I am, though you know, even if I'm silent.  
I'm miserable: that's a brief summary of my ills,  
and whoever lives on having offended Caesar, will be so.  
Are you interested to know what the people round [Tomis](#)  
are like, and the customs of those I live among?  
Though there's a mix of Greeks and [Getae](#) on this coast,  
it's characterised more by the barely civilised Getae.  
Great hordes of [Sarmatians](#) and Getae pass  
to and fro, along the trails, on horseback.  
There's not one among them who doesn't carry  
bow, quiver, and arrows pale yellow with viper's gall:  
Harsh voices, grim faces, the true image of [Mars](#),  
neither beard or hair trimmed, hands not slow  
to deal wounds with the ever-present knife  
that every barbarian carries, strapped to his side.  
Alas, dear friend, your poet is living among them,  
seeing them, hearing them, forgetting those he loves:  
and would he were not alive, and died among them,  
so that his shade might yet leave this hateful place.  
You write that my songs are being danced now  
to a crowded theatre, my verses applauded, dear friend,  
though [for my part](#) I've composed nothing for the theatre,



as you know yourself, my [Muse](#) isn't eager for applause.  
Still I'm not ungrateful for anything that prevents  
my being forgotten, and brings the exile's name to the  
lips.

Though I sometimes curse the poetry  
that has harmed me, and my [Muses](#),  
when I've cursed them at length, I still can't be without  
them,

I seek the weapons blood-stained from my wounds,  
and the Greek ship battered by the waves of [Euboea](#)  
dares to run the waters of Cape [Caphereus](#).

Yet I don't labour all night for the praise, or work  
for the sake of a future name that were better hidden.  
I occupy my mind with studies: beguile my sorrow,  
trying to deceive my cares with words.

What else can I do, alone on this desert strand,  
what other help for these ills should I try to find?  
If I look at the place, the place is hateful,  
and nothing could be sadder on this earth,  
if at the people, they barely deserve the name,  
they've more cruel savagery in them than wolves.  
They fear no law: justice yields to force,  
and right is overturned by the sword's aggression.  
They keep off the evils of cold with pelts  
and loose trousers, shaggy faces hidden in long hair.  
A few still retain vestiges of the Greek language,  
though even this the Getic pronunciation barbarises.  
There's not a single one of the population who might  
chance to utter a few words of Latin while speaking.

I, the Roman poet – forgive me, Muses! –  
am forced to speak Sarmatian for the most part.  
See, I'm ashamed to admit it, from long disuse,  
now, the Latin words scarcely even occur to me.  
I don't doubt there are more than a few barbarisms  
in this book: it's not the man's fault but this place.  
Yet, lest I lose the use of the Italian language,  
and my own voice be muted in its native tongue,  
I speak to myself, using forgotten phrases,  
and retrace the ill-fated symbols of my studies.  
So I drag out my life, and time, so I retreat from  
and banish the contemplation of my troubles.  
I seek forgetfulness of my misery in song:  
if I win that prize by my studies, it's enough.

## Book TV.VIII:1-38 Letter To An Enemy

Abject as I am, I've not fallen so low that  
I'm beneath you, whom nothing can be below.  
Shameless one, what stirs your animosity against me?  
Why exult in misfortunes you yourself might suffer?  
My troubles, which would make wild beasts weep,  
don't thaw you, or reconcile you to one who's down,  
nor do you fear the power of [Fortune](#)'s precarious wheel,  
nor the proud words that the goddess hates.  
Vengeful [Nemesis](#) exacts punishment on those  
who deserve it: why set foot where you trample on my  
fate?  
I saw a man who laughed at shipwrecks, drowned  
in the sea, and said: 'The waves were never more just.'  
He who once denied humble food to the poor  
now eats the bread of beggary himself.  
Fortune wanders, changeable, with uncertain footsteps,  
never remaining sure, nor fixed in the same place,  
now bringing happiness, now showing a bitter face,  
and only true in her inconstancy.  
I too flowered, but the flower was transient,  
my fire was a fire of straw, and was brief.  
Still, so cruel joy might not grip your soul complete,  
[my hope](#) of placating the god's not wholly dead,  
either on the grounds that I offended without crime,  
and my fault, not free of shame, is free of odium,  
or because the whole world from dawn to dusk  
contains no one more merciful than him it obeys.

Isn't it true, that, though no power conquers him,  
he has a tender heart for the prayers of the fearful,  
and, following the example of the gods he'll join,  
when he remits my sentence he'll grant other requests.  
If you count the sunny or cloudy days in a year,  
you'll find that it's more often been bright,  
so don't rejoice too much in my downfall,  
when you think that I too may be recalled:  
think, if the prince shows lenience, it may be  
you'll be saddened by seeing my face in the city,  
and I may see you exiled, with greater cause:  
after my first wish that's the next in turn.

## Book TV.IX:1-38 A Letter Of Thanks

Oh, if you'd let [your name](#) be set in my verse  
how often you'd have been set there by me!  
Remembering your help, I'd have sung only you,  
without you no page of my books would have been seen.  
What I owe to you would be known by the whole city:  
if I'm still read, as an exile, in the city I lost.  
Present times would be aware of your kindness,  
and future times, if only my writings endure,  
and wise readers would never cease to bless you:  
your honour, in rescuing a poet, would remain.  
Caesar's gift is supreme: that I breathe the air:  
it's you I need to thank, after the great gods.  
He gave life: you preserve what he gave,  
and make it possible to enjoy the gift received.  
When most men had a horror of my downfall,  
some even wishing it thought they'd feared it,  
and gazed at my shipwreck from a high hill,  
and gave no hand to the swimmer in wild seas,  
you alone dragged me, half-dead, from the waves.  
This too is your doing: that I'm able to remember.  
May Caesar and the gods always befriend you:  
no prayer of mine could be more heartfelt.  
If you allowed it, my work would set these things  
in the brightest of lights in eloquent books:  
even now my [Muse](#), though ordered to be silent,  
can scarcely hold back from naming you, against your  
wishes.

Like a hound that's scented the trail of a frightened deer,  
baying, and held in check by the strong leash,  
like an eager racehorse thudding on the unopened  
starting-gate, with its hooves, and even its brow,  
so my [Thalia](#), chained and imprisoned by your command,  
longs to pursue the glory of your forbidden name.  
But, so you're not harmed by the homage of a friend  
who remembers, I'll obey your orders – have no fear.  
I wouldn't obey if you didn't count on my remembering.  
What your voice doesn't forbid, I will be: grateful.  
While I see the light of life – oh, let the time be brief –  
my spirit will be a slave to that duty.

## Book TV.X:1-53 Harsh Exile In [Tomis](#)

[Three times](#) the [Danube](#)'s frozen with the cold, three times the [Black Sea](#)'s waves have hardened, since I've been in [Pontus](#).

Yet I seem to have been absent from my country already for as long as the ten years [Troy](#) knew the Greek host.

You'd think time stood still, it moves so slowly, and with lagging steps the year completes its course.

For me the summer solstice hardly lessens the nights, and winter can't make the days any shorter.

Surely nature's been altered, in my case, and makes all things as tedious as my cares.

Or is time running its course in the usual way, and it's more this period of my life that's hard?

I'm trapped by the shore of the [Euxine](#), that misnomer, and the truly sinister coast of the [Scythian](#) Sea.

Innumerable tribes round about threaten fierce war, and think it's a disgrace to exist without pillage.

Nowhere's safe outside: the hill itself's defended by fragile walls, and the ingenuity of its siting.

The enemy descends, when least expected, like birds, hardly seen before they're taking away their plunder.

Often when the gates are shut, inside, we gather arrows that fell in the middle of the streets.

So the man who dares to farm the fields is rare, one hand grips the plough, the other a weapon.

The shepherd plays his reed-pipe glued with pitch, under a helmet, and frightened sheep fear war not wolves.

We're scarcely protected by the fortress's shelter: and  
even  
the barbarous crowd inside, mixed with Greeks, inspire  
fear,  
for the barbarians live amongst us, without discrimination,  
and also occupy more than half the houses.  
Even if you don't fear them, you'd hate the sight  
of their sheepskins, their chests covered by their long hair.  
Those too, who are thought to descend from the Greek  
colony,  
wear Persian trousers instead of their ancestral clothing.  
They hold communication in the common tongue:  
I have to make myself understood by gestures.  
Here *I'm* the barbarian no one comprehends,  
the [Getae](#) laugh foolishly at my Latin words.  
and they often talk maliciously to my face,  
quite safely, taunting me perhaps for my exile.  
As is usual they think there's something wrong  
about my only nodding no or yes to what to they say.  
Add to all this that the sharp sword dispenses justice  
unjustly, and wounds are often dealt in the forum.  
Oh harsh [Lachesis](#), when I have such adverse stars,  
not to have granted a shorter thread to my life.  
That I'm deprived of the sight of my country, and of you,  
my friends: that I sing of existence among the [Scythian](#)  
tribes:  
both are a heavy punishment. However much I deserved  
exile



from the city, I didn't perhaps deserve to exist in such a place.

Madman! What am I saying? In offending Caesar's divine will, I also deserved to lose life itself.

## Book TV.XI:1-30 An Insult To His Wife

[Your](#) letter complains that someone has said  
that you're 'an exile's wife', by way of insult.  
I was aggrieved, not so much that my fate is spoken of  
with malice, I'm used to suffering pain bravely now,  
as to think that I'm a cause of shame to you, to whom  
I'd wish it least of all, and that you blushed at our ills.  
Endure, and be true: you've suffered much worse,  
when the Prince's anger tore me away from you.  
Still the one who called me 'exile' judges wrongly:  
a milder sentence punishes my fault.  
My worst punishment is having offended him,  
and I wish the hour of my death had come before.  
Still my ship was wrecked, but not drowned and sunk,  
and though deprived of harbour, it still floats.  
He didn't take my life, my wealth, my civil rights,  
though I deserved to lose them all by [my offence](#).  
But since no criminal act accompanied my sin,  
he only ordered I should leave my native hearth.  
Caesar's power proved lenient to me,  
as to others, whose number is immeasurable.  
He applied the word *relegatus* to me not *exul*:  
my case is sound because he judged it so.  
So my verses, rightly, sing your praises, Caesar,  
however good they are, to the best of their abilities:  
I beg the gods, rightly, to close the gates of heaven  
to you still, and will you to be a god, separate from them.  
So the people pray: and as rivers run to the deep ocean

so a stream runs too, with its meagre waters.  
And you, the one whose mouth calls me 'exile',  
stop burdening my fate with that lying name!

## Book TV.XII:1-68 Poetry In Exile

You write: I should lighten my sad hours with work,  
lest my thoughts vanish through shameful neglect.  
What you advise is hard, my friend, since songs  
are the product of joy, and need a mind at peace.  
My fortunes are blown about by hostile winds,  
and nothing could be sadder than my fate.  
You're urging [Priam](#) to dance at the death of his sons,  
and [Niobe](#), bereaved, to lead the festive chorus.  
You think poetry and not mourning should claim  
one ordered off alone to the distant [Getae](#)?  
Grant me a heart strengthened by the vigorous power  
they say [Socrates](#) had, who was accused by [Anytus](#),  
wisdom still falls crushed by the weight of such  
misfortune:  
a god's anger's more powerful than human strength.  
That ancient, called wise by [Apollo](#), would have had  
no more power to write in this situation.  
If I could forget my country, and forget you,  
if all sense of what I've lost should leave me,  
still fear itself denies me peace to perform the task,  
I live in a place encircled by countless enemies.  
And add to that, my imagination's dulled, harmed  
by long disuse, and much inferior to what it once was.  
A field that's not refreshed by constant ploughing  
will produce nothing but weeds and brambles.  
A horse that's stabled too long will race badly,  
and be last of those released from the starting-gate.

A boat will be weakened by rot, and gape with cracks,  
if it's separated from its accustomed waters too long.  
Give up hope for me, that little as I was before  
I can even become that man I was, once more.  
My talent's extinguished by long sufferance of ills,  
and nothing of my former strength remains.  
Yet if I take up a writing tablet, as I have now,  
and wish to set words on their proper feet,  
no verses are composed, or only such as you see,  
only worthy of their author's age and situation.  
Lastly, the thought of fame grants no small power  
to the mind: desire for praise makes for fertile thought.  
Once, while a following breeze drove my sails on,  
I was attracted by the glitter of celebrity and fame.  
Now things are not so good for me that I yearn for glory:  
if it were possible I'd wish no one to know of me.  
Or do you urge me to write because at first my verse  
went well, so as to follow up on my success?  
With your permission, [Muses](#), let me say: Sisters,  
the nine of you are the main cause of my exile.  
As [Perillus](#), who made the bronze bull, paid the price,  
so I'm paying the penalty for my art.  
I ought to have nothing more to do with verse,  
one shipwrecked I ought rightly to avoid all water.  
And if I were mad and tried the fatal art again,  
consider if this place equips me for song.  
There are no books here, no one to lend me an ear,  
or understand what my words signify.  
Everywhere's filled with barbarism, cries of beasts:

everywhere's filled with the fear of hostile sounds.  
I myself have already un-learned Latin, I think,  
now I've learnt to speak [Getic](#) and [Sarmatian](#).  
Yet still, to confess the truth to you, my Muse  
can't be prevented from composing poems.  
I write, and burn the books I've written in the fire:  
a few ashes are the outcome of my labours.  
I can't, and yet I long to, make some worthwhile verse:  
therefore my effort's thrown into the flames,  
and only fragments of any of my work,  
saved by chance or guile, ever reach you.  
If only my *Ars Amatoria*, that ruined [its author](#),  
who anticipated no such thing, had turned to ashes!

## Book TV.XIII:1-34 Ill, And Wishing For Letters

This 'Good health' Ovid sends you from [Getic](#) lands,  
if anyone can send what he lacks himself.  
Sick at heart I've drawn the sickness into my body,  
so no part of me might be free of torment,  
and for days I've been tortured by pains in my side:  
so winter's immoderate cold has harmed me.  
Yet if only you are well, I'm partly well:  
since my ruin was supported by your shoulders.  
Why, when you've given me such great proof of love,  
when you protect my life in every way,  
do you sin by rarely consoling me with a letter,  
offering the fact of loyalty, denying me the words?  
I beg you to alter that! If you corrected that one thing  
there'd be no flaw in your illustrious person.  
I'd accuse you more strongly, except it's possible  
a letter's been sent that's not reached me yet.  
The gods grant that my complaint's baseless,  
and I'm wrong in thinking you've forgotten me.  
It's clear what I pray for is so: since it's wrong for me  
to believe that the strength of your feelings should change.  
Sooner would pale wormwood be missing from icy  
[Pontus](#),  
or [Sicilian Hybla](#) lack its sweet-scented thyme,  
than anyone could convict you of forgetting a friend.  
The threads of my fate are not so dark as that.  
Still, beware of seeming what you're not, so you  
can refute these false accusations of guilt.

As we used to spend long hours in conversation,  
until the daylight failed us, while we talked,  
so letters now should bear our silent voices to and fro,  
and paper and hands perform the acts of tongues.  
Lest I seem too despairing of this ever being so,  
and may these few lines serve to remind you of it,  
accept that word with which a letter always ends –  
and may your fortunes be different from mine! – ‘Vale’.



## **Book TV.XIV:1-46 In Praise Of His Wife**

You see how great a monument I've reared  
to you in my books, [wife](#) dearer to me than myself.  
Though Fortune might detract from their author,  
you'll still be made glorious by my art:  
as long as I'm read, your virtue will be read,  
nor can you vanish utterly in the mournful pyre.  
Though your husband's fate might make you seem  
one to be pitied, you'll find those who'd wish to be  
what you are, who'd call you happy and envy you  
in that you share in our misfortunes.  
I'd not have given you more by giving you wealth:  
the rich take nothing to the ancestral shades.  
I've given you the fruits of immortal fame,  
and you possess a gift, the greatest I could give.  
Add that you're the sole custodian of my estate,  
a burden to you that comes with no little honour:  
that my voice is never silent about you, and you  
should be proud of your husband's testimony.  
Stand firm, so no one thinks it said thoughtlessly,  
support me and your faithful devotion equally.  
While I was untouched your virtue was free  
of vile accusations, and to that extent of reproach.  
Now a space is cleared for you, by our ruin:  
let your virtue build a house here for all to see.  
It's easy to be good when what prevents it is remote,  
and a wife has nothing that obstructs her duties.  
Not to avoid the clouds, when the god thunders,

that's loyalty indeed, that's wedded love.  
That virtue not governed by [Fortune](#) is truly rare,  
that which remains still standing, when she vanishes.  
Yet whenever virtue itself is the prize it seeks,  
and faces what's difficult, in less happy times,  
no age ignores it, though you add centuries,  
it's a subject for admiration, wherever Earth's paths  
extend.

Do you see how [Penelope](#)'s loyalty is praised  
through distant ages, with undying fame?

Do you see how [Alcestis](#), [Admetus](#)'s wife, is sung:  
[Hector](#)'s [Andromache](#): [Evadne](#) who dared the burning  
pyre?

How [Laodamia](#)'s name lives, wife to Phylacos' grandson  
[Protesilaus](#), whose swift foot first touched the [Trojan](#)  
shore?

You'd be no help to me dead, rather loving and loyal,  
here:

you don't need to search for fame through suffering.

And don't think I'm admonishing you, for inaction:

I'm raising sail on a ship that's already under oars.

Who tells you to do what you're already doing, praises  
your actions, in telling, and approves them by his urging.

## **The End of Tristia Book V**

## Ex Ponto Book I

*‘quid tibi cum Ponto?  
what have you to do with Pontus?’*  
Tristia III.XIII:11

## Book EI.I:1-36 To Brutus: The Nature of His Book

Ovid sends you this work from the [Getic](#) shore:  
he's no stranger already to the land of [Tomis](#).  
[Brutus](#), if you've time, welcome these foreign books  
with friendship: but hide them somewhere, anywhere.  
They don't dare go entering a public library,  
in case their author's closed the doors to them.  
Ah, the times I've said: '*You* teach nothing shameful:  
go, the place is open to your chaste verses!'  
They still won't go, but as you see they think  
it's safer to lie hidden in a private [household](#).  
You'd like to know where to put them, without harming  
anyone? Where my *Ars Amatoria* stood, there's your  
place.  
Perhaps you'll ask why they come, while they're a  
novelty.  
Whatever the reason, accept them, so long as it's not for  
love!  
You'll find, though the title's not about anything sad,  
this book's no less sad than the ones that went before.  
Same theme, different title: and each letter shows  
whom it was sent to without hiding the name.  
You don't like it, but you can't prevent it:  
my obliging [Muse](#) comes against your will.  
Whatever it is, add it to my works. Nothing stops  
an exile's children enjoying the city if they keep the law.

There's nothing to fear. [Antony](#)'s writings are read,  
and [Marcus Brutus](#), the learned, has shelves waiting.  
I'm not so foolish as to compare myself with such men:  
still, *I've* not employed fierce weapons against the gods,  
In short Caesar, though he doesn't need it himself,  
lacks no honour in any book of mine.  
If you're dubious about me, admit praise of a god,  
and accept my poetry after removing the name.  
The peaceful olive branch is helpful in wartime:  
is it not beneficial to contain the creator of peace?  
When [Aeneas](#) carried [his father](#) on his shoulders,  
they say the very flames made way for the hero:  
so won't all paths open to a book bearing [Aeneas's scion](#)?  
Indeed one's father of a country, the other only of a hero.

## Book EI.I:37-80 To Brutus: His Prayer

Is there anyone brave enough to drive from his threshold  
one who shakes [Isis](#)'s rattling *sistrum* of [Pharos](#) in his  
hand?

When the flute-player, before [Cybele](#), Mother of the gods,  
sounds the curved horn, who grudges him a few coppers  
as alms?

No such thing, we know, is done at [Diana](#)'s command,  
yet her prophet too still gains the means to live.

The power of the divine being itself stirs our hearts:

there's nothing shameful in being caught by credulity.

Behold, instead of the *sistrum* or [Phrygian](#) boxwood pipe,  
I come bearing the sacred names of the [Julian race](#).

I celebrate, I prophesy. Make way for the bearer of holy  
symbols!

The right's not claimed by me, but by a mighty god.

Because I've earned and experienced the prince's anger,  
don't think I'd not wish, for my part, to worship him.

I've seen one who confessed to outraging the divinity  
of linen-robed [Isis](#) kneeling before Isis's altar.

Another, robbed of sight for a similar reason,  
shouted, through the streets, that he'd deserved it.

The gods delight in instances of such testimony,  
since they, thereby, give witness of their powers.

They often ease punishments and restore the sight  
they've taken, when they see true penitence for sin.

Oh, I repent! If anything the wretched say's believed,  
I repent, and feel the real torment of my actions.

Though exile is grief, my offence is more so:  
and deserving punishment's worse than suffering it.  
If the gods favoured me, and he most visible of them  
should annul my sentence, the fault still exists forever.  
At least death will make me, when it comes, no longer an  
exile:  
but death can't arrange things so I never offended either.  
So it's no wonder if my mind's decaying,  
melting like water dripping from the snow.  
It's gnawed at as a ship's weakened by hidden molluscs:  
as waves of salt water carve away the cliffs:  
as heaps of iron are eaten by corroding rust:  
as a shelved book feeds the worm's mouth,  
so my heart feels the constant bite of care,  
which will never make an end. Not before  
life itself will these pangs leave my mind:  
he who grieves will die sooner than the grief.  
If the gods above, whose I am, believe me,  
perhaps I'll be thought worthy of a little help,  
and be sent to a place free of the [Scythian](#) bows.  
If I asked for more, it would be sheer effrontery.

## Book EI.II:1-52 To Paullus Fabius Maximus: His Life In Exile

[Maximus](#), you who fill the measure of so great a name,  
and match your ancestry with your own nobility of spirit,  
in order to secure whose birth not all the Fabii  
were killed that day when the three hundred fell,  
perhaps you're asking who sent you this letter,  
wishing to be surer of who speaks to you.

Ah, what should I do? I fear you'll be hardened on seeing  
the name, and you'll read what's left with a hostile mind.  
You be the judge. I'll dare to confess I've written to you  
(*..in the hope that you might be able to lessen my ills....?*)

I, who, though admittedly deserving of a heavier  
punishment, can scarcely experience a heavier one.

I live among enemies, surrounded with dangers,  
as if peace was taken from me with my native land:  
they double the chance of death from a cruel wound,  
by smearing every arrow-head with viper's gall.

Equipped so, the horseman circles our anxious walls,  
in the same way that a wolf circles the penned sheep:  
and once that light bow's strung with horse's sinew  
it remains taut, held by its fastenings, forever.

The rooftops bristle, covered by the coating of arrows  
fixed there, and the heavy-barred gate hardly prevents  
attack.

Add that the face of the land, is covered with neither  
shrubs

nor trees, and that lifeless winter merges into winter.



Here a [fourth](#) winter wearies me, contending as I am  
with cold, with arrows, and with my own fate.  
My tears are endless, unless numbness checks them:  
and a lethargy like death grips my thoughts.  
Though she saw so many deaths, [Niobe](#) was happy,  
losing her sense of feeling, turned to stone by her sorrows!  
And you, [Phaethon](#)'s sisters, whose mouths the poplar  
closed with fresh bark, as you cried over your brother!  
I'm one not allowed to enter any kind of tree:  
I'm one who wishes in vain to become stone.  
Let [Medusa](#) herself appear before my eyes,  
Medusa herself will lose all her power.  
In living I never lose the bitterness of sensation,  
and my punishment's worse for its long duration.  
So [Tityus's](#) liver, never consumed, is always whole,  
renewed so that it can perish again, forever.  
I imagine, when rest and sleep, care's common healer,  
are here, that night might be free of my usual ills.  
But dreams that imitate real dangers terrify me,  
and my senses wake to my own torment.  
Either I believe myself dodging [Sarmatian](#) arrows,  
or offering my hands, captive, to the cruel chains.  
Or when I'm deceived by the semblance of kinder dreams,  
I see the roofs of the homeland I've left behind.  
And sometimes I speak with you, honoured friends,  
and sometimes, at length, with my beloved wife.  
So, when I've known this brief and unreal joy,  
remembering the happiness, my state is worse.

## Book EI.II:53-100 To Paullus Fabius Maximus: His Need

Whether day gazes on this wretched life,  
or whether [Night](#) urges on her frosty horses,  
my heart melts with its unending sorrow,  
as fresh wax does too near the flames.  
I often pray for death, yet un-pray that same death,  
lest [Sarmatian](#) soil should cover my bones.  
When I think how merciful Augustus is, I believe  
a kindlier shore might be granted to my shipwreck.  
When I see the enduring nature of my fate, I weaken,  
and slight hope subsides, conquered by great fear.  
Yet I neither hope nor pray for anything other  
than, by exchange of ills, to be free to leave this place.  
It's that, and nothing else, your favour can modestly  
attempt  
for me, and still preserve your reputation.  
[Maximus](#), chief eloquence of the [Roman](#) language,  
in mercy, take up the advocacy of this difficult case.  
A bad one, I admit, but it will become a good one  
if you take it, just speak kind words for a wretched exile.  
For Caesar doesn't know, though a god knows all,  
what state this isolated place is in.  
The great burden of public affairs occupies his powers:  
this is too small a matter for his celestial mind.  
He's not free to enquire about the region that holds [Tomis](#),  
a place scarcely known to the neighbouring [Getae](#),  
or what the [Sarmatians](#) are up to, or the fierce [Iazyges](#),

and the [Tauric](#) land guarded by the [Oresteian goddess](#),  
or the other tribes that when [Danube](#)'s frozen with ice  
ride over the solid spine of the river on their swift horses.  
For the most part, glorious Rome, these people neither  
care  
about you, nor fear the weapons of [Italian](#) soldiers.  
Bows and full quivers supply them with courage,  
and their horses, capable of long journeys,  
and knowing how to endure days of hunger and thirst,  
and that the pursuing enemy will have no access to water.  
The anger of a merciful man wouldn't have sent me here,  
if this territory had been well enough known to him.  
He wouldn't delight in me, or any Roman, being taken  
by the enemy, I least of all to whom he himself granted  
life.  
He didn't choose to destroy me as he might, at the  
slightest nod.  
There's no need of any Getae to bring about my death.  
But he found [no reason](#) for my death in any of my actions,  
and it's possible he's less hostile to me than he was.  
Even then he did nothing I didn't compel him to do:  
his anger even stops short of what I deserve.  
So may the gods, of whom he himself is the most just,  
cause kindly earth to create nothing greater than Caesar,  
and as it has been under his rule, may the earth stay under  
a Caesar, passed on through the hands of his race.

## **Book EI.II:101-150 To Paullus Fabius Maximus: His Request**

Now, open your lips on behalf of my sorrows,  
whenever the judge is as mild as I too found him.  
Don't ask for my happiness, but for me to be safer  
in my misery: exiled further from savage enemies:  
that some rough [Getan](#) with his naked sword  
shouldn't take the life granted me by a living god:  
in short, that if I die, I might be buried in a gentler land,  
and my bones not be covered by [Scythian](#) earth,  
nor my ashes, ill-interred, as no doubt an exile deserves,  
be trampled under [Thracian](#) horses' hooves,  
nor, if there's any consciousness beyond the grave,  
even a shadow of [Sarmatia](#), terrify my ghost.  
This might move Caesar's spirit if he heard it  
[Maximus](#), yet only if it has first moved yours.  
Let your voice, I pray, arouse mercy in Augustus's ear,  
since it often brings help to anxious defendants,  
and with your learned tongue's accustomed sweetness  
move the heart of a hero who must be treated as a god.  
You'll appeal, not to [Theromedon](#), or savage [Atreus](#),  
or King [Diomedes](#) who made men food for horses,  
but to a prince who's slow to punish, swift to reward,  
who grieves whenever he's compelled to be harsh,  
who conquers only that he might spare the conquered,  
who's placed an eternal bar on civil war, who rules  
many things by fear of punishment, few by punishing,  
and hurls his rare lightning with an unwilling hand.

So then, being sent as advocate to such a merciful hearing,  
ask that my place of exile might be nearer home.  
I'm he who honoured you, whose presence the dinner  
table used to give witness to among your guests:  
I'm he who brought [Hymen](#) to your wedding torches,  
and sang verses worthy of your blest marriage bed,  
whose books you used to praise, as I remember,  
except the ones that have harmed their author,  
who admired the writings you sometimes read me:  
I'm he who was granted [a bride](#) from your house.  
[Marcia](#) approved of her, always loved her from  
her earliest years, counted her among her companions,  
and her mother [Atia](#), Caesar's aunt, so regarded her  
before: anyone approved by that court, is approved.  
Even that [Claudia](#), purer than her own reputation,  
would have needed no divine aid, if praised by them.  
I too lived years that are gone without a stain:  
though my recent life must be passed over in silence.  
But if I'm silent about myself, my wife's your charge:  
you can't ignore her and still keep the faith.  
She flies to you for refuge, and embraces your altar,  
- rightly each comes to the god they honour - and begs,  
with tears, that you might soften Caesar with your prayers,  
so her husband's funeral might take place nearer home.

## Book EI.III:1-48 To Rufinus: Yearning For Rome

[Rufinus](#), your friend Ovid sends you this greeting,  
if one who's wretched can be anyone's friend.  
The solace you've lately granted my troubled mind  
brought help and hope to my ills. As [Philoctetes](#)  
the Poeantian hero, thanks to [Machaon](#)'s skill,  
felt the healing power ease his wound,  
So I, low in spirits, wounded by a bitter blow,  
began to gather strength again from your advice  
and, though fading, was revived by your words,  
as the pulse recovers when wine's administered.  
But your eloquence was not so powerful  
that my heart could be healed by your words.  
You could reduce the whirlpool of my cares  
yet no less than you took away still remains.  
Perhaps a scar will form in sufficient time:  
the raw wound quivers at the touch of a hand.  
The doctor can't always cure the patient:  
at times the illness is beyond his skill.  
You see how the blood expelled by a weak lung  
points the sure way to the waters of the [Styx](#).  
Let [Aesculapius](#) himself bring sacred herbs,  
he'll not cure a wound in the heart.  
Medicine can't remove the crippling effects of gout,  
or bring any relief for the horrors of dropsy.  
Sorrow too at times isn't curable by skill –  
or, if it is, it has to be erased by passing time.  
When your advice has strengthened my low spirits,

when I've adopted your mind's defences,  
then love of my country, stronger than all reason,  
undoes the work your letters have achieved.  
Whether you wish to call it love or unmanly tenderness,  
I confess my strength of mind is weakened by misery.  
No one doubts [Ulysses](#)' worldly wisdom, but even he  
prayed  
that he might see the smoke of his ancestral hearth again.  
Our native soil draws all of us, by I know not  
what sweetness, and never allows us to forget.  
Where's better than [Rome](#)? Where's worse than cold  
[Scythia](#)?  
Yet the homesick barbarian will still flee the City.  
Though [Pandion](#)'s daughter is fine, shut in her cage,  
she yearns to return to her woodlands.  
Bulls seek the pastures they know, and lions –  
despite their wild natures – seek their lairs.  
Yet you hope, by your palliatives, to remove  
the pangs of exile from my mind.  
Ensure that you and yours are not so dear to me,  
then it will be that much less painful to miss you.  
And, I suppose, though I'm distant from my native land  
I've still managed to end among human society.

## Book EI.III:49-94 To Rufinus: The Exile List

I'm here, abandoned, on the furthest shores of the world,  
where the buried earth carries perpetual snowfall.  
No fields bear fruit, or sweet grapes, here,  
no willows green the banks, no oaks the hills.  
Nor can you celebrate the sea rather than the land,  
the sunless waters ever heaving with the winds' madness.  
Wherever you look are uncultivated levels,  
and the vast plains that no one owns.  
A dreadful enemy's near to left and right,  
terrifying us on all sides with fear of our neighbours.  
One side expects to feel the [Bistonian](#) spears,  
the other arrows from [Sarmatian](#) hands.  
So quote the example of ancient heroes to me,  
ones who endured their fate with firm minds.  
Admire the deep fortitude of great-hearted [Rutilius](#),  
who refused the offered terms of repatriation.  
[Smyrna](#) held that hero, not [Pontus](#) a hostile land,  
hardly anywhere's more sought after than Smyrna.  
[Diogenes](#), the Cynic, didn't grieve, far from [Sinope](#),  
since he found a home in the land of [Attica](#).  
[Themistocles](#), who beat the Persians, weapon  
for weapon, first knew exile in the city of Argos.  
[Aristides](#), driven from his country, fled to Sparta:  
of the two places it's uncertain which was best.  
[Patroclus](#) left [Opus](#), when young, having killed a man,  
and became [Achilles](#)' guest on [Thessalian](#) soil.  
[Jason](#), under whose leadership the sacred ship sailed



[Colchian](#) waters, was exiled from [Haemonia](#) to [Pirene](#)'s spring,

[Agenor](#)'s son [Cadmus](#) left the walls of [Sidon](#) to found a city, [Thebes](#), in a better place.

[Tydeus](#) exiled from [Calydon](#), came to [Adrastus](#),

[Teucer](#) was welcomed by [Venus](#)'s beloved Cyprus.

Why tell of the ancient Romans, whose furthest place of exile was only [Tibur](#)?

Though I list them all, no one in any age has every been given a worse place, so far from home.

So let your wisdom forgive one who grieves: though he carries out so little of what you tell him.

Yet I don't deny if my wounds were curable they'd be able to be cured through your advice.

I'm afraid you're trying to save me in vain: the help you bring won't aid my desperate sickness.

And I don't say so because I'm the wiser of us two, it's that I know myself better than any doctor can.

Be that as it may, your kindness comes to me as a great gift, and I'm well counselled by it.

## **Book EI.IV:1-58 To His Wife: Time Passing**

Now the decline of life is on me, whitening my hair,  
now the wrinkles of age are furrowing my face:  
now strength and vigour ebb in my weakened body,  
the games of youth that pleased, no longer delight.  
If you suddenly saw me, you wouldn't know me,  
such is the ruin that's been made of my life.  
I admit the years have done it, but there's another cause,  
my anguish of spirit and my continual suffering.  
And if my ills had been spread over as many years  
believe me, I'd be older than [Pylian Nestor](#).  
You know how the sturdy oxen are broken in body  
by the stubborn earth – and what's stronger than an ox?  
The soil that's never allowed to lie fallow  
decays, wearied by endless production.  
The horse that enters every race in the [Circus](#)  
without a break in competition, will fall.  
Strong though it may be, the ship that's never hauled  
from fresh water to dry-dock will founder in the waves.  
I'm weakened too by an endless series of woes,  
and am forced to be old before my time.  
Leisure nourishes the body, the mind's fed by it as well:  
excessive labour works against them both.  
Look what praise [Jason](#), the son of [Aeson](#), receives  
from later ages because he came to this region.  
Yet his toil was less and lighter than mine,  
if great fame didn't merely hide the truth.  
He headed for [Pontus](#), sent there by [Pelias](#),

who was scarcely feared beyond [Thessaly](#)'s border.  
Caesar's anger harmed me, at whom earth trembles  
from the sun's rising to its setting, both.  
Thessaly's nearer Pontus than Rome the [Danube](#)'s mouth,  
and he travelled a shorter distance than I did.  
He had Greek leaders as companions,  
but I was separated from all in my flight.  
I ploughed the vast seas in a fragile boat:  
it was a solid ship that carried [Aeson](#)'s son.  
I had no [Tiphys](#) as helmsman, no son of [Agenor](#),  
[Phineus](#), to teach what routes to follow or avoid.  
He was protected by [Pallas](#) and royal [Juno](#):  
no divine powers defended my life.  
He was aided by [Cupid](#)'s cunning arts:  
I wish [Amor](#) had not learnt them from me.  
He returned home: I'll die in this land,  
if the heavy wrath of an injured god endures.  
No doubt you've aged too because of our troubles,  
you who were still young when I left the city.  
O let the gods grant me to see you so,  
and set fond kisses on your altered hair,  
and, clasping your slight body in my arms,  
say: 'It's love for me that's made you thin,'  
and tear for tear tell you of my sufferings,  
enjoying the speech together I never expected,  
and offering that incense, with grateful hand, due  
to the [Caesars](#) and [the wife](#) worthy of a Caesar!  
Would that the [Dawn](#), [Memnon](#)'s mother, with rosy lips  
might soon call forth the day when the Prince relents!

## Book EI.V:1-42 To Cotta Maximus: The Compulsion To Write

Ovid, who once was not the least of your friends  
asks you to read his words to you, [Maximus](#).  
Don't look to find my genius in them,  
lest you appear ignorant of my exile.  
You see how laziness spoils an idle body,  
how water acquires a tang unless its flowing.  
Whatever skill I had in making poetry  
fails me, too, diminished by idle neglect.  
Maximus, if you believe me, this too that you read,  
I write while barely forcing it from an unwilling hand.  
There's no delight in setting the mind to such things,  
nor does the [Muse](#) come to the harsh [Getae](#) when called.  
Yet I'm struggling to weave verses, as you see:  
though it's no easier than my fate.  
When I read it, I'm ashamed of what I've written,  
since I see what I who wrote it think should be erased.  
Still I don't alter it. It's a greater effort than writing,  
and my fragile mind can't bear anything onerous.  
Should I start to use the file more bitingly,  
and summon every single word to judgement?  
Is fate not tormenting me enough unless I make [Lixus](#)  
flow into [Hebrus](#), and [Athos](#) add leaves to the Alps?  
The spirit with a miserable wound should be spared.  
Oxen draw back their sore necks from the load.  
But suppose there's a reward, the best reason for effort,  
and the field returns the seed with profit?

So far no work of mine, you can list them all,  
has profited me – I wish none had harmed me!  
Why do I write then, you wonder? I wonder too,  
and often ask like you what I seek in it.  
Or do people say truly that poets are not sane,  
and am I the greatest proof of what they say,  
I who persist in sowing my seed in poisonous ground  
though deceived so many times by barren soil?  
The fact is everyone's eager for their own pursuits,  
and delight in spending time on their favourite art.  
The wounded gladiator swears off fighting, then  
lifts the same weapons, forgetting his old wound.  
The shipwrecked sailor says: 'No more of those waves',  
then takes oar in waters where, just now, he swam.  
I too serve a useless pastime constantly,  
and revisit the [goddesses](#) I wish I'd never worshipped.

## Book EI.V:43- 86 To Cotta Maximus: The Use Of Writing

What else should I do? I'm not one to lead a life  
of idleness: wasted time's like death to me.  
I don't enjoy lying drugged with excess drink, till dawn,  
and the lure of the dice doesn't grip my luckless hands.  
When I've granted the time my body needs for sleep  
how should I spend the long hours of wakefulness?  
Shall I forget the ways of my country and, drawn  
to the skills here, learn to bend the [Sarmatian](#) bow?  
My powers prevent me taking up that pastime, too,  
since my mind is stronger than my slight body.  
When you've thought deeply about what I should do,  
you'll find nothing more useful than this useless art.  
Through it I win forgetfulness of my state:  
that's harvest enough if my soil can grow it.  
Fame may spur you on, you, intent on the [Pierian](#) choir  
so that the poems you read might gain acceptance.  
It's enough if I compose what comes easily,  
I lack the motive for too intense a labour.  
Why should I polish my verse with anxious care?  
Because I'm afraid the [Getae](#) won't approve them?  
Perhaps I'm being bold, but I would boast  
the [Danube](#) possesses no greater wit than mine.  
Here, in this land where I live, it's enough if I  
manage to be a poet among the uncivilised Getae.  
Why should I contend in fame with a distant world?  
What fate has granted me, let that place be [Rome](#).

My luckless Muse is happy with that theatre:  
as I deserve, so the great gods have willed.  
And I doubt there's a path for my books from here  
to there: [Boreas](#) reaches you on failing wings.  
We're divided by the heavens, and the [Bear](#),  
far from [Quirinus](#)'s city, sees the wild Getae near.  
I can scarcely believe a judgement on my work  
could leap across so much land and sea.  
Suppose it were read, and suppose, by a miracle,  
it found favour: surely that's no pleasure to the author.  
What benefit to you in being praised in hot [Aswan](#),  
or where the Indian waves wet [Ceylon](#)?  
Do you wish to aim higher? If the far distant [Pleiades](#)  
were to praise you, what would you boast of?  
But I, with my mediocre writings, don't register where  
you are: fame fled with the author from his true city.  
And you, I think, for whom I was lost when my reputation  
was buried, now you're silent about my dying here as  
well.

## Book EI.VI:1-54 To Graecinus: Hope

Is it true that when you heard of my downfall –  
being in a foreign land – your heart was sad?  
You may try to hide it and shrink from confessing,  
[Graecinus](#), but if I truly know you it must have been sad.  
A hateful cruelty does not fit your character,  
and is no less at odds with your pursuits.  
The liberal arts, for which you care the most,  
soften the feelings and drive away harshness.  
No one embraces them with greater loyalty  
as far as the service and a soldier's duties allow.  
Truly, as soon as I could understand where I was –  
and I was stunned for a long time, unable to think –  
I felt this also in my change of fortune: you were absent,  
a friend who would have been my great support.  
Everything that eases a troubled mind was absent too,  
with you, the best part of my courage and my counsel.  
But now, as you still can, I beg you, bring me one thing  
from afar, help my heart with your encouragement,  
one that, if you believe a friend who doesn't lie,  
ought to be called foolish rather than wicked.  
Neither brief nor safe to write would be [the history](#)  
of my sin: and my wounds fear to be touched.  
However they were inflicted on me, cease asking  
about them: don't disturb them if you want them to heal.  
Whatever happened should be called an error, not a crime.  
or is every error involving the great gods a sin?  
Graecinus, all hope of seeing my sentence



reduced, therefore, hasn't completely left me.  
Hope, that goddess, who, when all the other deities fled  
from sinful lands, was left alone on the god-forsaken  
earth.  
She lets the man digging ditches live, shackled with  
chains,  
believing that his limbs will be freed from the irons.  
She lets the shipwrecked sailor, who sees no land at all,  
still flail his arms about in the midst of the waves.  
Often the skill and care of the doctors fails someone,  
but hope will not die though the pulse grows faint.  
They say those shut in prison hope for release,  
and hung on a cross, a man still utters prayers.  
How many people this goddess has stopped from dying  
by the death they chose, as they tied the noose round their  
neck!  
She reproved me too, and checked me with her hand,  
as I was trying to end my sorrows with a sword,  
saying: 'What are you doing? Tears not blood are needed,  
often a prince's anger can be turned aside by weeping.'  
So though it's not a debt due to my merits  
still I've great hopes, given the kindness of the god.  
Graecinus, pray he's not harsh with me,  
and add some words of your own to my prayers.  
May I lie entombed in the sands of [Tomis](#)  
if you don't promise me this, for sure.  
For sooner will the doves avoid the dovecote, wild  
beasts their caves, cattle the grass, diving birds the sea,  
than will Graecinus let an old friend down.

All things have not been altered by my fate.

## **Book EI.VII:1-70 To Messalinus: His Claims For Remembrance**

Letters instead of spoken words bring you the greeting  
you read, [Messalinus](#), all the way from the savage [Getae](#).  
Does the place reveal the author? And, if the name's not  
been read,  
is the fact that I, Ovid, write these words, still hidden from  
you?

Do any of your friends, except myself, who pray I am  
your friend, live at the furthest limits of the world?  
May the gods will that all who revere and love you  
stay far from any acquaintance with these tribes.  
It's enough that I should live amongst ice and [Scythian](#)  
arrows, if owning to a sort of death is life.

Let me be crushed by war on the ground, cold in the sky,  
wild [Getae](#) with weapons, and battering winter hail:  
let me live in a region producing neither fruit nor grape,  
and not free of enemies in any direction,  
but let all the rest of your crowd of supporters be safe,  
of whom, as of the citizens, I was a humble member.

Woe is me if you're offended by these words,  
and deny that I had any connection with you!  
Even if that were true, you should forgive my lie:  
my boast detracts in no way from your glory.  
Who that's noticed by the Caesars doesn't think himself a  
friend?

Grant pardon to the weary: you were a Caesar to me.  
Yet I don't push in where I'm not allowed to go:

it's enough if you don't deny your house was open to me.  
Even if you were to have nothing more to do with me,  
surely you're hailed by one less voice than before.  
Your [father](#) didn't repudiate my friendship,  
he, the spur, the torch, the reason for my studies:  
for whom I shed tears, the last gift to the dead,  
and wrote verses to be sung in the midst of the forum.  
And there's your [brother](#), joined to you by as great a love  
as that which joined the sons of [Atreus](#), or the [Twins](#):  
he didn't disdain me as a friend and companion:  
if you don't think these words likely to harm him.  
if you do I'll own to a falsehood in that regard as well:  
and I'd rather then your whole House was closed to me.  
But it shouldn't be closed: no power is strong enough  
to accept the responsibility that a friend should never sin.  
And even though I'd like to be able to deny my offence,  
still no one's unaware that [crime](#) is absent from me.  
That unless a part of my guilt were excusable  
to be relegated would have been meagre punishment.  
But Caesar, who sees all things, saw that himself,  
that my crime might be termed stupidity:  
he spared me as far as I and the circumstances allowed,  
using his lightning bolt with restraint.  
He took neither life nor wealth from me, nor, if his anger  
might be overcome by your prayers, the possibility of  
return.  
But I fell heavily. What wonder is it if one  
who was struck by [Jupiter](#) has no trivial wound?  
Even if [Achilles](#) had limited his power

the Pelian spear he hurled dealt a heavy blow.  
So when my judge's decision supports me,  
there's no reason for your door to deny knowledge of me.  
I confess I cultivated it less frequently than I ought:  
but I believe that too was part of my ill fortune.  
Yet your brother's house did not experience the same  
lack of attention: so I was always under your House's  
[protection](#).

Such is your loyalty that your brother's friend  
has a claim on you, though he might not court you in  
person.  
And, just as thanks should always be given for favours,  
isn't it due your position to have deserved those thanks?  
If you allow me to suggest what you should desire,  
ask the gods that you might give more than you repay.  
This you do, and, as I clearly remember, your giving more  
has always been a reason for loyalty of service to you.  
Set me in whatever place you will, Messalinus,  
so long as I'm not a stranger to your house:  
and as for Ovid's troubles, since it seems he deserved  
them,  
if you don't grieve at his suffering, grieve that they're  
deserved.

## Book EI.VIII:1-70 To Severus: Memories of Home

Accept this greeting, [Severus](#), dear to my heart,  
sent to you by Ovid whom you loved.  
Don't ask how I am. If I told you all, you'd weep.  
It's enough if you have a summary of my troubles.  
I live amongst endless conflict, deprived of peace,  
while the quiver-carrying [Getae](#) make cruel war.  
Of all those banished it's I who am soldier *and* exile:  
the rest, I don't begrudge them, live in safety.  
And my books are more deserving of consideration,  
in that you're reading verses written while on watch.  
An old city stands on the banks of [Hister](#), Danube's  
other name, barely vulnerable because of its walls and site.  
[Aegisos](#) the Caspian founded it, and gave it his name,  
if we can believe what its people tell of themselves.  
The fierce [Getae](#) captured it after they had destroyed  
the [Odrysii](#) in a shock war, taking arms against the king.  
He, remembering the mighty race his virtue adds to,  
arrived there at once supported by a vast army.  
He did not leave until he'd crushed the bold spirit  
of that people, by a justified slaughter of the guilty.  
Bravest king of our times, may it be granted you  
to always wield the sceptre in your noble hand.  
What more could I ask on your behalf, than that, as now,  
warring Rome, and mighty Caesar, should approve of  
you?  
But remembering where I started, I complain, dear friend  
that savage warfare's added to my troubles.

The [Pleiades](#), rising, announce the [fourth](#) autumn  
since I, thrust down to the shores of [Styx](#), lost you.  
Don't think it's so much the comforts of city life  
that Ovid looks for, though he does still seek them,  
for I recall in thought my sweet friends sometimes,  
sometimes I think of my dear [wife](#) and [daughter](#):  
and I revisit the sites of the lovely city from my home,  
and my mind surveys it all with its own inward eye.  
Now the [fora](#), now the temples, now the marbled theatres,  
now I think of each portico with its levelled grounds.  
Now the grassy [Campus](#) that faces the lovely gardens,  
the ponds and the canals, and the [Aqua Virgo](#).  
But I suppose, the pleasures of the city being snatched  
away  
in my misery, that I should at least enjoy all this  
countryside!  
It's not so much that my heart desires the fields I lost,  
the noble landscapes of the [Paelignian](#) country,  
or those gardens sited on the pine-clad hills  
that view the junction of [Via Clodia](#) and [Via Flaminia](#).  
I don't know who I've cultivated them for: I used to add  
spring water to the beds myself, I'm not ashamed to say:  
if they're still living, there are certain trees there  
my hand planted, but I'll not be gathering their fruit.  
Despite those losses I wish it were possible to have  
a plot of ground at least to cultivate in my exile!  
If only I could I'd like to be shepherd to the cliff-hanging  
goats:

leaning on my staff, I'd like to guard the grazing sheep myself.

I myself would lead the oxen through the fields under the plough

so my heart would not be fixed on its familiar sorrows,  
and learn the words the [Getic](#) bullocks understand  
and go shouting the customary warnings to them.

I'd control the handle of the heavy ploughshare myself  
and try my hand at scattering seed in the furrowed earth.

I wouldn't hesitate to clear the weeds with a long hoe,  
and supply the water that the thirsty garden drinks.

Yet how, when there's only the thinnest of walls  
and a barred gate between me and the enemy?

But the [fatal goddesses](#), and it makes me rejoice  
with all my heart, spun strong threads at your birth.

You have the [Campus](#), or a colonnade's dense shade,  
or the forum in which you spend so little time.

Now [Umbria](#) calls you home, or the [Appian](#) Way leads  
you

to the country on flashing wheels heading for your [Alban](#)  
estate.

There perhaps you wish that Caesar might temper  
his anger, and your villa entertain me as a guest.

Ah, my friend you ask too much: choose something  
less demanding, and trim the sails of prayer I beg you.

I only desire a place nearer home, not exposed to war:  
then a major part of my troubles would be eased.



## **Book El.IX:1-56 To Cotta Maximus: News Of Celsus' Death**

[Your](#) letter that came to me concerning [Celsus](#)'s death was immediately made moist by my tears:  
and though it's wrong to say it, and I'd not have thought it possible, your letter was read by unwilling eyes.  
Nothing more bitter has reached my ears, since I have been here in [Pontus](#), and I pray it never will.  
His image comes to my eyes as if he were here, and, though he's dead, love pictures him still living.  
Often my mind recalls his playfulness, free of gravity, how he performed serious things with a calm loyalty.  
Yet no occasions come more frequently to mind than those, and I wish they'd been the last of my life, when my house suddenly fell in total ruin and crashed down around it's master's head.  
He stood by me, [Maximus](#), when most people abandoned me, and he was not involved in my affairs.  
I saw him weeping at my 'funeral rites' as if he were laying his own brother in the flames.  
He clung to my embrace, consoled me as I lay grieving, and mingled his tears endlessly with mine.  
O how often, as the frustrating saviour of my bitter life, he restrained my hands ready to cause my own death!  
O how often he said: 'The gods' anger is not implacable: live, and don't deny you could ever be pardoned!' Yet what he repeated most often was: 'Think, how great a help Maximus can be to you.'

Maximus will take the trouble: such is his loyalty:  
and request that Caesar's anger not be final:  
He'll exert his brother's influence and his own,  
and attempt every assistance to ease your pain.'  
These words lessened my weariness with my sad life,  
Maximus: take care that they were not idle ones.  
He used to promise that he'd come to me even here  
but only if you granted permission for the long journey,  
since he revered the sanctuary of your house as you  
revere the gods who are masters of this world.  
Believe me, though it's right you have many friends,  
if it's true that character and probity, not wealth  
or the titles of illustrious ancestors, make for greatness,  
then he was in no way the least among the many.  
So it's fitting I make libation of tears for dead Celsus,  
those he granted to me in life when I was fleeing:  
It's fitting I make verse witness to a rare spirit,  
that those to come may read your name, Celsus.  
This, that I can send from the lands of the [Getae](#),  
this is the only thing of mine allowed in Rome.  
I couldn't accompany the bier, or anoint your body,  
the whole world separates me from your tomb.  
Maximus, who could do so, whom in life you  
thought godlike, carried out every office for you.  
He conducted your exequies and rituals of great honour,  
and poured the spices over your cold breast.  
Grieving, he mingled falling tears with the unguent  
and laid your bones to rest in neighbouring ground.  
Since he pays the debt he owes to friends who've died,

let him count me as well among the dead.

## Book El.X:1-44 To Flaccus: His State Of Health

Ovid the exile sends you ‘good health’, [Flaccus](#),  
if he can send you something he lacks himself.  
Prolonged apathy, with its bitter cares, has weakened  
my body, won’t allow it to exercise its proper powers.  
True I’ve no pain, I don’t burn and gasp with fever,  
and my pulse keeps to its regular rhythm.  
But my appetite’s gone: I push away meals I’m served,  
with distaste, complain, when it’s time to eat hated food.  
Serve me with what sea, land or air produces,  
none of it will serve to make me hunger.  
Let ambrosia and nectar, the gods’ food and drink  
be served me by busy [Hebe](#)’s lovely hand,  
still their savour won’t excite my jaded palate  
and the weight will lie inert on my stomach for hours.  
Though it’s all true I wouldn’t venture to write this  
to everyone, in case they thought my ills a mere conceit.  
As though my position, the nature of my circumstances,  
was such there could actually be room for conceits!  
If any fear that Caesar’s anger sits too lightly on me  
I pray such ‘conceits’ as these may be theirs as well.  
That sleep, too, which is food itself to a frail body,  
fails to provide *my* useless body with its nurture.  
I lie awake instead: my endless sorrows awake too,  
since the place I’m in itself lends them substance.  
You’d hardly know my features if you saw them,  
and you’d ask what’s become of my old complexion.  
No strength penetrates my fragile joints,

and my limbs are more pallid than fresh wax.  
I haven't contracted these ills by excess [drinking](#):  
you know that water's almost the only thing I drink.  
nor by eating heavily: even if I'd loved to do so,  
there's no opportunity in the [Getic](#) country.  
My strength's not wasted by [Venus](#)'s ruinous passion:  
she doesn't usually come to a sorrowful bed.  
The water and the place harm me, and there's a deeper  
cause, the anxiety of spirit that's always with me.  
If you and your brother alike were not helping me,  
my mind would hardly endure the weight of sadness  
You're like a shore without rocks to a shattered boat,  
you offer me the help that so many deny.  
I beg you to always bring me what I'll always need,  
for as long as Caesar's godhead is offended with me.  
Let each of you as suppliants implore your gods not to  
end,  
but merely to lessen, his justified anger against me.

## **The End of Ex Ponto Book I**

## Ex Ponto Book II

### Book EII.I:68 To Germanicus: The Triumph

The [news](#) of [Caesar](#)'s triumph has reached this place  
as well, where the [south](#) wind's breath barely comes.  
I never thought any sweetness could be mine in [Scythia](#),  
but this land's less hateful to me now than it was before.  
At last the clouds of care are driven off: I see  
a fragment of clear sky: I've cheated fate.  
Even if Caesar doesn't wish me any joy,  
he should still wish this one joy on us all.  
The gods, so as to be worshipped in joyous piety,  
order sadness laid aside on their feast days too.  
In short, though it's madness to dare confess it  
I'd still enjoy this happiness if he forbids it.  
When [Jupiter](#) delights the fields with needed rain,  
stubborn weeds will grow among the crops.  
I too, a useless plant, feel the fertilising power,  
and am often benefited despite his will.  
The delights of Caesar's heart are mine too, as far  
as my powers allow: that House can't be a private one.  
Thanks to you, Fame, though I'm imprisoned  
among the [Getae](#), I've seen the glorious triumph.  
Your report told me how countless peoples  
recently gathered to gaze on the leader's face:  
and Rome whose vast walls compass the wide world,  
scarcely had room to hold her many guests.

You told me how the sun shone brightly,  
by heaven's power, and the day matched  
the faces of the crowd, though, for days before,  
a cloudy [southerly](#) poured down endless rain,  
and how the victor made warlike gifts to the heroes,  
honouring them in a mighty voice, how,  
wearing embroidered robes, glorious insignia,  
he first scattered incense on the sacred fires  
purely to placate his [father](#)'s Justice,  
which always occupies a temple in his heart,  
how he heard happy omens of applause as he went  
and the stones were red with dew-wet roses:  
silver fascimiles of conquered walls were carried  
before him, barbarian towns with defeated men,  
rivers, mountains and battles in thick forests,  
mingled piles of shields and spears,  
the buildings of the [Roman](#) forum gilded  
by the gold of trophies, glittering in the sun,  
and so many captive chieftains, chained by the neck,  
they were almost enough to form an enemy host.  
Most of them were granted life and pardon,  
among them [Bato](#), high chieftain of the war.  
Why should I fail to believe the divine anger could lessen  
towards me, when I see the gods merciful to an enemy?  
[Germanicus](#), the same news informed me,  
that floats of townships rolled on in your name.  
Those towns were not well-enough defended against you,  
despite massive walls, armaments, and clever placing.  
May the gods grant you long life, you'll do the rest,

so long as there's time enough to show your worth.  
I pray it will come about: a poet's oracle's worth  
something,  
since the god gave a favourable answer to my prayer.  
You too with garlanded horses, will be seen to climb  
the [Tarpeian](#) Rock in victory, by a happy Rome:  
your [father](#) will see his son's mature honours,  
feeling the joy that he has felt at his own.  
Mark my prophetic words to you even now,  
you, greatest of youths in war or peace.  
I'll tell of that triumph also perhaps in verse  
if only my lifespan equals my misfortunes,  
and I don't stain [Scythian](#) arrows with my blood  
before, and no fierce [Getan](#) steals my life with a sword.  
If your laurels are dedicated in the temple while I live,  
you'll say that both my prophecies have come true.



## Book EII.II:1-38 To Messalinus: His Error

He who honoured your House from his earliest years,  
Ovid, driven to the [Black Sea](#)'s sinister left-hand shore,  
gives you the greeting, [Messalinus](#), he once offered  
face to face, from this land of unconquered [Getae](#).  
Alas if, having read the name, your expression  
is not what it once was, and you hesitate to read on!  
Read, don't banish my words with my self:  
my verse is allowed to exist in your city.  
I never believed, though [Ossa](#) supported [Pelion](#),  
I had the power to touch the bright stars with my hand,  
nor did I join [Enceladus](#)'s mad faction,  
taking up arms against the gods of the world,  
nor as the rash hand of [Diomedes](#) did,  
have I aimed my spear at any divine power.  
[My offence](#) is grave but it's one that has only  
ventured to destroy me, not cause greater sin.  
I can only be called unwise and cowardly:  
those are the proper terms for my behaviour.  
I confess it's right you too were resistant to my  
entreaties, after I'd deserved Caesar's anger:  
such is your loyalty to all the [Julian](#) clan,  
you're hurt if you think any of them are hurt.  
But even if you take up arms and threaten me  
with cruel wounds you won't make me afraid.  
A [Trojan](#) ship of [Aeneas](#)'s welcomed Greek  
[Achaemenides](#): [Achilles](#)' spear helped [Mysian Telephus](#).  
Sometimes temple violators seek sanctuary at the altar,

not fearing to seek the help of the god they've injured.  
Some might say it isn't wise. I admit it.  
But my ship doesn't sail through calm waters.  
Let others seek safety: the most wretched fate's  
the safest, since fear of a worse one is absent.  
Driven by the foaming sea, stretching out our arms  
we snatch at thorns and harsh rocks with our hands:  
the bird, with quivering wings, in fear of the hawk  
dares to seek human protection in its weariness,  
and a doe won't hesitate to trust herself to a nearby house  
when she's running in terror from the hostile hounds.

## **Book EII.II:39-74 To Messalinus: The Time Is Propitious**

Kindest of men, allow my tears an audience, I beg you,  
don't close a harsh door against my anxious voice,  
show favour, carry my words to the gods of Rome,  
worshipped no less by you than the [Tarpeian Thunderer](#),  
be ambassador for my request, take up my cause:  
though no case with my name on is a good one.  
Now I'm almost buried, now I'm ill and frozen  
at least: if I'm saved at all, I'll be saved by you.  
Now let that influence, the love of an eternal prince  
wins for you, exert itself on behalf of the weary.  
Now let the shining eloquence of your house appear,  
with which you've benefited anxious defendants.  
Your father's fluent tongue lives in both you sons,  
and that asset has found its proper heirs.  
I don't ask that it should try to defend me: the case  
of an accused who's confessed is not defensible.  
Yet see if you might apologise for my actions  
given the source of my error, or whether it's better  
not to try anything like that. The wound is such  
that, since it can't be healed, I think it's safer not to touch  
it.  
Tongue, be silent! Nothing more is to be told.  
[I wish](#) to be able to bury my own ashes.  
So speak your words as if no error ever misled me,  
so that I can enjoy the life he granted me:  
and when he's calm and that expression's tranquil

that, as it changes, alters the empire and the world,  
ask that I might not be a worthless prize for the [Getae](#),  
and to grant a gentler land for my wretched exile.  
It's a good time for petitions. He's safe and sound, and  
sees  
that your powers, Rome, which he fashioned, are sound.  
His [wife](#), is well, and keeps the sacred bed intact:  
his son, [Tiberius](#), extends the Roman Empire:  
[Germanicus](#), by his courage, is greater than his years,  
and [Drusus](#)' energy is no less than his nobility.  
Add that the younger women, the loyal granddaughters,  
the granddaughter's sons, and the rest of [his House](#) are  
whole.

## Book EII.II:75-126 To Messalinus: His Request

Then there's the triumph over [Paeonia](#), there are  
raised arms in mountainous [Dalmatia](#) lowered in peace:  
[Illyria](#), a servant now, throwing down her weapons,  
and not refusing to set her head beneath Caesar's foot.  
[Tiberius](#) himself appeared in his chariot, calm-faced,  
his forehead wreathed with [Apollo](#)'s Daphnian laurel.  
His loyal sons worthy of their father and the names  
granted  
them, followed him, attended by you two brothers,  
like the [Twins](#) of the neighbouring temple  
whom divine Julius views from his lofty shrine.  
Messalinus does not deny the supreme place  
of joy, to those before whom all must yield,  
whatever's left concerns battles of affection,  
in these he'll take second place to no man.  
He'll celebrate this day above all others, on which  
the laurel of merit's rightly set on an honoured brow.  
O happy are those allowed to see the triumph,  
and savour the general's godlike countenance!  
But instead of Caesar's face I see the [Sarmatians](#),  
a land without peace and waves bound by ice.  
Yet if you hear this, if my voice reaches so far,  
let your influence, your charm alter my place of exile.  
Your [father](#) wishes this, if his eloquent shade still feels,  
he whom I cultivated from my earliest youth.  
And your brother so wishes, though perhaps he fears  
that attention to my affairs might harm you.

All your House asks it, nor can you deny  
that I too was once one of your followers.  
Surely my genius, that I feel I used wrongly,  
was often approved, except for the *Ars Amatoria*.  
Nor is my life, if you except its recent sins,  
able to bring shame on your House.  
May the sanctuaries of your race flourish,  
may the gods above and the Caesars protect you:  
only beg that merciful deity, who's rightly angered with  
me,  
to move me far from the savagery of [Scythian](#) lands.  
I know it's difficult, but virtue aims for the heights,  
and the thanks for such a service will be greater.  
Besides it's no [Polyphemus](#) in [Etna](#)'s vast caves,  
it's no cannibal, no [Antiphates](#), who'll hear your words,  
but a calm and merciful father, inclined to pardon,  
who often thunders without the flash of lightning,  
who's indeed sad himself when he's ordered something  
sad,  
and for whom to exact punishment is to punish himself,  
though his mercy was defeated by my offence,  
and his anger was forced to display its full strength.  
Since I'm a whole world apart from my country,  
I can't throw myself before the god himself,  
Be the priest: carry my request to the god you worship,  
while adding words of your own to my prayers.  
But only try it if you think it won't be harmful to me.  
Forgive me. I'm a shipwrecked man, afraid of every sea.

## Book EII.III:1-48 To Cotta Maximus: On Friendship

[Maximus](#), whose name is equalled by your bright virtues,  
you, who don't allow your nature to be altered by fame,  
cherished by me to the last day of my life –  
for how does this state differ from death? –  
by not turning away from a friend in need,  
you perform an act rarer than any in this age.  
It's shameful to say, yet, if we confess the truth,  
the crowd values friendship by its usefulness.  
Their first care's for expediency, not honour,  
and their loyalty stands or falls by Fortune.  
You won't easily find one in a thousand  
who considers virtue to be its own reward.  
If right action doesn't gain a prize, it fails  
to impress, and doing good for free is regretted.  
Only what's profitable is dear: take hope of gain  
from a greedy mind, and no one's sought after.  
Now everyone desires his return, and counts,  
with anxious fingers, what will be of use to himself.  
That [goddess](#) of friendship, who was once revered,  
sells herself, intent on gain, like a prostitute.  
So I marvel the more that you're not swept away  
as well, by the force of common vice, that torrent of water.  
There's only love for those whom fortune follows:  
but when she's stormy everyone takes flight.  
Look at me, once fortified with many friends,  
while the favouring breeze swelled my sails:  
now the wild seas are tumultuous with the tempest,

I'm abandoned on a shattered boat in mid-ocean:  
while others didn't even wish to be seen to know me,  
only two or three brought help when I was banished.  
You were the chief. You were fit to be their leader  
not companion, not to find an exemplar but to be one.  
You, who accept [the exile](#) only made a mistake,  
delight in virtue and duty for their own sake.  
Goodness, in your judgement, is free of reward:  
sought for itself, unaccompanied by outward benefit.  
You think it's wrong to drive a friend away who's  
wretched,  
or prevent him being one because he's been unlucky.  
It's kinder to support his weary chin with only a finger,  
than to push the swimmer's face beneath the clear wave.  
See what [Achilles](#) did for his dead friend [Patroclus](#):  
and think, that to live this life of mine is like death.  
[Theseus](#) went with [Pirithous](#) to the [Stygian](#) waves:  
how far distant is my death from those Stygian waters?  
[Orestes](#), maddened, was helped by Phocæan [Pylades](#):  
and my offence was not without a touch of madness.  
You too should receive, as you are doing, the praise due  
to mighty heroes, and bring what help you can to the  
fallen.



## **Book EII.III:49-100 To Cotta Maximus: The Disclosure**

If I know you well, if you're still as you  
used to be, and your courage has not lessened,  
the more [Fortune](#) rages, the more you resist her,  
taking care, rightly, lest she overwhelm you:  
and you fight well when your enemy fights well.  
So, I'm helped and injured by the same thing.  
Doubtless you consider it shameful, dearest boy,  
to become a friend of the goddess on her sphere.  
You're loyal, and seeing that that sails of the broken boat  
are not as you wish, you still raise them such as they are.  
The boat's so shattered it's thought it must soon founder,  
but the wreckage is still supported on your shoulders.  
It's true your anger was justified at first, no milder  
than his, who was justifiably offended by me.  
The pain that distressed great Caesar's feelings,  
you swore immediately that you felt it too.  
Yet they say that when you heard the cause  
of my disaster, you groaned aloud at my error.  
Then your letters began to bring me comfort,  
bringing hope that the wounded god might be softened.  
Then the constancy of long friendship moved you,  
that began for me before you were born: and at birth  
you were the friend, to me, that you became to others,  
because I gave you the first kisses in your cradle.  
Since I've honoured your House from my earliest years,  
that makes me an old responsibility of yours.

That father of yours, with an eloquence  
in the Latin tongue not inferior to his lineage,  
first urged me to grant my verse a public  
hearing: he was the guide to my talent.  
Nor, I contend, could your brother recall  
the moment of my first service to him.  
But it was you I was attached to before all others,  
so that our friendship was as one whatever came.  
[Aethalian Elba](#) last saw me with [you](#), and caught  
the tears as they fell from our sad cheeks:  
when you asked whether the rumour was true  
that brought the evil news of my offence,  
[I wavered](#), doubtfully, between confession and denial  
my trembling revealing the signs of my fear,  
and, like the snow the rainy [south wind](#) melts,  
welling tears ran down my terrified cheeks.  
So you, recalling this, knowing that my sin  
could be buried if my first error were forgiven,  
you think of your old friend in his misfortunes  
and help me by bandaging my wounds.  
In return, if I had the chance to choose freely, I'd ask  
a thousand blessings on you, for showing such true worth.  
But if I'm only to echo your own vows, I'll pray  
for your [mother](#)'s well-being, after Caesar's.  
I recall you used to ask that of the gods, first of all,  
when you made the altars rich with incense.

## Book EII.IV:1-34 To Atticus: Literary Friendship

Let Ovid speak to you from the icy [Danube](#), [Atticus](#),  
you who, in my opinion, should not be doubted.  
Do you still think of your wretched friend at all,  
or has your love played its part, and weakened?  
The gods are not so harsh to me that I'd believe,  
or think it reasonable, that you've forgotten me already.  
Your image is always in front of my eyes,  
and I seem to see your features in my mind.  
I remember many deep talks you and I had,  
and more than a few hours of playful fun.  
Often hours of lengthy talk passed swiftly,  
often the day was briefer than my words.  
Often you listened to a freshly made poem,  
a new [Muse](#) was submitted to your criticism.  
I considered the public pleased, if you praised:  
that was the sweet prize of the critic's affection.  
More than once I've edited it, on your advice,  
so my work might be smoothed by a friendly file.  
The streets, the squares, all the porticoes, saw us  
together: and the amphitheatre, in adjoining seats.  
In short our love, was always as great, dearest friend,  
as that of [Achilles](#) and [Antilochus](#), [Nestor](#)'s son.  
I can't believe it would vanish from your heart,  
though you drank deep of [Lethe](#)'s care-dispelling waters.  
Sooner will the longest days occur in winter,  
and summer nights be swifter than December's,  
[Babylon](#) lack heat, and [Pontus](#) have no ice,

the marigold out-scent the rose of [Paestum](#),  
than forgetfulness of what we were shall possess you.  
No part of my fate can be so devoid of brightness.  
Take care that this faith of mine is not called  
false, and my credulity pure foolishness,  
and defend your old comrade, with constant loyalty,  
as best you can, and as long as I'm not a burden.

### **Book EII.V:1-40 To Salanus: An Abortive Poem**

I send words composed in elegiac measure, Ovid  
to [Salanus](#), prefaced by my wish for his good health.  
I hope it may be so, and to prove the omen true,  
I pray that you're safe to read this, my friend.  
Your sincerity, something almost extinct in this age,  
requires me to make such prayers, on your behalf,  
for though I was only slightly acquainted with you,  
they say you were grieved by my exile:  
and, reading my verses sent from the [Black Sea](#),  
your approval helped, regardless of their worth:  
and you wished that Caesar's anger towards me  
might be eased, a wish he would allow, if he knew.  
Such a kind prayer, because of that nature of yours,  
and none the less pleasing to me for that.  
It's possible you're the more moved by my ills,  
learned friend, due to the circumstances that apply here.  
Believe me, you'll hardly find a place, anywhere on earth,  
that takes less delight in the fruits of [Augustan](#) peace.  
Yet you read this verse composed amid fierce battles,

and having read it, approve it with favourable words,  
and you praise my genius, that runs in a meagre vein,  
and you make a mighty river of a little stream.  
Indeed, your endorsement's gratifying to my spirit,  
even if it's hard for you to imagine the wretched being  
pleased.

As long as I undertake poems on humble themes  
my talent's sufficient for the slender content.  
Lately, when news of a great triumph arrived,  
I dared to undertake a work of some substance.  
The gravity and splendour of the thing sank my attempt,  
I couldn't support the weight of what I'd started.  
What's praiseworthy in it is the willingness to oblige:  
the rest of the material was stillborn.  
If by any chance that work has come to your notice,  
I ask that it might enjoy your protection.  
Let my thanks to you, who'd do this even if I didn't  
ask it, add to it their slight crowning touch.  
I don't deserve your praise, but you have a heart  
that's pure as milk or the un-trodden snow:  
you admire others, when you're to be admired  
yourself, your art and eloquence aren't hidden.

## Book EII.V:41-76 To Salanus: Praise of Germanicus

[You're](#) accustomed to share the Prince of Youth's studies,  
that Caesar who made a name for himself in Germany.  
You've been [Germanicus](#)'s companion from his earliest  
years,  
a friend of old, pleasing by talent as well as character.  
Your prior speech gave forward impetus to his:  
he has you to elicit his words, from your own.  
When you cease, and the mortal mouth is still,  
and the room is quiet for a little while,  
the youth, worthy of his [Julian](#) name, rises,  
as [Lucifer](#) rises from the [Eastern](#) waters.  
As he stands there, silent, with an orator's face and  
bearing,  
his graceful appearance creates the expectation of learned  
speech.  
Then when the pause is over, and the celestial lips have  
opened,  
you'd swear the gods are accustomed to speak in that  
fashion,  
and say: 'This is eloquence appropriate to a Prince':  
there's such nobility in his use of words.  
Though you please him, your head among the stars,  
you still think to acquire an exiled poet's writings.  
Truly, there's harmony between kindred spirits,  
and everyone maintains allegiance to their calling:  
the labourer loves the farmer, the soldier the maker  
of cruel war, the sailor the master of the swaying ship.

You too, studiously, make a study of the [Muses](#),  
and, skilfully, you approve my skill.  
Our work is different, but it flows from the same fountain:  
we are both practitioners of the liberal arts.  
The [thyrsus](#) fails to aid you, chewing [laurel](#)'s for me,  
and yet the love is bound to be in us both:  
as your eloquence gives my poetry vigour,  
so beauty flows from me into your words.  
So you're right to think verse borders on your studies,  
and the rites of mutual service should be kept.  
For that reason I pray the friend who values you,  
may do so to the last moment of your life,  
and he, who holds the reins of the world, succeed:  
which is the people's prayer and mine as well.

## Book EII.VI:1-38 To Graecinus: An Answer To His Reproof

Ovid, who used to be present in person, [Graecinus](#),  
greeted you sadly in verse, from [Black Sea](#) waters.  
This is an exile's voice: letters grant me a tongue,  
and I'd be dumb if I weren't allowed to write.  
You reprove your foolish friend's sins, as you ought,  
and tell me the ills I endure are less than I earned.  
You say true, but it's too late to reprove my fault:  
don't speak bitter words to the defendant who's confessed.  
I needed the warning when I could have rounded  
[Ceraunia](#),  
all sails standing, so might I have avoided the cruel reefs.  
Now I'm shipwrecked what use is it to learn  
what course my boat should have taken?  
Rather an arm should be extended to the tired swimmer,  
and don't regret supporting his chin with your hand.  
That you do: I pray you will do too: that your wife and  
mother  
your brothers and all your household might be well,  
as you always pray, aloud, with all your heart,  
that all your actions might be approved of by the [Caesars](#).  
It would be wrong if you brought no kind of help  
to your old friend in such a wretched state,  
it would be wrong to retreat, and not stand firm,  
it would be wrong to abandon a ship in distress,  
wrong to side with chance, surrender a friend to fate,  
and deny he's yours unless he's fortunate.



That's not how [Pylades](#) and [Orestes](#) behaved,  
not such the loyalty of [Theseus](#) and [Pirithous](#):  
admired by previous ages, to be admired by those to come,  
for whom the whole theatre echoes with applause.  
You too deserve a name amongst such heroes,  
protecting your friend in the hardest times.  
You deserve it, and since you earned praise by loyalty,  
my thanks for your help will never fall silent.  
Believe me, if my poetry's not destined to die,  
you'll often be on the lips of our posterity.  
Only see that you stay loyal to the weary, Graecinus,  
and let that impulse endure for lengths of time.  
Though you do, I'll still row despite the following wind,  
there's no harm in setting spurs to the galloping horse.

## Book EII.VII:1-46 To Atticus: His Constant Grief

[Atticus](#), my letter, sent from among the barely  
pacified [Getae](#), wishes first of all to greet you.  
Next follows the desire to hear how you are,  
and whether, however you are, you care about me.  
I don't doubt you do, yet real dread of misfortune  
often causes me to suffer baseless fears.  
Forgive me, please, excuse excessive dread.  
The shipwrecked sailor even fears calm water.  
The fish that's been hurt by a treacherous barb  
thinks there's a bronze hook in all its food.  
Often a lamb flees the sight of a distant dog,  
thinks it's a wolf, avoiding true help in error.  
The wounded limb shrinks from a gentle touch,  
and a vain shadow instils fear in the nervous.  
So, pierced by [Fortune](#)'s iniquitous arrows,  
I only conceive sad thoughts in my mind.  
It's clear to me now that fate, keeping its first course,  
will always keep pursuing its familiar track:  
the gods are watching in case anything's conceded to me  
in kindness, and I think it's scarcely possible to cheat fate.  
Fortune takes care to destroy me, she who used  
to be fickle, constant now, and sure to harm me badly.  
Believe me, if I'm known to you as a truth-sayer,  
(in my position how could one be a liar)  
you'd count ears of wheat faster, by [Cinyphus](#),  
or thyme plants flowering on the heights of [Hybla](#),  
birds flying through the air on quivering wings,

or know how many fish swam in the sea,  
before you'd have the total of my sufferings  
that I've endured on land, endured mid-ocean.  
There's no harsher race in the world than the [Getae](#),  
yet even they've groaned at my troubles.  
If I tried to record it all in autobiographical verse,  
a whole Iliad could be made from my misfortune.  
I'm not afraid because I think I need to fear you  
whose love has granted me a thousand proofs,  
but because every wretched thing is fearful, and because  
the door of happiness has long been closed to me.  
Now my grief's become a habit, and as falling water  
carves out a stone with its constant dripping,  
so I'm hurt by continual blows of Fortune,  
until I've hardly room for a new wound.  
The ploughshare's not worn thinner by steady use,  
nor the [Appian Way](#) more hollowed by the wheel's rim,  
than my heart's trampled by this run of misfortunes,  
and I've found nothing that can bring me help.

## Book EII.VII:47-84 To Atticus: Courage Conquers All

Fame in the liberal arts is sought by many of us:  
unhappily I've perished through my own gifts.  
My life before was free of fault, and passed without stain:  
but that's brought me no aid in my misery.  
Often a serious fault's pardoned by the intercession  
of friends: all kindness has been silent on my account.  
Some, in trouble, are assisted by being present in person:  
[I was absent](#) when this great storm overwhelmed my life.  
Who wouldn't dread even the silent wrath of Caesar?  
Bitter words were added to my punishment.  
The season can lighten exile: I, driven out to sea,  
suffered [Arcturus](#)' threats and the [Pleiades](#)'.  
Ships often find the winter waves calm,  
the seas were no stormier for [Ulysses](#)'.  
Friends' true loyalty might have eased my troubles:  
but a treacherous crowd enriched themselves with my  
spoils.  
Location makes exile milder: there's no sadder  
land than this beneath either starry pole.  
It's something to be near the borders of your own country:  
The furthest lands, the ends of the world, hold me.  
Caesar, your laurel should offer peace even to exiles:  
[Black Sea](#) earth is open to hostile neighbours.  
It's sweet to spend time cultivating the fields:  
barbarian foes allow no ground to be ploughed.  
Body and mind are helped by a temperate climate:  
perpetual cold chills the [Sarmatian](#) coastline.

There's a harmless pleasure in fresh water:  
I drink marsh water mixed with brine.  
Everything's lacking. Yet courage conquers all:  
It even causes the body to acquire strength.  
To support the burden you must strive with head  
unbowed,  
if you allow your strength to falter you will fall.  
The hope too that time might soften the prince's wrath,  
warns me against aversion to life, losing heart.  
And you give no small comfort to me,  
whose loyalty's been tested by my troubles.  
Please hold to what you've started, don't desert the ship  
at sea, defend me and your decision in one.

## Book EII.VIII:1-36 To Cotta Maximus: Imperial Likenesses

A [Caesar](#) arrived with a [Caesar](#), for me, just now,  
those that you've sent me [Cotta](#) Maximus: the gods:  
and [Livia](#) is there, joined with her Caesars, so that  
your gift could be complete, as it ought to be.  
Fortunate silver, more blessed than any gold,  
that was recently coarse metal, is now divine.  
By granting me riches, you wouldn't have given me more  
than the triple deities you've sent to these shores.  
It's something to gaze at gods, and consider them present,  
and be able to speak with them as if with the truly divine.  
As much as you could achieve it, I've returned home,  
no longer in a far land, safe as before in the midst of the  
city.  
I see the faces of the Caesars, as I once did:  
I scarcely had any hope of this in my prayers:  
I salute, as I used to salute, the heavenly power.  
Even if you offered me return, I think you could do  
nothing greater. What do my eyes miss but the [Palace](#)?  
That place would be worthless without Caesar.  
As I gaze at him I seem myself to be seeing Rome:  
since he embodies the features of the fatherland itself.  
Am I wrong or is the expression in his portrait one of  
anger,  
is his face somehow grim and menacing?  
Spare me, hero mightier in virtues than  
the vast world, reign in your justified revenge.

Please, spare me, undying glory of our age,  
lord of the earth that you make your care.  
In the name of the fatherland, dearer to you than yourself,  
and the gods who are never deaf to your prayers,  
and your [bed-mate](#) who alone is equal to you,  
and to whom your grandeur is no burden,  
and [your son](#), like you the model of virtue,  
who can be seen from his character to be yours,  
and your [grandsons](#), worthy of their [father](#) and  
grandfather,  
who make great strides under your command,  
ease my sentence the least amount, reduce it,  
and grant me a place of exile far from the [Scythian](#) foe.

## Book EII.VIII:37-76 To Cotta Maximus: His Prayer

And you, the [Caesar](#) closest to Caesar, if it's allowed,  
let your godhead not be hostile to my prayers,  
So may fierce Germany be dragged, a slave  
with fear-struck face, before your triumphant horses:  
so may your father reach [Pylian Nestor](#)'s years, your  
mother  
those of the Cumean [Sybil](#), and you be long a son.  
You too, fitting wife for a mighty husband,  
give a sympathetic ear to a suppliant's prayers.  
May your husband prosper, your grandsons and their sons,  
your good daughters-in law, and their daughters.  
May the Elder [Drusus](#) whom cruel Germany snatched  
from you, be the only one of your race to fall.  
May Tiberius soon drive behind snow-white steeds,  
the avenger of his brother's death, clothed in purple.  
O, kindest gods, assent to my timorous prayers.  
Let it benefit me to have deities present here.  
When [Caesar](#) arrives the gladiator exits safely  
from the arena: his appearance is no small aid.  
I'm aided too, by seeing your faces, as much as I can,  
now that three deities have entered a single house.  
Happy are those who see the reality, not phantoms,  
and see the gods' true features, face to face.  
Since hostile fate has begrudged me that,  
I cherish the forms and portraits art created,  
so men might know the gods the deep heavens  
conceal, and worship [Jupiter](#) through Jupiter's image.



So have a care that your likenesses, that are here with me  
and always will be, aren't situated in a hateful region.  
Sooner shall my head be severed from my neck,  
sooner will I let my eyes be gouged from their sockets,  
than I lack you, by your being taken from me, O powers  
of the State: you'll be the altar and refuge of my exile.  
I'll embrace you when I'm surrounded by [Getic](#) weapons,  
and I'll follow you as my eagles, and my standards.  
Either I'm deceiving myself, mocked by excess  
of longing, or hope of a more appropriate exile's here.  
The portrait's features grow less and less severe,  
and the head seems to nod at my words.  
I pray my timid heart's presentiments prove true,  
that the god's anger lessens, even if it's just.

## Book EII.IX:1-38 To Cotys of Thrace: Mutual Advantage

[Cotys](#), descendant of kings, the line of whose nobility reaches as far back as the name of [Eumolpus](#), if ready rumour has already reached your ears, that I inhabit part of a country near to yours, kindest of youths, hear the voice of the suppliant, and, since you can, bring what help you can, to an exile. [Fortune](#) has surrendered me to you – I don't complain of her in doing so – in this one thing she isn't hostile to me.

Welcome my shipwreck on a gentle shore:  
don't let the waves prove safer than the land.  
Believe me, it's a regal action to aid the fallen,  
it's appropriate for as great a hero as yourself.  
It's fitting to your rank: that great as it is  
can scarcely be equal to your spirit.  
Power is never active in a better cause  
than in not letting such prayers be made in vain.  
That brilliant lineage of yours urges it,  
it's a work of that nobility born of the gods.  
Eumolpus the famous founder of your race,  
and [Erichthonius](#) his ancestor advise it.

You and the gods have this in common, both of you  
are accustomed to offer help when your suppliants ask.  
Would there be any reason for the divine to be granted  
its usual honour, if the gods lacked the will to help?  
If [Jupiter](#) turned deaf ears to our prayers, why should

a fallen victim die, in front of Jupiter's temple?  
If the sea didn't offer calm waters for my journey  
why should I offer [Neptune](#) incense in vain?  
Why should [Ceres](#) receive the entrails of a pregnant sow  
if she left unfulfilled the prayers of labouring farmers?  
The sacrificial goat won't offer its throat to long-haired  
[Bacchus](#),  
if grape juice doesn't flow under the trampling feet.  
It's because he plans for his country so well,  
that we ask Caesar to control the reins of Empire.  
Advantage, then, makes god and humans great,  
by their support and their mutual assistance.  
You too, O Cotys, son worthy of your father  
should benefit one who's within your camp.

## Book EII.IX:39-80 To Cotys of Thrace: His Request

It's fitting for a man to take delight in saving man,  
and there's no better way of winning support.  
Who does not curse [Antiphates](#), a king of cannibals?  
Who disapproves of generous [Alcinous](#)'s character?  
Your father's no tyrant from [Cassandra](#) or [Pherae](#),  
no [Phalaris](#) who burnt the inventor in his invention:  
but one fierce in war, never knowing defeat when armed,  
yet never desiring bloodshed once peace was made.  
Moreover constant study of the liberal arts  
civilises the character, and inhibits cruelty.  
No king's been better equipped in them,  
or given more time to the gentler arts.  
Your poetry's a witness, so that, if you hid your name,  
I'd deny it was composed by a youth of [Thrace](#):  
and [Bistonias](#)' land is made proud of your skill,  
so that [Orpheus](#) might not be the only poet there.  
Just as you have the courage, when events demand it,  
to take up arms and stain your hands with enemy blood,  
just as you've learned to hurl javelins with a flick of the  
wrist,  
and guide the flight of your galloping horse,  
so when ample time's been given to your father's arts,  
and their military task happens to be dormant,  
in order that your leisure time's not lost in idle sleep,  
you take the [Muses](#)' path to the bright stars.  
This creates something of a bond between you and me:  
each is a follower of the same sacred rites.

Poet to poet I stretch out my arms in asking  
that your land should protect me in my exile.  
I didn't come to Pontus, guilty of murder,  
no lethal poison was mixed by my hand:  
no fraudulent document convicted my ring  
of printing a false seal on its linen ties.  
I've done nothing that the law forbids to be done:  
yet a weightier offence of mine's to be confessed here.  
And don't ask, what it is, I wrote a stupid '*Art of Love*':  
that prevents my hands from ever being clean.  
Did I sin further? Don't seek to know,  
so my guilt can hide beneath my '*Art*' alone.  
Whatever it is, my judge's anger was moderate,  
who took nothing from me, except my native earth.  
Since I'm bereft of that now, let your nearness offer me  
the power to live in safety in this place I hate.

## Book EII.X:1-52 To Macer: Early Travels Together

[Macer](#), do you guess at all from the image printed  
in the wax, that Ovid writes these words to you?  
If the ring is not a witness to its master,  
do you recognise the letters shaped by my hand?  
Or is recognition denied you by passing time,  
so your eyes cannot recall the ancient signs?  
You're allowed to forget hand and seal,  
so long as your love for me hasn't vanished.  
You owe it to long years of friendship,  
to the fact that my wife's no stranger to you,  
to the studies you employed more wisely than I did,  
and, as is proper, you're not incriminated by 'Art'.  
You sing whatever immortal [Homer](#) left unsung,  
so the Trojan War won't lack the final touch.  
Master Ovid, without much prudence, passing on  
the art of love, sadly won the prize for his teaching.  
Still, there are rites common to all poets,  
though each follows a different path:  
I think you'll remember it, though we're  
far apart, and desire to ease my situation.  
We gazed at splendid cities of Asia, with you as guide:  
[Sicily](#), with you as guide, was revealed to my eyes.  
We saw [Etna](#)'s flames illuminate the sky,  
eruptions of the [giant](#) under the mountain,  
and [Enna](#)'s lake, [Palicus](#)'s sulphurous pools,  
and where [Anapus](#) joins [Cyane](#) to his waters.  
Not far from there the nymph, [Arethusa](#), escaping

the [Elean](#) river, runs hidden beneath the waves, even now.  
There I passed the greater part of the quickly gliding year.  
Ah, how different that place is to this land of the [Getae](#)!  
And that was only a part of what we both saw,  
while you made the paths joyful for me!  
Whether we cut the blue wave in a painted boat,  
or drove along in a swift-wheeled carriage,  
the road often seemed short with changing talk,  
and more words than inches if you numbered them.  
Often the day was too short for our discourse,  
and the long hours of summer days failed us.  
It's something to have feared the dangers of the sea,  
together, and offered our mutual prayers to the ocean  
gods,  
and to have done things together on occasion,  
and afterwards be able to recall innocent laughter.  
When these thoughts come to you, though I'm absent,  
I'll be in front of your eyes as if you just now saw me.  
And, for my part, though I live beneath the celestial pole,  
that always stands high above the flowing waters,  
I see you in the only way I can, in my mind,  
and often speak to you beneath the frozen axis.  
You're here, unwittingly, many times present though  
absent,  
and you come, at my command, from mid-city to the  
[Getae](#).  
Repay me in turn, and, since yours is a happier land,  
keep me there forever in your remembering heart.

## Book EII.XI:1-28 To Rufus: His Wife's Uncle

Ovid, the author of the unfortunate *Ars Amatoria*  
sends you this effort, [Rufus](#), rushed off in a hurry,  
so that though we're separated by a whole world's  
width, you can still know that I remember you.  
I'd sooner come to forget my own name,  
than let your loyalty be driven from my heart:  
and I'll return this spirit to the vacant air,  
before my thanks for your services fail.  
I call those tears a great service that flowed  
over your face when mine was dry, rigid with pain:  
I call your solace of a grieving mind great service,  
when you granted it to me and to yourself.  
My wife's to be praised spontaneously, for herself,  
yet she's the better for your advice. And the sort  
of uncle that [Castor](#) was to [Hermione](#), [Hector](#) to [Iulus](#),  
I'm pleased to say is what you are to my wife.  
She tries to be not unlike you in honesty,  
and proves by her life that she's of your blood.  
So that which she would have done without urging  
she completes more fully with you as sponsor also.  
The spirited horse which races for the prize,  
itself, runs more strongly still if you urge it on.  
Besides you execute the wishes of an absent man  
with faithful care, and no burden you carry annoys you.  
Oh, since I've not the power, may the gods show  
gratitude! As they will do if they see your acts of loyalty:



May you long have strength as well to maintain that  
character,  
Rufus, the greatest glory of [Fundi](#)'s earth.

## **The End of Ex Ponto Book II**

## Ex Ponto Book III

### Book EIII.I:1-66 To His Wife: Her Role

Sea, first struck by [Jason](#)'s oars, and land,  
never free of savage enemies and snow,  
will a time come when Ovid is ordered away  
to a less hostile place, leaves you behind?  
Surely I ought not, living on in this barbarian  
country, to be buried in the soil of [Tomis](#)?  
By your leave, [Pontus](#), if you've any leave to give,  
land trampled by swift horses of nearby enemies,  
by your leave I'd seek to call you the worst feature  
of my harsh exile, you that aggravate my trouble.  
You never experience Spring wreathed in crowns  
of flowers, nor see the naked bodies of the reapers.  
Autumn never offers you its clusters of grapes:  
all seasons are gripped by the immoderate cold.  
You hold the waves ice-bound, and the fish,  
in the sea, often swim roofed-in by solid water.  
There are no springs, except those that are almost brine:  
drink, and you're dubious whether they quench or parch.  
The odd barren tree sticks up in the open field,  
and the land is merely the sea in disguise.  
No birds sing, unless they're ones from far forests,  
drinking sea-water here, making raucous cries.  
The empty plains bristle with acrid wormwood,  
a harvest appropriate to this bitter place.

Add our fear, walls battered at by enemies,  
their arrows soaking wet with fatal venom,  
add how far this region is from every track,  
to which none travel on foot, securely, or by boat,.  
No wonder then if, seeking an end to this,  
I ask endlessly for a different location.  
Your lack of success, wife, is a greater wonder,  
and your ability to hold back tears at my troubles.  
You ask what you should do? Ask yourself, surely:  
you'll find out, if you truly desire to know.  
It's not enough to wish: you must long to achieve,  
and the anxiety should shorten your hours asleep.  
I think many wish it: who'd be so unfair to me  
as to desire me to have no peace in my exile?  
You should work for me day and night, strain  
with a full heart and with every sinew.  
And you must win our friends, so others help,  
wife, and appear the leader of your party.  
The role imposed on you in my books is a great one:  
you're spoken of as the model of a good wife.  
Take care you don't slip from that position. See you  
guard what fame has achieved, so my claim is true.  
Though I don't complain myself, fame, as she should, will  
complain when I'm silent, if you don't show care for me.  
Fate has exposed me to the public gaze,  
and given me more notoriety than before.  
[Capaneus](#) was made more famous when the lightning  
struck:  
[Amphiaraus](#) when his horses were swallowed by the earth.

[Ulysses](#) would have been less known if he'd wandered less:

[Philoctetes](#)' great fame derived from his wound.

If there's a place for the humble among such names,

I too am made conspicuous by my ruin.

And my writings won't let you pass unknown,

you, whose name's no less than Coan [Bittis](#)'.

So whatever you do will be seen on a mighty stage,

and you'll be a virtuous wife before many witnesses.

Believe me, whenever you're praised in my verse

he who reads that praise asks if you're worthy of it.

And though many, I think, approve those virtues,

not a few women will carp at your deeds.

It's for you to ensure that jealousy can't say:

'She's indifferent to her poor husband's safety.'

## **Book EIII.I:67-104 To His Wife: His Request To Her**

Since I'm weakening, unable to drag the cart,  
see that you shoulder the wavering yoke alone.  
Sick, I gaze at the doctor with failing pulse:  
stand by me, while the last of my life is left:  
What I'd provide if I were stronger than you,  
grant to me, since you yourself are the stronger.  
Our mutual love and our marriage vows urge it:  
this your own character urges, my wife.  
You owe it to the [Fabii](#) who esteem you, to adorn  
their house no less with virtue than with duty.  
Do what you will, unless you're praised as a wife  
you won't be thought to have brought honour to [Marcia](#).  
Nor am I undeserving: and, if you'll confess the truth,  
some thanks are due for all my kindnesses.  
Indeed, you return them to me at full interest,  
and talk, even if others wish, won't harm you.  
But add this one thing to your previous actions,  
be assiduous in the matter of our misfortunes.  
Work, so I might live in a less hostile region,  
and then no aspect of your duty will be lacking.  
I ask a lot, but nothing hateful's being asked,  
if you don't succeed, the failure won't harm you.  
And don't flare up because I ask you so often  
to do what you're doing, and act as you are.  
The brave have often been inspired by the trumpets,  
and the general's words urge on troops fighting hard.  
Your virtue is known and established for all time:

don't let your courage be less than your virtue.  
You don't have to raise an [Amazon](#)'s battle-axe for me,  
or carry a curved shield on your feeble arm.  
A god's to be entreated, not that he befriend me,  
but to be less angry with me than before.  
If there's no favour, tears will win you favour,  
you can move the gods in that way, or not at all.  
You won't lack tears, well provided by our troubles,  
you've a wealth of weeping with me for a husband:  
and as things are I think you'll always be crying.  
These are the riches my fate serves up for you.

## Book EIII.I:105-166 To His Wife: An Approach To Livia

Had you to redeem my death, a detestable idea,  
[Alcestis](#), [Admetus](#)'s wife would be your model.  
You'd emulate [Penelope](#) if, by chaste deceit, you wished  
to be the bride misleading insistent suitors.  
If you followed your dead husband to the shadows,  
[Laodamia](#) would be your guide in the act.  
You'd need to keep [Evadne](#) before your eyes, if you  
wanted to throw yourself bravely onto the burning pyre.  
But you don't need to die, don't need [Penelope](#)'s weaving.  
It's [Caesar's wife](#) your lips need to pray to,  
who by her virtue shows that ancient times  
don't touch our age in their praise of chastity:  
she who with [Venus](#)'s beauty, [Juno](#)'s ways,  
alone was found worthy to share the celestial bed.  
Why tremble or hesitate to approach her? It's no impious  
[Procne](#) or [Medea](#) who's to be moved by your words,  
no murderous [Danaid](#), not [Agamemnon](#)'s cruel [wife](#),  
no yelping [Scylla](#) terrorising [Sicilian](#) waters,  
no [Circe](#) born with the power to alter forms,  
no [Medusa](#) binding her knotted hair with snakes,  
but the first of women, in whom [Fortune](#) shows herself  
as clear-sighted, and falsely charged with being blind:  
than whom the earth holds nothing more glorious,  
save Caesar, from the sun's rising to its setting.  
Choose a well-considered time to ask,  
lest your boat sets sail on an adverse tide.

The oracles don't always deliver sacred prophecies,  
the temples themselves aren't always open.  
When the city's state is as I now divine it,  
and there's no grief on peoples' faces,  
when Augustus's house, to be revered as the [Capitol](#),  
is as happy as it is now, and filled with peace,  
then may the gods grant you the chance to make an  
approach,  
then reflect your words may achieve something.  
If she's doing something greater, put off your attempt,  
and take care not to ruin my chances by hastiness.  
Again I don't suggest you pick a time when she's idle:  
she barely has leisure for her personal needs.  
When the whole House is filled with revered senators,  
you too should go amongst the crush of business.  
When you succeed in reaching Juno's presence,  
make sure you remember the part you have to play.  
Don't defend my actions: a poor case should be silent.  
Let your words be nothing but anxious prayers.  
Next remove the barrier to tears, sink to the ground,  
stretch your arms towards those deathless feet.  
Then ask for nothing except that I might leave  
the cruel enemy behind: let fate be enemy enough.  
More comes to mind, but confused by fear, your voice  
trembling, you'll barely be able even to say that.  
I suspect it won't harm you. She'll see  
you're terrified of her majesty. And it won't hurt  
if your speech is interrupted by sobs:  
tears sometimes carry the weight of words.



Make sure it's a lucky day for such things too,  
and a suitable hour, when the omens are good.  
But first light a fire on the holy altars,  
offer pure wine and incense to the great gods.  
Worship divine Augustus amongst them, above all,  
his loyal descendants, and the partner of his bed.  
May they be merciful to you as is their way,  
and view your tears with faces free of harshness.

## **Book EIII.II:1-110 To Cotta Maximus: Iphigenia in Tauris**

[Cotta](#), may the 'health' you read here, that I  
send you, be truly sent, and reach you, I pray.  
Your well-being removes much of my torment,  
and to a large extent causes me to feel well.  
While others waver, and desert the storm-tossed sail,  
you remain, the shattered boat's only anchor.  
So is your loyalty welcome. I forgive those  
who've taken flight along with Fortune.  
Though it strikes one man, it's not only one the lightning  
frightens, and the crowd round the stricken one tremble.  
When a wall has given warning of its imminent fall,  
nervousness and fear empty the place.  
What fearful man doesn't avoid contagious illness,  
afraid of contracting disease by its proximity?  
Some of my friends too deserted me because  
of excessive fear and terror, not hatred of me.  
They didn't lack loyalty or the wish to serve me:  
they went in fear of the hostile gods.  
They might seem over cautious or fearful,  
but they don't deserve to be called bad.  
Or is it my honesty excuses dear friends,  
and favours them so they're absolved from blame.  
Let them be content with this forgiveness: they're free  
to boast they're proved innocent by my testimony too.  
You few are the better friends who though it wrong  
not to bring me help in a tight corner.

So my gratitude for your services will only die  
when my body's consumed and turned to ashes.  
I'm wrong: it will outlast the years of my life,  
if I'm still read by thoughtful posterity.  
The bloodless body's destined for a mournful tomb,  
fame and honour escape the towering pyre.  
Even [Theseus](#) died, and [Pylades](#), [Orestes](#)' friend:  
yet each still lives on in his renown.  
You too will often be praised by remote descendants,  
and your glory will shine bright in my verses.  
Here too the [Sarmatians](#) and the [Getae](#) already know  
of you, and the savage crowd approve of such spirits.  
And lately when I was telling of your loyalty  
(since I've learnt how to speak Getic and Sarmatian)  
it chanced that an old man, standing in the circle,  
replied in this way to what I said:  
'Good stranger, we too know the name of friendship, we  
who live by the [Black Sea](#) and the [Danube](#), far from you.  
There's a place in [Scythia](#), our ancestors called [Tauris](#),  
that's not so far away from the [Getic](#) lands.  
I was born in that land (I'm not ashamed of my country):  
it's people worship a goddess, [Diana](#), sister of [Apollo](#).  
Her temple still stands, supported on giant columns,  
and you enter it by a flight of forty steps.  
The story goes that it once held a statue of the deity,  
and the base, lacking its goddess, is there to quell your  
doubts:  
and the altar, which was white from the colour of the  
stone,

is darkened, reddened by the stains of spilt blood.  
A woman, unknown to the marriage torches, noblest  
of the daughters of Scythia by birth, performs the rites.  
The nature of the sacrifice, as our ancestors decreed,  
is that a stranger be slain by this virgin's blade.  
[Thoas](#) ruled the kingdom, famous in [Maeotia](#),  
no other was better known, by [Euxine](#) waters.  
They say that while he was king a certain [Iphigenia](#)  
made her way there through the clear air.  
They say [Diana](#) set her down in these regions, she  
blown in a cloud, through the sky, by gentle breezes.  
She duly presided over the shrine for many years,  
performing the sad rites with unwilling hands:  
until two young men arrived on board a ship  
with sails, and set their feet on our shores.  
They were equal in age and affection: one was [Orestes](#),  
the other [Pylades](#): fame keeps their names alive.  
They were led straight to [Trivia](#)'s savage altar,  
their hands tied together behind their backs.  
The Greek priestess sprinkled the captives with purifying  
water,  
that the long sacrificial ribbons might encircle their yellow  
hair.  
As she initiated the rites, bound the threads round their  
temples,  
as she herself searched for reasons for her slow delay,  
she said: "Youths, I am not cruel (forgive me),  
I perform rites more cruel than those of my own land.

It's the practice of this people. What city do you come from?

What journey do you make in your ill-fated vessel?"

So she spoke, then the sacred virgin, hearing the name of her native country, found them to be men of her own city.

"Let one of you die, a victim of these rites," she said, "let the other carry the news to the fatherland."

Pylades, intent on being the one to die, orders his dear Orestes

to go: he refuses, and each in turn argue about their dying.

This remains the only thing they ever disagreed on:

on all else they were as one, and without dispute.

While the handsome youths act out their loving quarrel, she pens pages of writing to her brother.

She was sending word to her brother, and he to whom it was given (such is human fate!) *was* her brother.

So, without delay, they took Diana's image from the temple,

and were carried in secret over the boundless sea in their boat.

The youths' love was wonderful: though many years have passed, they still have great fame here in Scythia.'

After he had finished telling this well-known story, everyone there praised acts of loyal devotion.

Even on this shore, and there's none that is wilder, it's clear that friendship's name moves savage hearts.

If such actions stir the harsh [Getae](#), what should they do to you, who are born of an [Italian](#) city?

Added to which you have a spirit that's always gentle,  
and a character that's witness to your high nobility,  
that [Volesus](#), founder of your father's line, would  
recognise,  
or on your mother's side, that [Numa](#) would not disown,  
and the Cottas, added to your natal line, a house and name  
that would perish but for your existence, would approve.  
Hero, worthy of this ancestry, consider it in keeping  
with such things to support a fallen friend.

## **Book EIII.III:1-108 To Paullus Fabius Maximus: Love's Visit**

If you've a little time to give to an exiled friend,  
O star of the Fabii, [Maximus](#), attend,  
while I tell of what I saw, a ghost of the flesh,  
an image of reality, or perhaps it was a dream.  
It was night, and the moonlight entered my double  
shuttered window, as bright as ever at the full.  
Sleep, our common rest from care, held me,  
and my weary limbs were sprawled over the bed,  
when suddenly the trembling air shook with wings,  
and, with a slight noise, the window creaked open.  
Startled I lifted myself on my left elbow, and sleep  
was driven at a blow from my anxious mind.  
There stood [Love](#), but not with the aspect that he used  
to have, resting his left hand on the maple bedpost,  
no neck-let, no pin in his hair, his unruly locks  
not neatly groomed now, as they were before.  
The hair fell softly over his unkempt cheeks,  
and his plumage looked bedraggled to my eyes,  
as the back of a homing dove often is,  
with the many hands that touch and handle it.  
As soon as I knew him, and no one's better known  
to me, my tongue was freed and I spoke these words:  
'Boy, the cause of your deceived master's exile,  
you, whom I'd far better not have taught,  
are you here too, where there's never any peace,  
where the wild [Danube](#) gathers its icy waters?

What's the reason for your journey, other than to view  
my troubles, which accuse you, if you're unaware of it?  
You were the first to dictate my youthful verses to me:  
you guided me to set elegiac pentameter to hexameter.  
You wouldn't let me reach to [Homeric](#) song,  
or tell the actions of the mighty heroes.  
The force of my genius, slight perhaps yet something,  
was diminished by your bow and your torches.  
and my mind was free for no great undertaking,  
while I sang your, and your mother's, reign.  
That wasn't enough. I also ensured by a foolish poem  
that you wouldn't be inexperienced in my Arts.  
The reward of exile was dealt me for it, wretchedly,  
and that in a remote place, never peaceful.  
Chionian [Eumolpus](#) was not such to [Orpheus](#),  
nor [Olympus](#) to [Marsyas](#), the [Satyr](#) of [Phrygia](#),  
nor did [Chiron](#) receive such a prize from [Achilles](#),  
nor did [Numa](#), they say, harm [Pythagoras](#).  
Not to list all the names collected down the ages,  
I'm the only one ruined by my disciple.  
This is the reward the master has, with you as pupil,  
because I gave you weapons, and taught you, wanton.  
Yet you know, and could swear with a clear  
conscience, that I've never troubled lawful beds.  
I wrote for those whose chaste hair was never  
touched by ribbons, nor their feet by the long robe.  
Say, I beg you, did you ever at my command  
learn how to cheat brides, and make paternity uncertain?  
Hasn't every woman the law protects from seducers



been strictly excluded from all those works?  
Still, what use is that if it's thought I've composed  
notes on adultery, which is forbidden by harsh laws?  
But don't let [Caesar](#)'s anger at me be implacable,  
who's of your kin, through [Aeneas](#) your brother,  
so may you carry the arrows that strike us all,  
so may your torches never lack their swift fire,  
so may he rule the empire, and control all lands:  
let him wish to punish me in a pleasanter place.'  
So it seemed I spoke to the winged boy,  
so he seemed to reply to me in these words:  
'I swear by my weapons, my torches and arrows,  
by my mother, and by Caesar's life, I've learnt  
nothing save what's legal from your teaching,  
and there's nothing criminal in your arts.  
I wish I could defend you on other charges, as in this!  
You know there's [another thing](#) that harms you more.  
Whatever it is (since the painful thing shouldn't be told,  
and you can't say that you are free from blame)  
though you try to hide the crime under the guise of error,  
your judge's anger was no more than you deserved.  
Yet my wings have glided over endless ways  
to see you, and console you in your misery.  
I first saw this place when, at my mother's request,  
I pierced the [Phasian](#) girl, [Medea](#), with my arrow.  
The reason why I'm here again after long ages  
is you, O fond soldier of my army.  
So forget your fears: Caesar's anger will relent,  
and a gentler hour will come, at your prayer.

Don't be scared at the delay, the time we wish is near,  
and [the triumph](#) has filled everyone with joy.  
While the house, the children, their mother [Livia](#), rejoice,  
while you rejoice, great father of our leader and our land,  
while the people congratulate themselves, and every altar  
burns with fragrant fires throughout the city,  
while the sacred powers offer an easy approach,  
it's to be hoped our prayers might have some worth.'  
He spoke, and either he slid away into thin air,  
or my senses themselves began to wake.  
If I doubted your approval of these words, Maximus,  
I might believe that swans were black as [Memnon](#).  
But milky liquid can't be altered to dark pitch,  
nor can shining ivory become purple terebinth.  
Your birth suits your spirit, since you have a noble  
heart, and the straightforwardness of [Hercules](#).  
Livid malice, vice of fear, won't show itself in noble  
natures, but slides like a hidden snake along the earth.  
Your mind towers high above your birth itself,  
for your name's no greater than your genius.  
So let others hurt the wretched, and choose to be feared,  
and carry points dipped in bitter poison:  
Your house, at least, is used to helping suppliants,  
be willing, please, for me to be among their number.

## Book EIII.IV:1-56 To Rufinus: His Poem On The 'Triumph'

Ovid sends these words, bearing no empty greeting,  
from the town of [Tomis](#), to you, [Rufinus](#),  
and asks you, to befriend his '*Triumph*'  
if, that is, it has reached your hands yet.  
It's a slight work, unequal to the occasion:  
but such as it is he asks you to defend it.  
The strong have inner power, and need no [Machaon](#).  
It's the sick and anxious who seek the doctor's skill.  
Great poets don't require indulgent readers: they grip us,  
however unwilling we are, or hard to please.  
I, with a skill diminished by long suffering,  
(or perhaps there never was any former talent),  
my powers gone, am strengthened by your sincerity:  
take that away and I'd think all was lost.  
Though all my work depends on well-disposed  
indulgence,  
that one in particular has a special right to your support.  
Other poets write about triumphs they've watched:  
it's one thing to record events with the hand of a witness,  
but I've penned what an eager ear learned, with difficulty,  
from hearsay, and rumour has acted as my eyes.  
As if a similar passion, or the same inspiration  
comes from what is heard as what is seen!  
It's not the absence of the shining gold and silver  
that you've seen, that finery, I complain of:  
but the places, people in a thousand shapes and forms,

the battles themselves would have fed my verse,  
and the royal faces, surest guide to their thoughts,  
might perhaps have added something to the work.  
Any talent can catch alight, from the applause  
and the happy approval of the crowd:  
I'd have gained strength from such a clamour,  
like a raw recruit hearing the trumpet-call to arms.  
Though my heart were colder than snow and ice,  
frozen harder than this place that I endure,  
the general's face up there in his ivory chariot,  
would drive away all frost from my feelings.  
Without that, and using dubious informants,  
it's right I seek the help of your indulgence.  
The names of the leaders and the places  
aren't known to me. Nothing is to hand.  
What portion of such things could rumour bring  
or someone writing to me about it?  
The more you ought to forgive me, O reader,  
if I've made errors in it, or neglected anything.  
Add that my lyre, always dwelling on it's master's moans,  
can barely turn itself to happy songs.  
Cheerful words, though searched for, hardly come to  
mind,  
and delight in anything seems novel to me.  
Just as eyes shun the unaccustomed sunlight,  
so my mind was slow to delight.  
Novelty's the most dearly-loved of all things, too,  
and thanks are lacking for service made late by delay.

Others have competed together in writing of the great  
triumph,  
and I suspect people have read them widely, for some  
time.  
The thirsty reader drank them: he's sated by my cup:  
that drink was fresh, my water will be tepid.

## **Book EIII.IV:57-115 To Rufinus: His Prophecy**

I haven't been remiss: idleness hasn't slowed me:  
but I live on a far shore of a vast sea.  
While news gets here, and hasty verse is written  
and, once made, goes to you, a year can pass.  
It's no small thing to be first in the untouched rose-garden,  
not gather, with late hands, what's almost been passed by.  
No wonder, with the flowers picked, the garden bare,  
if the wreath that's made is unworthy of your leader.  
This I beg: that no poet thinks these words are spoken  
against their verse! My [Muse](#) speaks only for herself.  
Poets, you and I have rites in common:  
if the wretched are allowed to be of your choir.  
You spent a large part of your spirit with me, friends:  
I cherish you now in that way, even though I'm absent.  
So let my verse be sealed with your approval  
since I cannot speak on its behalf myself.  
Often writings are made pleasing by death, since envy  
hurts the living, gnaws with the tooth of injustice.  
If to live wretchedly is like dying, earth delays  
me, and my destiny only lacks a tomb.  
Though the outcome of my efforts is faulted in the end,  
by everyone, there'll be no one to deny my sense of duty.  
Though strength is lacking, yet the will's to be praised:  
I divine that the gods will be content with that.  
It ensures that a poor man's welcome at the altars:  
a lamb's no less acceptable than a sacrificial ox.  
It was a great enough thing too to make it a heavy task

even for the noble [author](#) of the Aeneid.  
Anyway, weak elegiacs couldn't carry the weight  
of so great a triumph on their disparate wheels.  
My judgement's uncertain as to what metre to use now:  
since a second triumph's near, concerning you, [Rhine](#).  
The prophecies of inspired poets are not vain:  
Jove will be granted laurel, while the first's still green.  
It's not my words you read, I'm banished to the [Danube](#),  
waters that the as yet un-pacified [Getae](#) drink:  
this is the voice of a god, a god is in my heart,  
this I prophesy, led by a god's command.  
[Livia](#), why hesitate, to ready a retinue and chariot  
for a triumph? Already war allows you no delay.  
Traitorous Germany throws away the hated spears,  
soon you'll admit my omen carries weight.  
Believe, and truth will shortly arrive. [Your son](#) will have  
double honour, and, as before, follow the yoked horses.  
Bring out the purple, to throw on the victor's shoulders:  
the wreath itself will know that familiar brow:  
and let greaves and shield shine with gold and gems,  
and the trophied tree-trunk stand above chained men:  
and towns in ivory be circled by towered walls,  
and the semblance be thought to act the real thing.  
Let uncouth Rhine, hair trailing under broken  
reeds, bear along its waters fouled with blood.  
Captive kings already call for savage insignia,  
and for robes richer than their destinies,  
and what else the unconquered courage of your sons,  
has needed you to prepare so often, and so often will.

Gods, by whose prophecy I speak of things to come,  
prove my words, I pray, with swift vindication.



## Book EIII.V:1-58 To Cotta: A Compliment

You ask where the letter that you read comes from?  
From here: where [Danube](#) joins with the blue waves.  
As soon as the region's named, the author should appear  
to you, Ovid the poet, wounded by his own talent.  
He offers a greeting to you, Maximus [Cotta](#), to whom he'd  
prefer  
to offer it face to face, a greeting from the land of the  
uncouth [Getae](#).  
I've read the fluent words you spoke in the crowded  
forum,  
O youth not unworthy of your fathers' eloquence.  
Though my hurrying tongue repeated them for a fair  
number of hours, I complain they were too few.  
But I've made them more by frequent re-reading, and  
never  
a time when they weren't more pleasing to me than at  
first.  
Though they lose nothing of their charm by such reading,  
it's by their power, not their novelty, that they please.  
Happy those to whom it was granted to hear them  
in actuality and enjoy so eloquent a speech!  
Though water that's brought to us has a taste that's sweet,  
the water we drink from the fount itself's more pleasing.  
And to take the fruit we've pulled from the branch  
delights us more than from a chased dish.  
If I'd not sinned, if my [Muse](#) hadn't caused my exile,  
your own voice would have told me what I read,

and perhaps I'd have sat, as I used to sit, as one  
of the [Centumviri](#), in judgement of your words,  
and a greater joy might have filled my heart, when I  
was swayed, and nodded my approval of your speech.  
But since fate preferred I leave you and my country,  
to live among the uncivilised Getae, please send,  
as often as you can, proofs of your skill for me to read  
so that I might seem to be in your company more,  
and unless you scorn to do so, follow the example,  
which you might more readily set me, since I,  
who have long been lost, try by my talent  
to be one who is not yet lost to you, Maximus.  
Repay me, and in future let me receive that frequent  
pleasure, the records of your labours, in my hands.  
But tell me, O youth, pregnant with my studies,  
if anything among them reminds you of me.  
When you read your friends a new made poem,  
or, as you often used to, urge them to recite,  
do you sometimes think your mind, unsure what's  
missing,  
nevertheless feels that something is missing,  
and as you often used to talk about me, present,  
is Ovid's name on your lips, even now?  
As for me may I die, pierced by a Getic arrow,  
(and you know how near punishment is if I lie)  
if I, absent, don't see you at almost ever instant.  
It's a kindness that the mind can go where it wishes.  
When I enter the City like that, unseen by all,  
I often speak with you, and enjoy your speech.

I can't tell you then how blessed I am,  
and how bright that hour is to my mind.  
Then, if you can believe it, I dream I've been received  
in the heavenly realm, to exist among the happy gods.  
When I'm here again, I leave the sky, the deities,  
for the land of [Pontus](#), not far from the [Styx](#).  
If my striving to return from here is prohibited by fate,  
then take from me, Maximus, this unprofitable hope.

## Book EIII.VI:1-60 To An Unknown Friend: Shipwreck

Ovid sends this brief poem from the [Euxine](#) Sea to his friend (how near he came to setting down the name!) But if his hand, lacking caution, had written who you are, perhaps that attention would have been grounds for complaint.

But why do you alone, when others think it safe, request that I not address you in my verse?

You can learn how great Caesar's mercy is, in the midst of his anger, from my case, if you don't already know.

If I were forced to judge what I deserve, myself,

I wouldn't reduce the sentence, I suffer, one iota.

He doesn't forbid anyone to remember his friends, nor prevent me writing to you, or you to me.

You'd commit no crime by consoling a comrade, easing his bitter fate with gentle words.

Why do you, by fearing what's safe, make such reverence for the Augustan gods offensive?

We see things, struck by the lightening bolt, live and recover, unhindered by [Jupiter](#).

[Leucothea](#) didn't refuse her aid to [Ulysses](#), as he swam, merely because [Neptune](#) wrecked his ship.

The heavenly powers, believe me, spare the wretched, and don't always, endlessly oppress the wounded.

No god is more lenient than our prince:

Justice moderates his powers.

[Caesar](#) recently established her in a marble shrine, but long ago in the temple of his heart.

[Jupiter](#) casually hurls his lightning at many,  
who've not merited punishment for any crime.  
Though [the god](#) of the sea has overwhelmed a multitude  
in the cruel waves, how many deserved to be drowned?  
When the bravest die in battle, even [Mars'](#)  
tithe seems unjust, in his own judgement.  
But if you chance to question every one,  
none of us would deny he earned what he suffers.  
More, those who have perished in sea, war or fire,  
no new day can bring them back to life again,  
but Caesar reprieves many or lightens their sentence,  
and I pray he'll want me as one among those many.  
When we as a people live under such a prince, can you  
really believe there's anything to fear in speaking to an  
exile?  
Perhaps you'd have reason to be afraid with [Busiris](#) as  
master,  
or [Phalaris](#) who used to incinerate men in his bronze bull.  
Stop defaming that kind spirit with your empty fears.  
Why be terrified of cruel reefs in calm waters?  
I scarcely think that I myself should be pardoned,  
for writing to you at first without using your name.  
But panic robbed me, stunned, of the use of reason,  
and all judgement had ended at fresh misfortune,  
and dreading my fate, not my judge's anger,  
I was even terrified of adding my own name.  
So admonished, allow the thoughtful poet  
to add the names dear to him, to your letters.  
It will be shameful for us both if you, so close to me

through long acquaintance, were nowhere visible in my book.

Yet that fear of yours can't be allowed to disturb your sleep,

I'll not show you more attentions than you wish,  
and I'll hide who you are unless you yourself allow:  
no one shall be forced to accept my tribute.

Though you could have loved me openly, in safety,  
if that's a thing of danger, love me secretly.

## **Book EIII.VII:1-40 To Unknown Friends: Resignation**

Words fail me, at asking the same thing so often,  
and I'm ashamed my useless prayers are without end.  
You've become weary of my monotonous verses,  
and I ask what you've all learned by heart, I suppose.  
You already know what my letter brings, though  
the wax has not been shaken from its ties.

So let me alter my purpose in writing,  
and not swim so often against the stream.  
Forgive me friends: I hoped so much from you:  
let there be an end for me to such mistakes.  
Nor will I be considered a burden on my wife:  
who's as honest to me, truly, as she's timid and  
unassertive.

[Naso](#), endure this too: you've suffered worse.  
there's no weight now that you could feel.

The bull shuns the plough when he's taken from the herd,  
and draws his neck away, new to the harsh yoke:  
for long there's been no trouble unknown to me,  
to whom the cruel usage of fate is customary.

I've reached the [Getic](#) lands: let me die among them,  
and let my [Fate](#) end as it has begun.

It helps to embrace hope – that's no help, being always in  
vain –

and think that what you wish to occur, will happen:  
the next stage is to despair of being saved, completely,  
and know you're lost, once and for all, with the surety of  
faith.

We see some wounds become worse by treatment,  
that it would have been better not to touch.  
He dies more easily, who's suddenly drowned by the  
waves,  
than he who wearies his arms in the raging sea.  
Why did I think it possible to leave [Scythia](#)'s  
bounds, and enjoy a more favourable land?  
Why did I ever hope for any leniency in my case?  
Surely my fate was clear enough to me?  
See, my torment's worse: recalling the sight of places  
renews the bitterness of exile, makes it recent.  
Yet it's better if it is that my friends' zeal has waned,  
than that petitions they've made have proved worthless.  
Indeed it's a great thing you don't dare to ask, my friends:  
yet there'd have been one willing to give, if anyone asked.  
Assuming Caesar's anger doesn't forbid it me,  
I'll waste away, bravely, by the [Euxine](#) Sea.



## Book EIII.VIII:1-24 To Maximus Paullus: A Gift

I was wondering what gift the land of [Tomis](#)  
might send you as witness to my thoughtful affection.  
You deserve silver, even more so yellow gold, but you  
used to find more joy in those when you were the giver.  
Besides there are no mines for precious metal here:  
the enemy barely allow the farmers to dig the ground.  
Often bright purple has bordered your robes,  
but it's not been dyed by the [Sarmatian](#) sea.  
The flocks produce coarse wool, and the women  
of Tomis have not yet learned the arts of [Pallas](#).  
Instead of spinning they grind [Ceres](#)'s gift,  
and carry water in pots on their heads.  
Here no clustering vines clothe the elms,  
no apples bend the branches with their load.  
The unlovely plains yield acrid wormwood,  
and the land shows its bitterness by its fruit.  
So there was nothing in all this region of [Pontus](#),  
the perverse, that my consideration could send.  
Still I've sent you [Scythian](#) arrows sheathed in a quiver:  
I pray they might be stained by your enemies' blood.  
Such are the pens of this shore: such are the books,  
such is the [Muse](#), [Maximus](#), that flourishes in this place!  
Though I'm ashamed to send them, they seem so poor,  
still I beg you to take pleasure in their being sent.

## Book EIII.IX:1-56 To Brutus: On Criticism

[Brutus](#), you tell me someone's carping at my verse,  
because the same sentiment's in all these books:  
nothing but asking to enjoy somewhere nearer, he says,  
and the fact I'm surrounded by crowds of enemies.  
O, how only one of my many faults is seized on!  
If that's the only way my [Muse](#) has sinned, that's fine.  
I see the defects in my books myself, though everyone  
approves their own poetry more than is right.  
The author praises the work: so once perhaps [Agrius](#),  
[Thersites](#)' father, might have called his son handsome.  
But this mistake doesn't cloud my judgement,  
I don't immediately love what I produce.  
So why, you ask, if I see my errors, do I sin,  
and allow the faults to remain in my writings?  
To suffer a disease and cure it are not the same affair,  
anyone can feel an illness, it's only removed by art.  
Often I leave some word I want to change,  
and energy abandons my judgement.  
Often I dislike (why hesitate to tell you the truth)  
correcting, enduring the toil of hard labour.  
The effort of writing's a joy in itself, and less an effort,  
and the growing work glows with one's feelings.  
But correction's as much more arduous a thing  
as [Homer](#) was greater than [Aristarchus](#), his critic,  
so that it hurts the mind, with worry's icy chill,  
and tightens the rein on horses eager for the race.  
And truly, as I wish the merciful gods to lessen Caesar's

anger, and my bones to be buried in peaceful ground,  
when I try, sometimes, to exercise care myself,  
the bitter aspect of my fate confronts me,  
and it seems to me a man who makes verse and bothers  
to correct it, among the savage [Getae](#), is barely sane.  
Yet there's nothing more forgivable in my writing  
than that a single feeling, almost, penetrates it all.  
Happy, I once sang happy things, sad things I sing in  
sadness:  
every time is suited to its own particular work.  
What should I write of but the ills of this bitter region,  
and to beg that I might die in a pleasanter place?  
I say the same things so often hardly any of it's heard,  
and my words, ignored, lack any profit.  
And yet though they're the same, I haven't addressed the  
same  
friends, and one voice of mine seeks help from many.  
Should I be asking it of you alone, [Brutus](#), of all my  
comrades,  
in case some reader discovers the same feelings written  
twice?  
Forgive the confession, learned ones, but that wasn't the  
object:  
my work's reputation is worth less than my own salvation.  
In short, many a poet, at his own discretion, plays  
variations on a subject, that he's shaped for himself.  
My [Muse](#), also, is only too true a witness to my troubles,  
and has the weight of an incorruptible informant.  
Not to produce a book, but that each should be granted

his own letter, that was my intention and my care.  
Later collecting them, anyhow, I linked them regardless:  
in case you think perhaps this work was selected by me.  
Be kind to my writings, whose purpose was not my glory,  
but their usefulness, and the duty they performed.

### **The End of Ex Ponto Book III**

## Ex Ponto Book IV

### Book EIV.I:1-36 To Sextus Pompey: His Dilatoriness

[Pompey](#), accept a poem composed by one  
who's indebted to you, Sextus, for his life.  
If you don't stop me setting down your name,  
that too will add to the sum of your merits:  
while, if you frown, I'll confess I've sinned indeed,  
though the reason for my offence should win approval.  
Truly, my mind could not be held from gratitude.  
Please don't let anger bear down on my loyal service.  
O, how often I thought myself disloyal in these books  
in that your name was nowhere to be read!  
O, how often, when I wished to write to others,  
my hand, unwittingly, set your name in the wax!  
The error of such mistakes itself pleased me,  
and my hand was barely willing to make the change.  
I said to myself: 'Let him see it, indeed even if he  
complains!  
I'm ashamed of not having earned his reproach before.'  
Give me the waters of [Lethé](#) that numb the heart, if  
they exist, I'll still not have the power to forget you.  
I beg you'll allow this, and not reject my words  
with contempt, nor consider my attentions a crime,  
and let this be the inadequate thanks offered for all your  
help:  
if not, I'll still be grateful, against your will.

Your grace was never slow in my affairs,  
your wealth never denied me generous assistance.  
Even now your compassion, undeterred by my  
swift fate, offers my life, and will offer it, aid.  
You might ask from where I derive such confidence  
in the future? Everyone cherishes what they've made.  
As [Venus](#) remains the labour and glory of [Apelles](#),  
wringing her hair wet with the sea's spray:  
as warlike [Athene](#) stands guard on the [Acropolis](#),  
created in bronze and ivory by [Phidias](#)'s hand:  
as [Calamis](#) wins praise for the horses he fashioned:  
as those cattle, true to life, are a masterpiece by [Myron](#):  
so I'm not the least of your possessions, Sextus,  
and celebrated as a work, a gift of your patronage.

## Book EIV.II:1-50 To Cornelius Severus: A Fellow Poet

O [Severus](#), mightiest poet of mighty patrons, this you read  
comes all the way from the long-haired [Getae](#):  
and it shames me, if you'll only allow me to tell the truth,  
that my books have been silent as yet about your name.

Yet letters without metre have never ceased  
to pass in turn between us, out of friendship.  
It's only verse I've not given you, witness to your  
thoughtful  
attentions. Why indeed give you what you yourself  
compose?

Who'd give [Aristaeus](#) honey, [Bacchus](#) Falernian wine,  
[Triptolemus](#) grain, or send apples to [Alcinous](#)?

You've a fertile mind, and of those who plough  
[Helicon](#), no one produces a richer crop.

To send verses to such, would be adding leaves to the  
woods.

That's the reason for my delaying to do so, Severus.  
Moreover my skill doesn't respond as before,  
I turn the arid shore with a barren blade.

As sure as mud chokes the waves in the canals,  
and the troubled water builds in a choked spring,  
so my mind's been hurt by muddy misfortune,  
and poetry flows in an impoverished vein.

If anyone had set [Homer](#) down in this place,  
believe me, even he'd have turned into a Getan.

Forgive my confession, I've let slip the reins of study,  
and my fingers are rarely drawn to letters.

That sacred impulse, that nourishes poet's hearts,  
that once used to be mine, has all vanished.  
My [Muse](#) barely plays her part, when I've taken up my  
tablets,  
she barely lays a hand there, almost has to be forced.  
I've little or no pleasure, to speak of, in writing,  
no joy in weaving words into metre,  
whether it's the fact I've reaped no profit from it,  
that makes this thing the source of my misfortunes:  
or that writing a poem you can't read to anyone  
is exactly like making gestures in the dark.  
An audience stirs interest: power grows  
with praise, and fame is a continual spur.  
Who can I recite my work to here, but yellow-haired  
[Coralli](#), and the other tribes of the barbarous Danube?  
But what can I do, alone, with what matters should I pass  
an ill-starred idleness, and fritter away the days?  
Since neither wine nor illusory dice attract me,  
those usual ways in which time silently steals by,  
and I can't delight in renewing earth by cultivation,  
though I'd like to if the savage wars allowed,  
what's left but the [Muses](#), a chilly consolation,  
those goddesses who've earned no good of me?  
But you, who drink more felicitously of the [Aonian](#) spring,  
go on loving that study that works advantageously for you,  
perform the [Muses](#)' rites as they deserve, and send some  
product of your recent efforts, here, for me to read.



## **Book EIV.III:1-58 To A Faithless Friend: The Wheel Of Fortune**

Shall I complain or be silent? Should I declare the crime  
nameless,  
or should I wish who [you](#) are to be known to everyone?  
I'll not utter a name, in case my complaint advantages  
you, and you acquire fame through my verse.  
As long as my ship rested on a solid keel, you were  
first among those who wished to sail with me.  
Now that [Fortune](#)'s frowned, you slide away,  
now that you know your help is really needed.  
You dissemble too: don't want to be thought to know me,  
'Who's that?' you ask, on hearing the name of Ovid.  
I'm the one, though you don't want to hear it, joined to  
you,  
in a long-standing friendship, almost boy with boy:  
I'm the one who was the first to know your serious  
thoughts, and the first to share in your pleasant jests:  
I'm the one, familiar friend of your house, by frequent  
custom,  
I'm the one, the one and only Poet in your opinion.  
I'm the one, traitor, you don't know if I'm still alive,  
whom you've taken no care to enquire about.  
If I was never dear to you, you show your deceit:  
if you weren't inventing it, your fickleness is revealed.  
Or come, tell me about some resentment that changed you:  
since my reproach is just, unless yours turns out to be.

What's the fellow crime that stops you being what you were?

Do you call it a crime that I've commenced being unhappy?

If you couldn't bring me help in substance or in action, you might have managed three words on a sheet of paper? I scarcely believe it myself, but rumour has it you insult me in my downfall, without sparing a single word.

Ah, madman, why are you doing this! Why, given Fortune might fail, do you lessen the tears to be shed at your own wreck?

That goddess shows by her own wavering orb that she's fickle,

she who always stands on its top beneath her unsteady feet.

She's less certain than every leaf, than any breeze: only yours, perverse one, equals her fickleness.

All things mortal hang by a tenuous thread, and what was strong is ruined by sudden chance.

Who's not heard of the power of [Croesus](#)'s wealth? Yet didn't he, a captive, have his life spared by his enemy?

[Dionysius](#), feared but now in the city of [Syracuse](#), barely kept fierce hunger away with his humble art.

Who was greater than [Pompey](#)? Yet, fleeing, he asked for help from a client, and in a submissive voice, and he, whom all the countries of the world obeyed, *ended by needing the aid of a single man.*

[Marius](#), famed for his triumphs over [Jugurtha](#) and the [Cimbri](#),  
under whose consulship Rome was so often victorious,  
lay in the mud and the marsh grass, and suffered  
many things shameful for so great a man.  
Divine power toys with human affairs, and true  
faith barely finds a place in present times.  
If anyone had said to me: 'You'll travel to [Euxine](#) shores,  
and live in fear of being wounded by [Getic](#) arrows,'  
I'd have said: 'Go and drink a potion that clears the brain,  
whatever's in all that stuff [Anticyra](#) produces.'  
Yet it happened to me: even if I could have guarded  
against  
human weapons, I couldn't do so at all against supreme  
gods.  
You too should be afraid, and consider: what seems  
your happiness, can turn to sadness while you speak.

## Book EIV.IV:1-50 To Sextus Pompeius: Consulship

There's no day so drenched by the southern  
clouds that the rain falls in an endless flood.  
There's no place so barren it hasn't a useful herb,  
lost as a rule among the tough brambles.  
A heavy fate makes nothing so miserable  
that there's no joy to lessen the pain a little.  
See how I, bereft of home, country, and the sight  
of my own, driven like a wreck to [Getic](#) waters,  
still found a reason there to brighten my glance,  
and cease to remember my misfortunes.  
As I walked alone along the yellow sands,  
there seemed the sound of wings behind me.  
Looking back, there was no one to be seen,  
but nevertheless these words came to my ears:  
'Lo, I, Rumour, come to you with glad tidings,  
having flown down the vast pathways of the air.  
Because of [Pompey](#)'s consulship, he who's dearer to you  
than any other, the [new year](#) will be happy and bright.'  
The goddess spoke and, having filled [Pontus](#)  
with good news, made her way to other nations.  
But care slipped from me in the midst of new joys,  
and the hostile harshness of this place was banished.  
So, two-faced [Janus](#), when you've opened the long year,  
and December's been driven out by your holy month,  
Pompey will don purple robes of high honour,  
and leave nothing more to be added to his titles.  
Now I seem to see halls near bursting with the crowd,

and the people trampled due to lack of space,  
and first you go to visit the [Tarpeian](#) holy places,  
and the gods begin to be receptive to your prayers:  
the snowy oxen, that [Falerii](#)'s grass has nourished,  
in its meadows, offer their throats to the sure axe:  
and next, as you wish deeply that all the gods  
might favour you, Jupiter and Caesar will do so.  
The [Curia](#) will receive you, and the senators, summoned  
in the usual way, will lend their ears to your words.  
When your speech from eloquent lips has pleased them,  
and, as customary, the day's brought words of good-omen,  
and you've given the thanks due to Caesar and the gods,  
(he'll give you cause why you should often repeat them)  
then you'll return home, escorted by the whole senate,  
your house scarcely big enough for everyone's attentions.  
Pity me, because I won't be there among that crowd,  
my eyes won't have the power to enjoy these things!  
What's permitted is for me to see you, though absent,  
in my mind: and view the features of the dear consul.  
May the gods allow my name to come to you sometimes,  
when you'll say: 'Ah, what's that poor wretch doing  
now?'  
If anyone reports words like that to me,  
I'll immediately confess my exile's eased.

## Book EIV.V:1-46 To Sextus Pompeius: Thanking The Consul

Go, slight verses, to the Consul's learned ear,  
carry a message for that distinguished man to read.  
It's a long road, and your feet won't balance,  
and the land lies shrouded in winter snow.  
You'll cross frozen [Thrace](#), [Haemus](#) hidden  
in the clouds, and the waters of the [Ionian](#) Sea,  
in less than ten days, even if you don't hurry  
on the journey, you'll reach the imperial city.  
Then [Pompey](#)'s house should be your first objective:  
no other's nearer to the Forum of [Augustus](#).  
If any in the crowd asks who you are, and where  
you're from, speak any name to mislead his ear.  
Even though I think it's safe to confess,  
surely words of deceit involve less danger.  
Even when you've reached the threshold, you won't get  
the chance to see the Consul without being stopped.  
He'll [be](#) laying down words of law to the citizens, seated  
on his high, conspicuously carved ivory chair:  
or managing public revenues, next to the planted spear,  
preventing the city's wealth being diminished:  
or, when the Senate's been called to the [Julian](#) Temple,  
he'll be debating affairs fitting for so great a Consul:  
or he'll be bearing familiar greetings to Augustus and his  
son,  
and consulting about some task not well enough  
understood.

[Germanicus](#) Caesar will claim the time left by all of this: he reverences him next to the great gods. But as soon as he's free from this host of tasks, he'll reach out a kindly hand to you, and ask, perhaps, how I myself, your author, am. I want you to reply in words like these: 'He's alive still, and acknowledges he owes his life to you, which he holds above all to be a gift of Caesar's mercy. With grateful lips he often says, that, when he was exiled, you had occasion to make those savage roads safe: it was owing to your heartfelt care he didn't warm some [Bistonian](#) sword-blade with his blood. and you added many gifts to help him live, so that his own resources weren't depleted. He swears he'll be your servant for all time, so thanks can be rendered for your services. Mountains will first be free of shadowy trees, and the seas be emptied of their sailing ships, rivers aim their course backward to their springs, before he ends his thanks for all your kindness.' When you've spoken, ask him to protect his gift, so the purpose of your journey can be fulfilled.

## Book EIV.VI:1-50 To Brutus: After Augustus's Death

[Brutus](#), the letter you're reading has come to you  
from that land where you'd prefer Ovid not to be.  
But what you'd not wish, wretched fate has willed.  
Ah me, it has greater power than your prayers.  
I've spent five years of one [Olympiad](#) in [Scythia](#):  
time's moving onwards into a second five,  
and stubborn fortune is unchanging, and slyly  
obstructs my wishes with a limping foot.

[Maximus](#), glory of the Fabii, had decided to speak,  
in supplication, to divine [Augustus](#) on my behalf.  
He died before he made the plea, and I think I'm reason  
for his death (though I can't be so important)  
Now I fear to trust my salvation to anyone:  
that recourse is truly finished with his death.

Augustus was beginning to forgive my mindless error:  
[he left](#) the world, and my hopes, bereft together.

Yet situated as I am far from your shores, I sent you  
such verse as I could write concerning the new god.  
May this respectful act aid me, and let there be an end  
to my ills, the anger of the sacred house be lessened.  
O, I can swear with a clear conscience that you, Brutus,  
known to me in no uncertain manner, pray for the same.  
Though you always granted me your true love,  
still that love has grown in my time of trouble.  
Anyone who saw your tears, that equalled mine,  
would have thought we were both to be punished.  
Nature made you kind to the wretched: she gave



no man a more merciful heart than you, Brutus:  
so whoever knew nothing of your worth in court cases,  
would hardly think your lips could prosecute criminals.  
In fact the same man, though it seems perverse maybe,  
can be mild with suppliants, and harsh with the guilty.  
When you undertake the vengeance of strict justice,  
every word's as though it's steeped in venom.  
May your enemies come to know how fierce you are  
in conflict, and suffer the sharp weapons of your tongue,  
which you polish with such refined care all would deny  
that ability could be present in such a person.  
But if you see anyone wounded by fate's injustice,  
no woman's more tender-hearted than you.  
I felt this most of all when the larger part  
of my friends denied all knowledge of me.  
Them I'll forget, you I'll never forget,  
you who ease the anxiety of my ills.  
The [Danube](#), all too close, will sooner turn its course  
back from the [Euxine](#) shore towards its source,  
the chariot of the sun be driven to the [Eastern](#) sea,  
as if the age of [Thyestean](#) banquets were returned,  
than any of you who've grieved at my exile  
shall denounce me as ungrateful, un-remembering.

## Book EIV.VII:1-54 To Vestalis: Local Knowledge

[Vestalis](#), since you've been posted to the [Euxine](#) Sea,  
to deliver justice in these places below the pole,  
you observe, in person, what country I'm stuck in, and you  
will witness I'm not in the habit of complaining idly.  
Through you, young offspring of Celtic kings,  
the truth of my words will not be ignored.  
You yourself can see [Pontus](#) truly solid with ice,  
you yourself see wine stand frozen by the frost:  
you yourself see the fierce [Iazygian](#) ox-herd  
lead his loaded wagon over the [Danube](#)'s floes.  
And you observe poison carried by barbed steel,  
so the weapon can be a dual cause of death.  
Would that this place had only to be administered,  
not also known to you yourself through warfare!  
Reaching for the highest rank, in the thick of danger,  
that well-deserved honour recently fell to you.  
Even though the title's full of reward for you,  
your courage is still greater than your role.  
Danube won't deny it whose waters were once  
dyed dark red with [Getic](#) blood, at your hands.  
[Aegisos](#) won't deny it, recaptured at your coming,  
gaining no advantage from the nature of its site.  
Since it's uncertain whether that city, touching the clouds  
on its high ridge, was better defended by arms or position.  
The fierce enemy had taken it from its [Thracian](#) king  
and, victorious, held its treasure captive, till [Vitellius](#),  
carried downriver, disembarked his troops,

and advanced his standards against the Getae.  
Then the impulse came to you, bravest scion  
of noble [Donnus](#), to attack the hostile force.  
No delay: conspicuous from afar in shining armour,  
ensuring that your brave deeds can't go unnoticed,  
with swift strides you charge their position,  
its steel, and stones, heavier than winter hail.  
A storm of missiles flung from above don't stop you,  
nor those arrow-tips steeped in snake's venom.  
Shafts with painted feathers cling to your helm,  
and scarcely any part of your shield's unscarred.  
Unhappily, your body can't escape every blow:  
but the pain is less than your sharp desire for glory.  
Such, they say, was [Ajax](#) at [Troy](#), when he endured  
[Hector](#)'s brands, in defending the Greek ships.  
When you came nearer, fighting hand to hand,  
when battle could be joined with cruel swords,  
it's difficult to tell of all your warlike actions there,  
how many you killed, whom, and how they fell.  
You trod in victory over the piles of dead your sword  
had made, the [Getae](#) heaped wherever your feet stood.  
The lower ranks followed their leader's example,  
fought, took many wounds, and delivered many.  
But your courage exceeded all others, as [Pegasus](#),  
once flew faster than the swiftest horse.  
[Aegisos](#) was taken, and your deeds, Vestalis,  
are born witness to, for ever, in my song.

## Book EIV.VIII:1-48 To Suillius: Praying To Germanicus

A letter has arrived here, one perfected [Suillius](#) by your studies: late indeed, but still, it pleases me: in which you say you'll bring me aid, as far as loyal friendship can stir the gods by asking. Even if you offered nothing else, your friendly purpose makes me your debtor: I call your wish to help true service.

Only let that impulse of yours endure lengths of time, and your loyalty not grow weary of my troubles. Our bonds of kinship make some claims on us, bonds that I pray will always remain strong. Since she who's your wife is almost my own daughter, and one who calls you son-in-law, calls me husband. It would be sad for me if you frowned reading this verse, and felt shame at being related to me by marriage! But you'll find nothing here meriting shame, except fate: she was blind where I was concerned. If you look at my family, you'll find we were knights for endless generations, from our first origins: or if you want to enquire into my morals, ignore my one error, alas, and they're spotless. If you hope anything at all can be achieved by praying, exhort the gods you worship, with a suppliant's voice. Let your god be young Caesar. Please your divine power, [Germanicus](#), truly no altar's better known to you than his. It never allows its priest's prayers to be made in vain:

seek assistance from it, concerning my affairs.  
No matter how slight the breeze, so long as it aids me  
my foundering barque will rise again from the waves.  
Then I'll offer sacred incense to the swift flames,  
and I'll bear witness to the power of the divinity.  
I'll not build a temple of Parian marble for you,  
Germanicus: my ruin stripped me of my wealth.  
Prosperous houses and cities will found temples to you:  
Ovid will thank you with his only riches, with poetry.  
I confess it's a meagre gift indeed for a great service,  
if it's words I give in return for my return being granted.  
But he who gives all he has gives thanks in abundance,  
and piety such as that has achieved its ends.  
Incense a poor man offers the gods from his lowly censer  
has no less power than that from a great man's dish.  
The new-born lamb, struck down in sacrifice, reddens  
the [Tarpeian](#) altars, as well as oxen fed on [Faliscan](#) grass.  
There's still nothing more fitting for the leaders of men  
than the tribute rendered by a poet's verse.  
Poetry acts everywhere as the herald of your glory,  
and ensures that the fame of your actions never dies.

## Book EIV.VIII:49-90 To Suillius: The Power of Poetry

Virtue's kept alive by verse, and, escaping  
the tomb, gains fame among later generations.  
Age's decay consumes iron and stone,  
and nothing has greater power than time.  
Writing survives the years. Through writing you know  
of [Agamemnon](#), and all who bore arms for or against him.  
Who'd know of [Thebes](#) and the seven generals, without  
poetry, or everything that happened before and since?  
The gods too, if it's right to say it, take on existence  
through poetry, such majesty needs a singing voice.  
It's how we know that [Chaos](#), that mass of early  
nature, separated out to acquire its elements:  
how the [Giants](#), aspiring to the rule of the Heavens,  
were hurled to [Styx](#) by the avenger's lightning blast:  
how victorious [Bacchus](#) won fame by conquering  
India, and [Hercules](#) by capturing [Oechalia](#).  
And [Germanicus](#), your [grandfather](#) whom his virtues have  
newly added to the stars, was immortalised in part by  
poetry.  
So, Caesar, if there's any life left in my skill,  
it will be at your service, completely.  
As a poet yourself you can't despise a poet's tribute:  
it *is* a thing of value in your judgement.  
And if your fame hadn't called you to great affairs,  
you'd have been the crowning glory of the [Muses](#).  
But it's better to give us all themes than poems:  
even if you can't abandon poetry completely.

One moment waging war, the next coercing words,  
what's labour for others, will be play for you.  
Just as [Apollo](#)'s not slow to use the lyre or bow,  
and either string will serve his holy hands,  
so the arts of prince and scholar never fail you,  
and the Muse is bound up with Jupiter in your mind.  
And since she's not banished me from that spring  
that [Gorgonian Pegasus](#)'s hollow hoof created,  
let it be helpful, and bring aid, that I observe our mutual  
rite,  
and have set my hand to the same studies:  
so I might flee these shores, too open to the [Coralli](#),  
a tribe clad in skins: escape the savage [Getae](#), at the last,  
and if my country's barred to such a wretch, be set down  
in any place not so far as this place is from [Rome](#),  
from where I might celebrate your latest glories,  
and tell of your great actions with least delay.  
Pray for him who's almost your father-in-law, dear  
[Suillius](#), that this request might reach the heavenly  
powers.

## Book EIV.IX:1-54 To Graecinus: On His Consulship

Ovid sends you this greeting, [Graecinus](#), as he can,  
but not as he would, from the [Black Sea](#) waters:  
once sent, may the gods have it find you in the dawn  
that first brings you the twelve 'rods and axes':  
because, since you'll reach the [Capitol](#) as [consul](#)  
without me, and I'll not be one of your people,  
allow my letter to take its master's place,  
and serve as a friend on the chosen day.  
And if I'd been born to a better fate,  
and my wheels had run on a truer axle,  
my lips would have performed the greeting  
that my hand now acts out in writing,  
and I'd congratulate you with sweet words and kisses,  
and your honours would be no less mine than yours.  
I'd be so proud on that day, I confess, there'd  
be scarcely any roof could contain my pride:  
and while the crowd of sacred senators surrounded you,  
I'd be commanded, a knight, to go before the consul:  
and though I'd wish always to be near you,  
I'd be glad not to have a mere place at your side.  
I'd not complain if I were crushed, it would be  
pleasant to be jostled by people at a time like that.  
I'd delight in gazing at the order of procession,  
and how the dense throng filled the lengthy way.  
and so you'd know how much little things impress me,  
I'd examine the quality of purple you were wearing,  
consider the shapes of the figures on your *curule* chair,



and the whole of that carved work of Numidian ivory.  
Then when you'd been accompanied to the [Tarpeian](#)  
Rock,  
when the holy sacrifice was slaughtered at your command,  
the great god that sits in the midst of the temple  
would have heard me too as I gave my private thanks:  
I'd have offered incense, heart fuller than my salver,  
rejoicing more than once at your supreme honour.  
There I'd be counted among the friends around you,  
if only a kinder fate granted me entrance to the city,  
and the pleasure my mind can only grasp at, now,  
would be experienced by my eyes as well.  
The gods won't consider it, and perhaps they're right:  
how can denying the case for my punishment help me?  
I'll still use my mind: it alone's not exiled from that place,  
to gaze at your robes and 'rods and axes'.  
It will see you one moment dispensing justice to the  
people,  
and fancy itself secretly present at your actions:  
then it will think you're doling out lengthy contracts,  
by the spear, settling it all with scrupulous honesty:  
next moment you're speaking eloquently to the Senate,  
pursuing what the state interest demands:  
then you're giving thanks on behalf of the divine  
Caesars, striking the white necks of fat oxen.  
If only, when you've done praying for greater things,  
you could ask the prince's anger to relent, for me!  
May a true flame rise from the holy altar, at your voice,  
and a bright flare declare its good omen as you pray.

## Book EIV.IX:55-88 To Graecinus: Ask Flaccus

Meanwhile, don't let me complain about everything,  
I'll be as festive as I can here at your consulship, as well.  
There's another reason for joy, not inferior to the first,  
your brother, [Flaccus](#), will succeed you in that great  
honour.

The office that ends for you as December closes  
he'll enter into on the first of January.

Such is your affection you'll experience alternate joys,  
you in your brother's consulship, and he in yours.  
And you'll be consul twice, and he'll be twice consul,  
and there'll be a double honour witnessed by your house.  
Though the honour's great, and martial [Rome](#) perceives  
nothing higher than the office of supreme consul,  
it's still magnified by the authority of the sponsor,  
and the gift acquires the majesty of the giver.

So may it be for you and Flaccus to enjoy  
such approval by [Augustus](#) for all time.

Still when your concerns are free of more pressing things,  
add both your prayers to mine, I beg you,  
and, if the breeze will fill a sail, loose the cables,  
so my ship can leave the waters of the [Styx](#).

[Flaccus](#) commanded here till recently, Graecinus,  
and the warring banks of [Danube](#) were safe in his care.  
He kept the [Moesian](#) tribes to their peace treaty,  
he cowed the [Getic](#) bowmen with the sword.  
He re-took [Troesmis](#) when captured, swiftly, with  
courage,

and stained the river waters with savage blood.  
Ask him about the features of this place, and the hostile  
[Scythian](#) climate, and how I fear the enemy nearby:  
if the slender arrows aren't tipped with snake venom,  
and human beings don't become a hideous offering:  
if I lie or [Pontus](#) really does freeze with the cold,  
and ice covers many acres of sea.  
When he's told you, question him as to my standing,  
and ask him, too, how I spend this cruel time.

### **Book EIV.IX:89-134 To Graecinus: His Status and Loyalty**

I'm not disliked here, nor indeed do I deserve to be,  
and my temperament's not altered with my fortunes.  
That calm reason, you used to praise, that diffidence  
there used to be, is still there in my appearance.  
So I've been throughout, here, where savage enemies  
demonstrate that might's more powerful than right,  
and no man, woman or child, in all these years,  
has had any reason to complain about me.  
That's why, in my wretchedness, the [Tomitae](#) are kind  
and support me, since this land has to play witness for me.  
They'd prefer me to leave, since they see it's my wish:  
but for themselves they want me still to stay here.  
Don't take my word for this: there are sealed decrees  
extant, praising me and granting me concessions.  
Though it's not fitting for the miserable to boast,  
the neighbouring towns grant me the same right.

Nor is my piety unknown: this foreign land  
sees the shrine to [Caesar](#) in my home.  
His virtuous son, [Tiberius](#), and priestess-widow, [Livia](#),  
stand beside him, no less a power now he's become a god.  
So none of his House are absent, [Drusus](#) and [Germanicus](#),  
are there, one by his grandmother's side, one by his  
father's.  
I offer incense to them and words of prayer,  
every time the sun rises in the [East](#).  
All of [Pontus](#), you're free to ask, would say that I'm  
not inventing this, and will witness to my devotion.  
Pontus knows I celebrate the birthday of the god,  
with what show I can, at this altar.  
Nor is my piety less known to such strangers  
as far-off [Propontis](#) sends to these waters.  
Your brother too, who had command of Pontus  
on the left, may perhaps have heard of it.  
My fortune is unequal to my purpose, but, though poor,  
I spend my slight resources freely on such attentions.  
So far away from the city, I don't bring it to your notice,  
but I'm content, out of a sense of duty, to be silent.  
Still, it may sometimes reach a Caesar's ears: from whom  
nothing that passes in the whole world is hidden.  
Caesar, received among the gods, you know and see it,  
for certain, since the earth's now set beneath your gaze.  
You, placed there among the vaulted stars,  
hear my prayers spoken by anxious lips.  
Perhaps the poems I've made and sent off, about  
you, the new god, may reach you there, too.

And so I foretell your divine power will yield to them:  
not without reason you take the gentle name of Father.

## Book EIV.X:1-34 To Albinovanus: The Sixth Summer

This is the [sixth](#) summer I'm forced to spend  
on [Cimmerian](#) shores, among [Getae](#) dressed in skins.  
Dearest [Albinovanus](#), can you compare flint  
or iron, in any way, to me, for durability?  
Drops of water carve out stone, a ring's thinned by use,  
the curved plough's worn away by the soil's pressure.  
So devouring time destroys all other things:  
but death delays, conquered by my hardiness.  
[Ulysses](#), the example of a spirit suffering to excess,  
was tossed about for ten years, on dangerous seas:  
yet, he didn't endure the anxiety of fate throughout,  
and there were often peaceful interludes.  
Was it really a hardship to fondle lovely [Calypso](#)  
for six years, and share a bed with a sea-goddess?  
And [Aeolus](#), Hippotes' son, welcomed him, gifted him  
with following winds so the breeze filled his driven sails.  
Nor is it any effort to listen to the [Sirens](#)' sweet singing:  
and the lotus wasn't bitter to him who tasted it.  
I'd buy those juices, that make you forget your homeland,  
at the price of half my life, if they were offered.  
And you can't compare a city of [Laestrygonians](#),  
with the tribes the [Danube](#) reveals in its winding course.  
[Cyclops](#) couldn't outdo cruel [Piacches](#) in savagery,  
and to me they're only a small part of the local terrors!  
[Scylla](#) may yelp, fierce with monsters, from distorted  
loins,  
but the [Sarmatian](#) pirates harm sailors more.

Though [Charybdis](#) may suck the sea down three times,  
and three times spew it out, you can't compare her  
with the fierce [Achaei](#), who roam the eastern shore  
with more licence, yet won't leave this shore alone.  
Here there's leafless land, arrows steeped in venom,  
here winter makes the sea a pathway for walkers,  
so where oars, a moment ago, beat their way through the  
waves,  
the passer-by, despising boats, walks without wetting his  
feet.

## Book EIV.X:35-84 To Albinovanus: The Rivers

Those who come from Italy say you barely believe all this.  
Wretched the man who suffers things too harsh to be  
believed!

Well believe this: I won't let you remain in ignorance  
of what causes bitter winter to freeze the [Sarmatian](#) sea.  
The stars of the Wain, [Ursa Major](#), wagon-shaped,  
are very close to us, and they possess extreme cold.  
Here's the source of the north wind, [Boreas](#), and this coast  
is his home, and he gains power from the location.  
But [Notus](#), the south wind, blows warm from the opposite  
pole, is far from us, is rarely experienced, and is feeble.  
Also the rivers here merge with land-locked [Pontus](#),  
and the waves lose their force because of the flow.  
Here the [Lycus](#), [Sagaris](#), [Penius](#), [Hypanes](#), and [Cales](#),  
all enter, the [Halys](#) writhing, full of whirlpools,  
raging [Parthenius](#), [Cynapses](#) rolling boulders,  
sliding on, [Tyras](#), fastest of streams, and you,  
[Thermodon](#), known to the [Amazon](#) war-bands,  
and you, [Phasis](#), once sought by the Greek heroes,  
[Borysthenes](#) and clearest [Dyrapses](#), [Melanthus](#)  
silently completing its gentle course. And the [Don](#)  
that separates two continents, Asia and [Europe](#),  
and innumerable others, Danube mightiest of all,  
that refuses, [Nile](#), to yield in power even to you.  
The spoil of so many waters adulterates the waves  
it swells, and stops the sea maintaining its power.  
Indeed, like a still pool or a stagnant swamp,



it's colour is diluted, and it's barely blue.  
The fresh water overlays the flood, lighter than sea-water,  
which gains specific weight from the salt admixture.  
If anyone asks why I relate all this to [Pedo](#),  
and what the point is of speaking so precisely,  
I'd say: 'I've whiled away the time, held off care.  
That's the fruit the present hour has brought me.  
I've avoided my usual worries, by writing this,  
and no longer feel that I'm among the [Getae](#).'  
But I've no doubt that you, singing [Theseus](#)' praises,  
are doing justice to the fame of your subject,  
and imitating the hero you describe. He'd deny  
that loyalty's only the friend of tranquil times.  
Though his deeds are great, and he's shown by you  
as grandly as a hero should be sung by such lips,  
there's still something of his, that we can copy,  
anyone can be a [Theseus](#) in faithfulness.  
You don't have to master enemies, with sword and club,  
those who made the Isthmus scarcely passable:  
but you must show love, not difficult for the willing.  
What effort is it to not to desecrate true loyalty?  
You mustn't think these words spoken by a complaining  
tongue, to you who stand by your friend, eternally.

## **Book EIV.XI:1-22 To Gallio: Commiseration**

[Gallio](#), it would be a crime barely excusable on my part, if your name wasn't present in my verse. Since I remember that you too bathed my wound with your tears when I was struck by the divine shaft. I wish that, injured by the snatching away of your friend, you'd had nothing more to complain of! The cruel gods were not pleased it should be so, not owning it wrong to strip you of your pure wife. Only now has the letter with your mournful news reached me, and I've read of your loss with tears. But I wouldn't, stupidly, dare to console the wise repeating the trite words of the learned to you: I suspect your grieving is already over, if not through rational thought, by the lapse of time. While your letter was reaching me, while my reply crossed so many lands and seas, a year has gone. The act of consolation belongs to a definite time, when grief's in train, and the harmed seek help. After many days have calmed the mind's hurt, he only renews it, who disturbs it, inappropriately. And then (and I hope this omen proves true on arrival!) you may be happy now, in a fresh marriage.

## Book EIV.XII:1-50 To Tuticanus: Affinities

The reason you're not found in my works, my friend,  
is a result of the way your name's constructed.  
I'd consider no one else worthier of that honour –  
if my verse happened to confer any honour.  
Metric rules, and the nature of [your name](#), prevent  
the compliment: there's no way you can be in my verse.  
I'd be ashamed to split your name across two lines,  
ending the first with one bit, starting the next with the rest.  
I'd be equally ashamed if I shortened a syllable  
that's long, and addressed you as Two-tick-a-nus.  
Nor can you enter a poem disguised as Tutti-car-nus,  
where a short syllable's made of that first long one.  
Nor by making the second syllable, that's over quickly,  
long, Two-tea-car-nus, by extending it in time.  
If I dared to distort your name by such tricks,  
I'd be laughed at, and rightly said to have no taste.  
That was the reason for delaying these attentions,  
but my love will perform them with added interest,  
and I'll sing you in some measure, send you a song, you,  
known to me, barely a lad, when you were barely a lad,  
and, through the ranks of all the many years we've seen,  
no less beloved by me than brother by brother.  
When I first controlled the reins, in my weak grasp,  
you were kind encouragement, my friend and guide.  
I often revised my works with you acting as critic,  
I often made changes based on your suggestions,  
while the Muses, those [Pierian](#) goddesses, taught you

how to compose a *Phaeacis* worthy of [Homer](#)'s pages.  
This steady path, this harmony begun in green youth,  
has extended undiminished to white-haired age.  
If that didn't move you, I'd think you'd a heart  
encased in hard iron or unbreakable steel.  
But this land will sooner be free of war and cold,  
the two things hateful [Pontus](#) offers me, sooner  
might [north](#) winds be warm, [south](#) winds cold,  
and my fate have the power to be gentler,  
than your heart be harsh to your weary friend.  
Let that culmination of evils be absent, as it is.  
But by the gods, and [He](#) is the surest of them  
under whose rule esteem for you steadily grows,  
see that the winds of hope don't desert my boat,  
protect the exile, with your endless devotion.  
What do I command, you ask? I'm dying to answer,  
if a dead man can be dying, but it's difficult to say:  
I can't find anything to try, to desire or not desire,  
and I don't exactly know what would benefit me.  
Believe me, wisdom's the first thing to flee the wretched,  
and sense and judgement vanish with position.  
Seek out yourself, please, in what way you can help,  
as well: make a road for my prayers through the deep.

## Book EIV.XIII:1-50 To Carus: The Sixth Winter

Greetings to you, O [Carus](#), counted among my true friends, you who are truly what you're named: dear! The style and form of my verse can act as immediate witness to the place from which you're greeted. Not that my style's wonderful, but it's not 'anyone's' at least:

whatever it may be, there's no hiding that it's mine.

And I think I could say which works are yours even if your name were missing from the title page.

However you're placed among the books you'll be discovered, recognised by well-known features.

A power we know to be worthy of [Hercules](#) will reveal the author, so suited to the one you sing.

And perhaps my [Muse](#) can be detected in her true colours, by tokens of her failings.

[Thersites](#)' ugliness prevented him from hiding, as much as [Nireus](#)' beauty made him stand out.

And you shouldn't marvel if my art's defective, since I've almost turned into a [Getic](#) poet.

Ah! Shameful: I've even written a work in Getic, where savage words are set to Italian metres.

My theme, you ask? You'd praise me: I speak of Caesar.

My new attempt was helped by a god's power.

I tell how the body of our father, [Augustus](#), was mortal, but his spirit has passed to the domains of heaven: and Tiberius is equal to his father in virtue, taking up the reins of empire, often refused, when asked:

and you [Livia](#) are the [Vesta](#) of modest mothers,  
whether worthier of son or husband is unclear:  
and two sons, a powerful help to their father,  
have given true pledges of their courage.  
When I read it aloud, not penned by my native [Muse](#),  
and the last page came beneath my fingers,  
they nodded their heads and their full quivers,  
and there was a long murmur from Getic mouths.  
And one said: 'Since you write all this about Caesar,  
you ought to be restored to Caesar's dominions.'  
That's what he said: but already, my Carus,  
the [sixth](#) winter sees me exiled under the icy pole.  
My poetry's no help. Poetry once harmed me,  
and was the prime cause of this wretched exile.  
But, by the mutual bonds of our sacred calling, in the  
name  
of friendship, and that's not something insignificant to  
you,  
(and may [Germanicus](#), with the German enemy  
led in chains, provide a subject for your art: and may  
his sons, who you've been given to train, to your  
great credit, be well, as the public asks of the gods),  
promote my cause, my health, as much as you can,  
something I'll not regain without a change of place.

## Book EIV.XIV:1-62 To Tuticanus: Being Nice To Tomis

These words are sent to [you](#), whose name won't fit  
my metres, as I complained to you recently in verse:  
and in these lines, except that I'm fairly well,  
you won't hear of anything else that pleases me.  
Even health itself is hateful, and my last prayer  
is to go anywhere at all away from here.  
I don't care where I'm sent to from this land,  
anywhere will be better than what I see.  
Send me sailing to [Syrtes](#), or to [Charybdis](#),  
as long as I escape this ground before me.  
[Styx](#) too, if it exists, would be a nice change from Danube,  
or wherever the world holds that's deeper than Styx.  
The ploughed field hates weeds less, the swallow cold,  
than Ovid hates this place near the warlike [Getae](#).  
The [Tomitae](#) are irritated with me for such words,  
and public anger's stirred by my verse.  
Shall I never stop being harmed by poetry,  
and always suffer for my outspoken art?  
Shall I hesitate to cut my fingers, so they can't write,  
still chase after the weapons madly, that have hurt me?  
Am I being driven towards the old reef again,  
into the waters where my ship was wrecked?  
But I've done nothing, not guilty: Tomitae,  
I like you, while I hate the place you're in.  
Let anyone examine the products of my labour:  
there's no complaint about you in my letters.  
I moan about the cold, the fearful incursions on every

side, the assaults the enemy make on the walls.  
The charges I've uttered against your land, not its people,  
are quite true: you too often criticise your own country.

[Hesiod](#), ancient farmer, dared to sing of how  
his [Ascra](#) was a place to be constantly avoided:  
though the man who wrote it had been born  
in that land, still Ascra wasn't angry with its poet.  
Who delighted in his homeland more than cunning  
[Ulysses](#)?

Yet he, by his own witness, learned the harshness of the  
place.

Scepsian [Metrodorus](#) attacked [Italian](#) ways, not the land,  
in bitter writing: and Rome itself was accused of guilt:  
yet Rome accepted the lying invective equably,  
and the author's wild speech did him no harm.

But a wrong interpretation rouses people's anger  
against me, accuses my poetry of a fresh crime.

I wish I were as happy as my heart is pure!

No one still alive has been wounded by my lips.

And even if I were blacker in words than [Illyrian](#)  
pitch, no loyal crowd would be harmed by me.

Tomitae, my situation's gentle reception among you  
shows how kind men of Greek extraction are.

The [Paeligni](#), my own race, and [Sulmo](#) my native place,  
could not have been more sympathetic to my troubles.

An honour you don't often grant to one who's  
safe and sound, you recently granted to me.

I'm the only one so far immune from taxes on your  
shores, excepting those that have that right by law.



My forehead has been wreathed with the sacred crown,  
that popular favour set there, against my will.  
As the island of [Delos](#) was dear to [Latona](#), offering  
her the only place of safety in her wanderings,  
so Tomis is dear to me, and remains true and hospitable  
to one who's exiled from his native land.  
If only the gods had made it so it might know hope  
of sweet peace, and was further from the frozen pole.

## Book EIV.XV:1-42 To Sextus Pompey: The Same Request

If there's anyone left around who's still not forgotten me, and who asks how Ovid the exile is getting on: let him know I owe my life to the [Caesars](#), and my comfort to [Sextus](#). After the gods he'll be supreme to me. If I consider all the days of my unhappy life, none of them has been devoid of his attentions. They've been as plentiful as the pomegranate seeds reddening under their slow-growing husks, in some fertile farm's orchard, as African grain, as the grape clusters of Lydia, as olives of [Sicyon](#), as honeycombs of [Hybla](#). My confession: you can witness it. Seal it, Citizens! The power of the law's not needed: I say it myself. Set me down, a humble possession, amongst your family wealth: I'm a part of your estate, however insignificant. Just like those [Sicilian](#) lands of yours, and those in [Macedonia](#), like your house next to the Forum of [Augustus](#), like your [Campanian](#) estate, dear to your eyes, whatever was left to you, Sextus, or you've bought: so I am yours as well, and by this sad gift you can't say you own nothing in [Pontus](#). I wish you could, and a pleasanter field be granted you, so you could own your investment in a better location!

Given that it's up to the gods, try and woo those powers  
with prayer, that you worship with a constant devotion,  
since it's hard to make out whether you are more  
a confirmation of my error, or a remedy for it.  
I don't ask because I doubt: but, following the stream,  
the flow of the current's often speeded by using oars.  
I'm ashamed and anxious, always making the same  
request,  
in case weariness with me, rightly, fills your mind.  
But what can I do? My desire's immoderate.  
Kind friend, forgive this fault of mine.  
Wanting to write otherwise, I fall to speaking the same:  
my letters of their own accord set the theme.  
Whether your influence achieves its effect, or whether  
harsh fate orders me to die beneath the frozen pole,  
I'll always recall your gifts to me, with a dutiful mind,  
and my homeland will hear how I am yours.  
It will be known by every place beneath the sky  
(if my [Muse](#) travels well beyond the savage [Getae](#))  
that you're the reason for, and guardian of, my well-being,  
I'm yours no less than if the bronze and scales weighed  
me.

## Book EIV.XVI:1-52 To An Enemy: His Fame

Why attack wretched Ovid's poetry, jealous man?  
The last day never harms genius, and fame  
is greater after we're turned to ashes. When I  
was counted among the living I too had a name:  
when [Marsus](#) lived, and mighty-voiced [Rabirius](#),  
and the [Ilian](#), [Macer](#), and the starry [Pedo](#):  
and [Carus](#), who'd have angered [Juno](#) in his [Hercules](#),  
if that hero wasn't already Juno's son-in-law:  
and [Severus](#) who gave [Latium](#) a royal poem,  
and tasteful [Numa](#), along with the two [Prisci](#):  
and [Montanus](#), master of equal and unequal couplets,  
who has a reputation in both forms of verse:  
and he who had [Ulysses](#) write to [Penelope](#)  
in his ten year wanderings over the cruel sea,  
and [Sabinus](#), abandoning his *Troien* to swift  
death, the incomplete effort of many days:  
[Largus](#), known by the name of his own genius,  
who guided the aged [Antenor](#) to Gallic fields:  
[Camerinus](#), singing of [Troy](#) after [Hector](#)'s defeat,  
and [Tuscus](#), well-known for his [Phyllis](#):  
the poet of a sea of sails whose verse you'd think  
composed by the sea-green gods themselves:  
he who spoke of Libya's armies, Rome's battles:  
and [Marius](#), skilled in every form of writing:  
[Trinacrius](#), author of his [Perseid](#), and [Lupus](#)  
author of [Helen](#)'s return with [Menelaus](#):  
and [he](#) who translated *Phaeacis* out of [Homer](#),

and you too [Rufus](#), sole lyricist of [Pindar](#)'s lyre:  
and [Turranius](#)'s [Muse](#), the tragically shod:  
and yours [Melissus](#) with her little slippers:  
[Varius](#) and [Graccus](#), granting tyrants fierce words,  
[Proculus](#) holding to [Callimachus](#)'s tender path,  
[Passer](#) turning to [Tityrus](#) and the ancient meadow,  
while [Grattius](#) gave hunters suitable weapons:  
[Fontanus](#) singing of [Naiads](#) loved by [Satyrs](#),  
[Capella](#) locking words in elegiac couplets:  
and others, whose names would take too long  
to mention, whose songs people possess:  
and youths whose work's unpublished  
so I've no right to speak about them  
(but, in all that crowd, I'd not dare to forget you,  
[Cotta](#), light of the [Muses](#), patron of their forum,  
to whom double the nobility was granted, Cottas  
on your mother's side, [Messallas](#) on your father's)  
and with them, if it's not wrong to say so, my Muse's  
bright name, she too being read among all those others.  
So, Envy, stop reviling one exiled from his country,  
stop scattering my ashes about, you, cruel one.  
I've lost everything: only my life remains,  
to grant me feeling and the stuff of sorrow.  
Where's the joy in stabbing your steel into my dead flesh?  
There's no place left where I can be dealt fresh wounds.

## **The End of Ex Ponto Book IV**

## Ibis

### Ibis:1-40 Preliminaries at the Altar: The Enemy

Until now, now that I've reached my fifties,  
all my [Muse](#)'s poetry has been harmless:  
and no letter of Ovid's exists, of the thousands  
written, that can be interpreted as hostile:  
and my books have hurt no one but myself:  
the author's *own* life was ruined by his '*Art*'.  
One person alone (and this itself is a great wrong)  
won't grant me the title of an honest man.  
Whoever it is (for I'll be silent still as yet about his  
name)  
he forces my novice hand to take up weapons.  
He won't let me, a man banished to the frozen  
source of the north wind, hide myself away in exile:  
and he, inexorably, disturbs the wound of a man  
seeking peace, bandies my name about the forum:  
won't let the companion of my marriage bed mourn,  
the ruin of her living husband, without troubling her,  
and while I cling to the shattered fragments of my  
boat,  
he fights for the planks from my shipwreck:  
this robber, who ought to quench the sudden flame,  
looks for plunder here in the middle of the fire.  
He works so there might be no succour for an aged  
fugitive:

ah, how much more he himself deserves my misfortune!

The gods are kinder! And to me [He](#)'s by far the greatest,

who did not wish my path to be that of poverty.

So let thanks be expressed for that, whenever possible,

and may I always deal with so merciful a heart.

[Pontus](#) might hear it: perhaps might see to it too,

that the earth nearest me acts as my witness.

But may you who trample on me, violently, in my fall,

be made wretched for it! I'll be your dearest enemy.

Moisture will sooner cease to conflict with fire,

the sun's light be merged with that of the moon:

one part of the sky bring east and west winds too,

warm south winds blow out of the frozen pole:

spring with autumn, summer with winter, mix,

dawn and sunset lie in the same part of the sky:

new harmony rise with smoke, that an ancient

quarrel divides, from the [brothers](#)' blazing pyre:

than you and I lay down, in a friendship that you shattered

by your crimes, these weapons we've assumed, cruel one.

## **Ibis:41-104 Preliminaries at the Altar: The Invocation**

We'll enjoy that peace, while life remains to me,  
that lies between the wolves and the defenceless  
flock.

First I'll wage a war in these verses I've begun,  
though it's not the thing to go to battle in this metre:  
and as the spear of a soldier, who's not fighting mad  
as yet, buries itself deep in the yellow sand,  
so I'll not hurl my sharpened steel at you as yet,  
my shaft won't seek your hateful life at once:

I'll not speak your name or actions in this work,  
but let you hide whom you are, for a little longer.  
Then, if you persist, unrestrained iambics will hurl  
my missiles at you, stained with [Lycambean](#) blood.

Now, as [Battiades](#) cursed his enemy [Ibis](#),

I'll curse you, and yours, in the same way.

And like him I've involved my poem with hidden  
matters:

I've followed him, though I'm unused to this sort of  
thing.

Its convolutions are uttered in imitation of those  
in *Ibis*, forgetful of my own custom and taste.

And since, when asked, I'm not saying who you are,  
as yet,

you too, in the meantime, can take the name of Ibis:  
and as my verse will reflect something of my nights,  
so may the sequence of your days be wholly dark.

Have this read to you on your birthday, and at new



year, by anyone whose lips have no need for lies.  
Gods of earth and sea, who maintain the good  
between the disparate poles, where Jupiter rules,  
I beg this of you: bend all your thoughts to this,  
and let my wishes carry their weight with you:  
and you earth itself, and the waves of ocean,  
and the highest sky itself, approve my prayers:  
and the stars, and that form clothed with rays of  
sunlight,  
and you Moon, that never glittered brighter in your  
orbit,  
and Night whom we revere for the beauty of your  
shadows:  
and [you](#) who spin your fatal work with triple  
thumbs,  
and you the [stream](#) of waters, not to be named in  
vain,  
that glides with dread murmurs through infernal  
valleys,  
and [you](#) with your hair bound by writhing snakes,  
who sit before the shadowy doors of the prison:  
you too, the lower powers, [Fauns](#), [Satyrs](#), [Lares](#),  
the rivers, and the nymphs and semi-divine races:  
appear, at the last, in our presence, all you gods,  
old and new, from out the ancient chaos,  
while dread charms are sung by treacherous mouths,  
and anger and grief act out their proper parts.  
All, in order, show your assent to my desires,  
and let there be no part of my prayer that fails.

And let it be fulfilled, I beg: so it may be thought  
not my word, but a speech of the race of [Pasiphae](#).  
And I'll have recounted these punishments, and he'll  
endure them, let his misery be greater for my skill!  
And let the prayers of execration harm his false  
name no less, nor the great gods be less inclined to  
stir:

I curse him as Ibis, whom the mind perceives,  
who knows he's earned these curses by his deeds.  
No delay is mine: I act as priest with sure prayer.  
Whoever is at my rites, show favour to my words:  
whoever is at my rites, speak your words of  
mourning,  
and with wet cheeks begin your weeping for Ibis:  
and run with every ill, and on stumbling feet,  
and cloak all your bodies with black garments!  
You too, why hesitate to don the fatal bands? Now  
your funeral altar's ready, as you yourself can see.

## **Ibis:105-134 The Litany of Maledictions: The Denial Of Benefits**

Your cortège is prepared: no delay to the sad prayers:

dread sacrifice, relinquish your throat to my knives.

Let earth deny its fruits to you, the rivers their waves,

let the winds and the breezes deny you their breath.

Let there be no heat to the sun, for you, no light for you

from the moon, let all the bright stars forsake your eyes.

Nor let fire or air offer themselves to you,

nor earth or ocean grant you a way.

Exiled, wander helpless, across the alien thresholds, seek out scant nourishment with a trembling mouth.

Body never free of ills, mind of grievous sickness, night be worse than day for you, and day than night.

May you be always pitiable, and yet let no one pity: let men and women take delight in your adversity.

Let hatred for your tears be on you, be so fit to stink, that when you might have known the worst of ills, you'll suffer more. And be, what's rare, devoid of common charity, a face offensive to your own fate.

And let no reason fail, of the many, for your dying: yet life be forced to shun the death you long for: and your spirit struggle long to leave your tortured

body, and interminable delay torment it first.  
Let this come to pass. Just now, himself, [Apollo](#)  
gave me  
an omen of the future, a bird flew from the mournful  
left.  
I'll consider the gods influenced by what I vow, and  
I'll  
always be nourished, traitor, by expectation of your  
death.  
And first let that day, that comes too slow for me,  
take away this life, often sought to excess by you,  
that this grief might have the power to vanish in a  
moment,  
and heal my hateful hours, and these hated days of  
mine.

## **Ibis:135-162 The Litany of Maledictions: Vengeance From The Grave**

While [Thracians](#) fight with bows, [Iazyges](#) with spears,  
while the [Ganges](#) runs warm, and [Danube](#) cold:  
while mountains produce oaks, and plains soft grass,  
while the Tuscan [Tiber](#) flows with its clear waters,  
I'll wage war on you: death will not end my anger,  
rather  
among the shades it will set a cruel weapon in my hands.  
Then, too, when I shall be dissolved in empty air,  
my bloodless ghost will still revile all your ways,  
then, too, my remembering shadow will pursue  
remedy for your deeds, and my bony form your face.  
Whether, as I'd not wish, I'm exhausted by long years,  
whether I'm dissolved in death by my own hand:  
whether I'm lost, shipwrecked by mighty waves,  
while the foreign fishes feed on my entrails:  
whether wandering birds pick at my limbs:  
whether wolves stain their jaws with my blood:  
whether any will deign to place me in the earth,  
or give my corpse in vain to the common pyre:  
wherever I may be, I'll strive to break from [Styx](#)'s shores,  
and, in vengeance, stretch an icy hand to where you are.

You'll see me watching, in the shades of silent  
nights,  
appearing as a vision, I'll drive away your sleep.  
Whatever you do, I'll flit before your lips and eyes,  
and moan so there can be no peace in your house.  
Cruel whips, and twining snakes, will hiss, and  
funeral  
torches, forever smoke before your guilty face.  
Living, you'll be haunted by the furies, dead as well,  
and the shorter then will be your punishment in life.

## **Ibis:163-208 The Litany of Maledictions: His Enemy After Death**

Your funeral will not affect you or your tears: you'll forgo

your life, unlamented: and the mob will all applaud while you are dragged away, at the executioners' hands,

and their hooks are buried deep in your bones.

Let the flames that snatch at all men, flee from you:

let the honest earth reject your hated corpse. May the cruel vulture tear your entrails, beak and claw, and the greedy dogs rip out your treacherous heart, and let there be (though you may be proud to be so loved) a quarrel for your body, among the wolves.

May you be in a place far from [Elysian](#) Fields, and be exiled, where the guilty host abide.

[Sisyphus](#) is there: he rolls and retrieves his stone: and [Ixion](#), beaten, driven by his wheel's swift circling,

and [Tityus](#), stretched across nine acres, head to toe, destined to offer his entrails evermore to carrion birds.

and the [Belides](#) who always bear water-jars on their shoulders,

that savage crowd, the daughters-in-law of exiled [Aegyptos](#).

[Tantalus](#), [Pelop](#)'s father, always reaches for the fruit there,

and water overflowing forever, forever torments him.

There let one of the [Furies](#) rake your flanks with her whip,

till the measure of your sins has been confessed:

another give your scored body to her hellish snakes:

the third one scorch your smoking cheeks with fire.

Be tortured by noxious shades in a thousand ways,

and [Aeacus](#) be gifted in forming your punishments.

The torment in the old tales be transferred to you:

let you be the reason for the ancients to be at peace.

You take Sisyphus's place: he'll grant you his weight to roll:

now your new limbs will turn Ixion's swift wheel:

and here the one who snatches vainly at branch and wave,

here the one that feeds the birds with his uneaten entrails.

Let no second death end the torments of this death,

let there be no final hour to all these ills.

Let me prophesy as few of them as the leaves one might gather

from [Ida](#), or drops of flowing water from the [Libyan](#) Sea.

For there could never be as many flowers in [Sicilian Hybla](#),

or yellow crocuses, I would say, in [Cilician](#) country,

nor winter shudder as much from swift [Northerlies](#),



those that make Mount [Athos](#) white with all their hail:

as all the torments you should undergo that could be recalled

by my voice, out of this mouth that adds to them.

Ah, let as many be yours, you wretch, and such disaster,

that even I might be counted on to be reduced to tears.

Those tears will make me endlessly blessed:

those tears will be sweeter, then, to me than laughter.

## **Ibis:209-250 The Litany of Maledictions: His Enemy's Fate**

You were born unfortunate (the gods willed it so),  
and no star was kind or beneficent at your birth.  
[Venus](#) did not shine, nor [Jupiter](#), in that hour,  
neither Moon nor Sun were favourably placed,  
nor did [Mercury](#), whom that bright [Maia](#) bore  
to great [Jove](#), offer his fires in any useful aspect.  
Cruel [Mars](#) that promises no peace, lowered down,  
and that planet of aged [Saturn](#), with his scythe.  
And the day of your birth was dark and impure,  
overcast with cloud, so you would only see sadness.  
This is the day to which, in our history, the fatal  
[Allia](#) gives it name: Ibis's day brought ruin to our  
people.

As soon as he'd fallen from his mother's foul  
womb, his vile body lay on [Cinyphian](#) soil,  
a night-owl sat over against him on the heights,  
and uttered dire sounds in a funereal voice,.  
At once the [Furies](#) washed him in marsh water,  
where a water channel ran from the [Stygian](#) stream,  
and smeared venom from a snake of [Erebus](#) on his  
breast,  
and clapped their bloodstained hands together thrice.  
They moistened the child's throat with bitches'  
milk:  
that was the first nourishment in the boy's mouth:  
from it the fosterling drank it's nurse's fury,

and howled with a dog's cry over all the city.  
They bound his limbs with dark-coloured bands,  
snatched from an accursed abandoned pyre:  
and, lest it lie unsupported on the naked earth,  
they propped his tender head on a hard stone.  
Then to make his eyelids retract they brought brands  
made of green twigs close to his eyes, close to the  
lids.  
The child wept when he was touched by bitter  
smoke,  
while one of the three sisters spoke, as follows:  
'We have set these tears flowing for all time, in you,  
and they'll always have sufficient reason to fall.'  
She spoke: but ordered [Clotho](#) to empower the  
future,  
and she spun the dark fateful thread with her hand:  
and so as not to speak a lengthy prophecy with her  
lips,  
she said: 'There'll be a poet who will sing your  
fate.'  
I am that poet: from me you'll learn your torments,  
let the gods grant you strength according only to my  
words:  
and let weighty matters follow from my verses,  
that you'll experience with certain grief.

## **Ibis:251-310 The Litany of Maledictions: Ancient Torments**

May you not be tortured without ancient precedent,  
nor your troubles be less than those of the [Trojans](#),  
and may you suffer pain as great as [Philoctetes](#),  
heir to Club-bearing [Hercules](#), from venom's  
torment.

Nor let your grief be less than [Telephus](#)', who drank  
from  
the doe's teat, and armed received a wound,  
unarmed help:

or he who fell headlong from his horse in the [Aleian](#)  
field,

[Philopoimen](#), whose character was nearly his own  
ruin.

May you know what [Phoenix](#) knew, and, robbed of  
sight,

find your perilous way with the help of a stick.

Nor see more than [Oedipus](#) whom his [daughter](#)  
guided,

both her parents being acknowledged sinners:

be blind as [Tiresias](#), the old man famous for  
[Apollo](#)'s art,

after he'd acted as judge of the gods' playful  
quarrel:

and as that man, [Phineus](#), by whose command a  
dove of [Pallas](#)

was sent out to lead the way, and be a guide to the [Argo](#):  
and [Polymestor](#), lacking eyes, that had viewed gold  
sinfully,  
the father giving them as funeral gifts to his  
murdered child:  
and like [Polyphemus](#), [Etna](#)'s shepherd, whose  
blinding,  
[Telemus](#), son of Eurymus, prophesied before the  
event:  
like the two sons of [Phineus](#), from whom he took the  
same  
light he gave: as the faces of [Thamyris](#) and  
[Demodocus](#).  
May someone sever your genitals, as [Saturn](#),  
when he was born, severed those of Uranus.  
Nor let [Neptune](#) in the swelling waves be kinder to  
you  
than to him whose brother and wife were turned into  
birds,  
or to [Ulysses](#), that cunning man, whom [Ino](#),  
[Semele](#)'s sister,  
pitied as he clung to the shattered timbers of his raft.  
Or, lest your flesh shall have known only this one  
manner  
of punishment, let it be split and dragged apart by  
horses:  
or you yourself suffer what the man, who thought to  
be free

by disgracing Rome, endured from the [Carthaginian leader](#).

Nor let divine power be prompt to your relief, just as the altars of Jupiter brought [Hercules](#) no profit.

And as [Thessalus](#) leapt from the heights of [Ossa](#), you too will throw yourself from the stony cliff.

Or like [Cychreus](#), who snatched [Eurylochus](#)' crown, let your body be food for ravenous serpents.

Or, as in [Ariadne](#)'s fate, may raging liquid rush over your head, covered by the waters.

And like [Prometheus](#), pinned there, without mercy, and exposed, feed the birds of the air with your blood.

Or be thrown like stricken [Eumolpus](#), scion of [Erectheus](#), three times defeated by mighty [Hercules](#), into the vast sea.

Or like [Phoenix](#), child of [Amyntor](#), the loved will be hated through shameful desire, and the son wounded by the cruel sword.

Let no more cups be mixed for you that are safe to drink,

than for [him](#) who was born of horned [Jupiter](#).

Or die suspended like the captive Acheus who hung a wretched witness to the gold-bearing waters.

Or like [Achilles](#)' scion, known by a famous name, struck down by a tile hurled from an enemy hand.

Nor let your bones lie more happily than [Pyrrhus](#),

that were scattered over the roads of [Ambracia](#).  
Die driven through by javelins like one born  
of Pyrrhus: nor may that rite of [Ceres](#) hide you.  
And like that king's scion spoken of just now in my  
verse,  
drink the aphrodisiac juice given you by your parent.  
Or be said to have been killed by a sacred adultress,  
as [Leucon](#) fell to an avenger said to be holy.

## **Ibis:311-364 The Litany of Maledictions: Ancient Torments**

May you send those dearest to you to the pyre,  
an ending to his life that [Sardanapalus](#) knew.  
Like [those](#) about to violate the temple of Libyan  
[Jove](#),  
may the sand driven by south winds bury your face.  
Like those killed by the later [Darius](#)'s deceit,  
may the ash as it subsides consume your visage.  
Or like he who once set out from olive-rich [Sicyon](#),  
may hunger and cold be the causes of your death.  
Or like the [Atarnean](#) may you be brought, basely,  
to your lord as a prize, sewn inside a bull's-hide.  
May your throat be cut in your room, like him  
of [Pherae](#), whose own wife killed him with a sword.  
Like Aleuas of [Larissa](#), by your wound, may you  
find  
those faithless whom you thought were faithful to  
you.  
Like Milo, under whose tyranny Pisa suffered,  
may you be hurled alive into shrouded waters.  
And may the weapons sent by Jove against  
Adimantus,  
who ruled the Phyllesian kingdom, find you too.  
Or like [Lenaeus](#) once from [Amastris](#)'s shores,  
may you be left naked on [Achillean](#) soil.  
And as Eurydamas was drawn three times round  
the tomb of Thrasyllus by hostile [Larissean](#) wheels,



as [Hector](#) who often rendered the walls safe, circled them with his body, they not long surviving him, as the adulterer was dragged over [Athenian](#) soil while [Hippomenes](#)' daughter suffered strange punishment, so, when that hated life has departed your limbs, may avenging horses drag your vile body. May some rock pierce your entrails, as once the Greeks were pierced in the [Euboean](#) Bay: and as the fierce ravager died by lightning and the waves, so may the waters that drown you be helped by fire. May your crazed mind too be driven by frenzies, like a man who's whole body is a single wound: as [Dryas](#)'s son who held the kingdom of [Rhodope](#), he who was disparately shod on his two feet, or as [Oetea](#)n Hercules was once, [Athamas](#) the serpent's son-in-law, [Orestes](#) Tisamenus's father, and [Alcmaeon](#) Callirhoe's husband. May your mother be no more chaste than her whom [Tydeus](#) would have blushed to have as a daughter-in-law: or the Locrian who, disguised as her murdered servant, joined in love with her brother-in-law. And may the gods grant you have such joy in your wife's loyalty as [Talaus](#), or [Agamemnon](#), [Tyndareus](#)'s son-in-law.

or such a wife as the daughters of [Belus](#), who dared  
to plan  
their cousins' deaths, whose necks bow, carrying  
water.

May your sister burn with fire as [Byblis](#) and [Canace](#)  
did, and not prove true except in their sinning.

If you've a daughter, may she be what Pelopea was  
to [Thyestes](#), [Myrrha](#) to her father, [Nyctimene](#) to  
hers.

Nor let her be more pious and careful of her father's  
life

than yours was [Pterelaus](#), or yours [Nisus](#), towards  
you:

or she who made a place infamous with her crime's  
name,  
trampling and crushing her father's limbs under the  
wheels.

## **Ibis:365-412 The Litany of Maledictions: Ancient Torments**

May you die like the young men of [Pisa](#), whose face  
and limbs the mountain slopes outside received:  
as [Oenomaus](#) who stained that soil more deeply,  
himself,  
that was often drenched by the blood of wretched  
princes,  
as that cruel tyrant's traitorous charioteer, [Myrtilus](#),  
died, who gave a new name to Myrtoan waters:  
as those who sought in vain the speeding girl,  
[Atalanta](#), she who was slowed by the three apples:  
those in the hidden cave changed to new monstrous  
shapes,  
never to return from the house of the [dark one](#):  
like those whose bodies violent [Aeacides](#) sent  
to the high pyre, aged men, and then women:  
like those we read of, whom the vile [Sphinx](#) killed,  
those defeated by the tortuous questions she uttered:  
like those sacrificed in [Bistonian Minerva](#)'s temple,  
for whom the goddess's glance is even now hidden:  
like those who once were made into a banquet  
in the blood-stained stables of [Diomedes](#) of [Thrace](#):  
like those who encountered the lions of [Therodamas](#),  
or suffered the [Tauric](#) rites of [Thoantean Diana](#):  
like the terrified men that ravening [Scylla](#), and  
opposing [Charybdis](#), snatched from the [Ithacan](#) ship:  
like those consumed in [Polyphemus](#)'s vast gut,

like those who fell into [Laestrygonian](#) hands:  
like those the Punic leader drowned in the waters  
of the well, making the depths white with their  
ashes:  
as [Penelope](#)'s twelve handmaids died, and the  
suitors,  
and the chief of the tyrants who armed the suitors:  
as the wrestler died, thrown by the [Boetian](#) stranger,  
his conqueror astonished that he had died:  
or the strong men crushed in that [Antaeus](#)'s arms,  
or those killed by the savage crowd of [Lemnian](#)  
women:  
or the one, denounced for wicked rites, on whom  
a stricken victim, at last, brought down vast rains:  
like Antaeus's brother, [Busiris](#), bound by that blood,  
who stained the field, and died by his example:  
like the impious man who having poor grass  
for fodder, fed his horses on human entrails:  
like those two [Centaurs](#), [Nessus](#), and [Eurytion](#), son-  
in-law  
of [Dexamenus](#), killed, with separate wounds, by the  
same avenger:  
like one from his city that your great-grandson,  
[Saturn](#), [Asclepius](#), himself saw restored to life:  
like [Sinis](#) and [Sciron](#) and his father [Procrustes](#):  
and the [Minotaur](#), half man and half bull:  
Sinis, who sent bent pine-trees from earth to air,  
to gaze at the Isthmus' seas on both sides:  
and [Cercyon](#), whom [Ceres](#) saw with delighted

gaze, dying at the hands of [Theseus](#).

## **Ibis:413-464 The Litany of Maledictions: Ancient Torments**

Let these ills, and none lighter than these, fall on you,

you whom my anger rightly heaps with curses.

Such as [Achaemenides](#) knew, abandoned on [Sicilian Etna](#), who saw [Aeneas](#)' Trojan sails approaching:

such a fate as [Irus](#), too, that beggar with two names, and those

who haunt the bridge: let it be more than you dare hope for.

May you love [Plutus](#), god of wealth, [Ceres](#)' son, in vain,

and riches fail however you search for them:

and as the ebbing wave retreats in its turn,

and the soft sand washes from under your feet,

so may your fortune always vanish, who knows how,

slipping away, endlessly, flowing through your hands.

And like [Erysichthon](#), the father of [Mestra](#) who changed her form

repeatedly, may you be wasted by endless hunger though full-fed:

and may you not be averse to human flesh: but in whatever

way you can, may you be the [Tydeus](#) of this age.

And may you commit [an act](#) to make the frantic  
horses  
of the Sun hurtle back from west to east:  
may you repeat the vile banquet at a [Lycaonian](#)  
table,  
trying to mislead Jupiter with a deceptive food:  
and I beg someone to test the power of the god,  
serve you as [Tantalus](#)'s son, or the son of [Tereus](#).  
And scatter your limbs through the open fields  
like the ones that delayed a [father](#)'s pursuit.  
May you imitate real bulls in [Perillus](#)'s bronze,  
with cries that match the contours of the beast:  
like cruel [Phalaris](#), your tongue first slit with a  
sword,  
may you bellow like an ox in that Paphian metal.  
When you wish to return to years of youth, may you  
be deceived like [Pelias](#), [Admetus](#)'s old father-in-  
law.  
Or may you be drowned, as you ride, sucked down  
by the mud, so long as your name wins no renown.  
I want you to die like those born from the serpent's  
teeth  
that [Cadmus](#), the [Sidonian](#), scattered on [Theban](#)  
fields.  
Or as Pittheus's [scion](#)'s did to [Medusa](#)'s cousin,  
may ominous imprecations descend on your head:  
like one cursed by the birds without warning,  
who purifies his body in a shower of water  
And may you suffer as many wounds as they say

they suffered, whom a knife used to cut at from beneath.

And, inspired, slash your private parts to [Phrygian](#) music,

like those whom [Cybele](#), the Mother, maddens:

and like [Attis](#), once a man, become not man or woman,

and strike the harsh cymbals with effeminate hand,

and at a stroke become one of the [Great Mother](#)'s cattle,

turned, in one swift step, from winner to sacrifice.

And lest Limon should suffer his punishment alone, may a horse with cruel teeth feed on your entrails.

Or like [Cassandreus](#), no gentler than his master, be wounded and buried under a pile of earth.

Or like the infant [Perseus](#), or the [Cycnean](#) hero, may you fall, confined, into the ocean waves.



## **Ibis:465-540 The Litany of Maledictions: Ancient Torments**

Or be struck down, a sacrifice to [Apollo](#) at the holy altars,  
as Theudotus suffered death from a savage enemy.  
Or may [Abdera](#) set you apart for certain days,  
and many stones hail down on you, accursed.  
Or may you suffer the three-pronged bolts of angry Jove,  
like Hipponous's son, [Capaneus](#), or [Dexithea](#)'s father,  
or Autonoe's sister, [Semele](#), or [Maia](#)'s nephew,  
like [Phaethon](#) who guided the terrified horses he chose:  
like the cruel [scion](#) of Aeolus, and his [son](#) of that blood,  
of whom [Arctos](#) was begot, that never knows the water,  
or as [Macelo](#) and her husband, struck down by swift flames,  
so, I pray, may you die by the fire of the divine avenger.  
And may you be their prize to whom is [Diana](#)'s [Delos](#),  
not before the day Thasos needed to be wasted:  
and those who tore apart [Actaeon](#) catching shy [Artemis](#) bathing, and [Linus](#), scion of Crotopus.  
Nor may you suffer less from a poisonous snake

than [Eurydice](#), daughter-in-law of [Calliope](#) and old [Oeagrus](#):

than [Hypsipyle](#)'s ward, [Opheltes](#): than he, of famous horses,

who first fastened a sharp point into hollowed wood.

May you approach high places no more safely than [Elpenor](#),

and suffer the effects of wine in the same way he did.

And die as tamely, as whoever delighted in calling savage [Dryops](#) to his Theiodamantine weapons:

or as cruel [Cacus](#) died, crushed, in his cave,

given away by the bellowing of oxen inside:

or [Lichas](#) who brought [Nessus](#)' gift steeped in venom,

and stained the [Euboean](#) waters with his blood.

Or like [Prometheus](#) may you hang in Tartarus from a high rock, or, as books tell, die [Socrates](#)' death:

as [Aegeus](#) who saw the deceptive sail of [Theseus](#)'s ship,

as the child, [Astyanax](#), hurled from the Trojan citadel,

as [Ino](#), the nurse, also aunt, of infant [Bacchus](#),

as [Talus](#) who found a saw was the cause of his death:

as the envious girl who threw herself from high cliffs,

who had spoken evil words to the unconquered god.

May a brooding lioness of your country, attack you  
in your native fields, and be the cause of a death like  
Phalaecus'.

May the wild boar that killed [Lycurgus](#)'s son, and  
[Adonis](#)

born of a tree, and brave [Idmon](#), destroy you too.

And may it even wound you as it dies, like him  
on whom the mouth, he had transfixed, closed.

Or may you be like the Phrygian, the Berecynian  
hunter,

whom a pine tree killed in the same way.

If your ship touches the Minoan sands,  
may the Cretan crowd think you're from Corfu.

May you be buried in a falling house, like the  
offspring

of [Aleus](#), when Jove's star befriended a scion of  
Leoprepheus.

Or may you give your name to the flowing waters,  
like [Evenus](#) or [Tiberinus](#), drowned in the rushing  
river.

May you be worthy of truncation, like that son of  
Astacus,

[Melanippus](#), a maimed corpse, your head eaten by  
your fellow men,

or may you give your burning limbs to the kindling  
pyre,

as they say [Broteas](#) did in his desire for death.

May you suffer death shut in a cave,  
like that author of unprofitable stories.

And as fierce iambics harm their creator,  
may your insolent tongue be your destruction.  
And like him who wounded [Athens](#) with endless  
song, die hated through a deficiency of food.  
And as it's said the poet of the grim lyre perished  
may a wound to your right hand be the cause of ruin.  
And as a serpent wounded [Agamemnonian Orestes](#)  
may you too die of an envenomed sting.  
May the first night of your marriage be the last  
of your life: so [Eupolis](#) and his new bride died.  
And as they say the tragedian [Lycophron](#) ended,  
may an arrow pierce you, and cling to your entrails.  
Or be torn apart and scattered in the woods by your  
kin,  
as [Pentheus](#) at [Thebes](#), grandson of the serpent,  
[Cadmus](#).  
May you be caught by a raging bull, dragged over  
wild  
mountains, as [Lycus](#)'s imperial wife [Dirce](#) was  
dragged.  
May your severed tongue lie there, before your feet,  
as [Philomela](#), her own sister's unwilling rival,  
suffered.  
And like dull [Myrrha](#)'s author, [Cinna](#), harmed by his  
name,  
may you be found scattered about throughout the  
city.

## **Ibis:541-596 The Litany of Maledictions: Ancient Torments**

And may that artisan, the bee, bury his venomous sting in your eye, as he did to the Achaean poet. And, on the harsh cliff, may your entrails be torn like [Prometheus](#), whose brother's daughter was [Pyrrha](#).

May you follow [Thyestes](#)' example, like [Harpagus](#)'s son,

and, carved in pieces, enter your father's gut.

May the cruel sword maim your trunk, and mutilate the parts, as they say Mamertas's limbs were maimed.

Or may a noose close the passage of your breath as the Syracusan poet's throat was stopped.

Or may your naked entrails be revealed by stripping your skin, like [Marsyas](#) who named a [Phrygian](#) river.

Unhappy, may you see [Medusa](#)'s petrifying face, that dealt death to many of the Cephenees.

Like [Glaucus](#), be bitten by the horses of Potniae, or like the other [Glaucus](#), leap into the sea's waves.

Or may Cretan honey choke your windpipe, like [one](#) who had the same name as the two I've mentioned.

May you drink anxiously, where [Socrates](#), wisest of men,

accused by [Anytus](#), once drank with imperturbable lips.

Nor may you be happier than [Haemon](#) in your love: or may you possess your sister as [Macareus](#) did his.

Or see what [Hector](#)'s son, [Astyanax](#), saw from his native citadel, when all was gripped by flames.

May you pay for infamies in your offspring, as for his grandfather,

that father's [son](#), by whose crime his sister became a mother.

And may that kind of weapon cling to your bones, with which

they say [Ulysses](#), the son-in-law of [Icarius](#), was killed.

And as that noisy throat was crushed in the wooden Horse,

so may your vocal passage be closed off with a thumb.

Or like Anaxarchus may you be ground in a deep mortar,

and your bones resound like grain does being pounded.

And may [Apollo](#) bury you in [Tartarus](#)'s depths like [Psamathe](#)'s

father, [Crotopus](#), because of what he did to his son [Linus](#).

And may that plague affect your people, that [Coroebus](#)'s

right hand ended, bringing aid to the wretched Argolis.

Like [Hippolytus](#), [Aethra](#)'s grandson, killed by [Venus](#)'s anger, may you an exile, be dragged away by your terrified horses.

As a host, [Polymestor](#), killed his foster-child [Polydorus](#), for his great wealth, may a host murder you for your scant riches.

And may all your race die with you, as they say his six brothers died with [Damasicthon](#).

As his funeral added to the musician's natal ills, may a just loathing visit your existence.

Like [Pelops](#)' sister, [Niobe](#), may you be hardened to standing stone, or [Battus](#) harmed by his own tongue.

If a Spartan boy attacks the empty air with a hurled discus, may you fall to a blow from that disc.

If any water's struck by your flailing arms, may it all be worse to you than the straits of [Abydos](#).

As the comic writer died in the clear waves, while swimming, may the waters of [Styx](#) choke your mouth.

Or as shipwrecked you ride the stormy sea, may you die on touching land, like [Palinurus](#).

As [Diana](#)'s guardian did to [Euripides](#) the tragic poet may a pack of vigilant dogs tear you to shreds.

## **Ibis:597-644 The Litany of Maledictions: Concluding Words**

Or like a [Sicilian](#) may you leap over the [giants'](#) mouth,  
because of whom [Etna](#) emits its wealth of flame.  
May the [Thracian](#) women, thinking you [Orpheus](#),  
tear your limbs apart with maddened fingers.  
As [Althaea](#)'s son burned in the distant flames,  
so may your pyre be lit by a burning brand.  
As the [Colchian](#) bride was held captive by her new crown,  
and the bride's father, and with the father the household:  
as the thinning blood ebbed from [Hercules'](#) body:  
so may the baleful venom devour your body.  
As his Athenian child avenged [Lycurgus](#) may a wound  
be left for you too to receive from a fresh weapon.  
Like Milo, may you try to split open the wood with ease,  
but be unable to withdraw your captive hand.  
May you be hurt like [Icarius](#), by gifts that an armed hand brought him from the drunken crowd.  
And as a virtuous daughter brought to death sadly to her father, may your throat be bound in a noose.  
And may you suffer starvation behind your own locked door



like the father who punished himself according to his own law.

May you outrage a phantom, like that of [Minerva](#)'s, who stopped the straits at Aulis being an easy harbour.

Or may you pay by death for a false charge, as [Palamedes](#) was punished, and not delight in what you did not earn.

As Isindius, the host, took the life of Aethalos, whom even now Ion, mindful, drives from his rites: as her father himself, from duty, brought Melanthea to light,

when she was hidden in the dark because of murder, so may your entrails be stabbed by spears, so, I pray, may all help be withheld from you.

May such night be yours, as [Dolon](#), the Trojan, who by a coward's pact, wished to drive the horses, that great [Achilles](#) drove.

May you have no quieter a sleep than [Rhesus](#), and his comrades before him on death's road: like those that forceful [Nisus](#) son of Hyrtacus ,and his friend

[Euryalus](#), sent to their deaths with Rhamnes the Rutulian.

Or like the scion of Clinias, surrounded by dark fires,

may you bear your half-burned bones to a [Stygian](#) death.

Or like [Remus](#) who dared to leap the new-made  
walls, may a simple spear take your life.  
Last, I pray that you may live and die in this place,  
between the [Sarmatian](#) and the [Getan](#) arrows.  
Meanwhile lest you complain that I've forgotten  
you,  
these words are sent to you in a hasty work.  
It's brief indeed, I confess: but, by their favour, may  
the gods  
grant more than I ask, and multiply the power of my  
prayers.  
You'll read more in time, containing your true  
name,  
in that metre in which bitter wars should be waged.

### **The End of Ibis**

## Name Index

### Abdera

[Ibis:465-540](#) The city in [Thrace](#). It was publicly purified once a year and one of the burghers set apart for that purpose was stoned to death as a scapegoat. He was excommunicated six days before in order to 'bear the sins of the people'. (See Frazer: The Golden Bough LVIII: The Human Scapegoat in Ancient Greece.)

### Absyrtus

The brother of [Medea](#). Remembered for his death at [Jason](#)'s hands during the escape from [Colchis](#). Ovid uses the tale of how Medea dismembered him and scattered his limbs behind their ship. King Aeetes following gathered up the remains. The cutting up (τομή) was a false etymology for [Tomis](#).

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) The source of Tomis's name.

### Abydos

A town at the narrows of the [Dardanelles](#), opposite [Sestos](#).

[Book TIX:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s route.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Swum by [Leander](#), hence a destructive passage.

### Accius (Lucius)

A Roman tragic poet, born c170BC in Umbria. He also wrote critical and historical works.

[Book TII:313-360](#) His character unlike his works.

Achaei

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) A fierce tribe living near the [Pontus](#).

Acheus

[Ibis:251-310](#) There was an Acheus son of Dorus and Creusa, daughter of [Erechtheus](#), who founded the Achaean race of Greece. The reference is obscure.

Achaemenides

A companion of [Ulysses](#) left behind in [Sicily](#) and rescued by [Aeneas](#). See Aeneid Book III:588.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) An example of a Greek welcomed by [Trojans](#).

[Ibis:413-464](#) A castaway.

Achilles

The Greek hero of the [Trojan](#) War. The son of Peleus, king of [Thessaly](#), and the sea-goddess Thetis, (See [Homer](#)'s Iliad).

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) [Patroclus](#) was his loyal companion.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Aeschylus in the *Myrmidons* and Sophocles in *Achilles' Lovers* represented Achilles as effeminate, and homosexual.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) [Ibis:597-644](#) [Dolon](#) coveted his horses.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) The greatest warrior at Troy.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) See Homer's Iliad IX.186. Achilles playing the lyre. [Briseis](#) was taken by [Agamemnon](#)

leading to Achilles' anger and the dispute that begins the Iliad.

[Book TIV.III:1-48](#) In this comparison [Ovid](#) is [Hector](#), so presumably [Augustus](#) is Achilles.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) Achilles was not offended by [Priam](#)'s tears over Hector.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) [Automedon](#) was his faithful charioteer.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Patroclus](#) sought refuge with him.

[Book EI.VII:1-70](#) He wielded his father Peleus's spear. Given him by [Chiron](#) the [Centaur](#) it was cut from an ash on the summit of Mount Pelion, [Athene](#) polished the shaft and Hephaestus forged the blade.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) His spear wounded and healed [Telephus](#).

[Book EII.III:1-48](#) A loyal friend to Patroclus, weeping for him after death and carrying out extensive funeral rites. Called scion (grandson) of [Aeacus](#).

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) His friendship with [Antilochus](#) was second only to that with Patroclus. (Odyssey 24.78-9)

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) [Chiron](#) the Centaur was his teacher.

[Ibis:251-310](#) [Pyrrhus](#) (Neoptolemus) was his son.

[Ibis:311-364](#) Achilles came from Thessaly.

Acontius

The lover of [Cydippe](#). She was bound to him by oath after picking up an apple on which he had written his pledge to marry her. See [Ovid](#)'s Heroides 20-21.

[Book TIII. X:41-78](#) The place devoid of fruit-trees.

Actaeon

The grandson of [Cadmus](#), son of Autonoë, called Hyantius from an ancient name for Boeotia. He saw [Diana](#) bathing naked and was turned into a stag. Pursued by his hounds, he was torn to pieces by his own pack. (See the Metope of Temple E at Selinus – the Death of Actaeon – Palermo, National Museum: and Titian's painting – the Death of Actaeon – National Gallery, London.) See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book III:138.

[Book TII:77-120](#) [Ovid](#) chooses this myth to indicate his own punishment for seeing something, a mischief (*culpa*) by chance. Like Actaeon, that alone seems to have been his error.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Torn apart by the hounds.

Actorides

The grandson of Actor. See [Patroclus](#).

Admetus

The husband of [Alcestis](#) who agreed to die on his behalf.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) Her love for him.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) His wife's response to his fate brought about her fame.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Alcestis, his wife.

[Ibis:413-464](#) [Pelias](#) was his father-in-law.

Adonis

[Ibis:465-540](#) The son of [Myrrha](#) by her father Cinyras, born after her transformation into a myrrh-tree. (As such he is a vegetation god born from the heart of the wood.)

See Metamorphoses X:681 [Venus](#) fell in love with him, but he was killed by a wild boar that gashed his thigh. His blood formed the windflower, the *anemone*.

Adrastus

Mythical prince of Argos.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Welcomed the exiled [Tydeus](#).

Aeacides

Descendants of [Aeacus](#), usually Achilles or his son [Pyrrhus](#).

[Book EII.III:1-48](#) [Achilles](#), grandson of [Aeacus](#).

[Ibis:365-412](#) Probably Pyrrhus (Neoptolemus) at the fall of Troy.

Aeacus

[Ibis:163-208](#) The son of [Jupiter](#) and Aegina, grandson of Asopus, the river-god of the north-eastern Peloponnese. He named his island, in the Saronic gulf, Aegina after his mother. Jupiter appointed him one of the three judges of the Underworld. The others were Minos and Rhadamanthys.

Aeëtes

King of [Colchis](#), son of [Sol](#) and the Oceanid Perse, brother of [Circe](#), and father of [Medea](#). See Ovid's Metamorphoses Book VII:1. The [Argonauts](#) reached his court, and requested the return of the Golden Fleece. The fleece was that of the divine ram on which Phrixus had fled from

Orchemonos, to avoid being sacrificed. Iolcus could never prosper until it was brought back to [Thessaly](#). King Aeetes was reluctant and set [Jason](#) demanding tasks as a pre-condition for its return. Medea assisted Jason to perform them.

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) He pursued the traitorous Medea.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) A poisoner and witch.

[Ibis:413-464](#) Medea killed her half-brother Apsyrtus, and scattered his limbs about to delay her father's pursuit.

Aegeus

[Ibis:465-540](#) The father of [Theseus](#) and king of [Athens](#). Theseus forgot to raise a white sail as a signal of success on his return to Athens from Crete and Aegeus leapt to his death in sorrow.

Aegides

[Theseus](#), son of [Aegeus](#).

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) [Book EII.VI:1-38](#) A paragon of friendship.

Aegisos

A [Moesian](#) town on the Danube delta. The modern Tulcea it lies about forty miles inland from the southern mouth of the delta and about seventy miles north of [Tomis](#).

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) Founded by Aegisos the Caspian according to legend, and taken by the [Getae](#).

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) Re-taken by [Vestalis](#) in AD12 after a [Getic](#) incursion. The Romans re-captured it with the aid of



the Odrysian [Thracians](#) of King [Rhoemetalces](#), father of [Cotys](#).

Aegisthus

The lover of [Clytemnestra](#) who murdered [Agamemnon](#).  
[Book TII:361-420](#) Famous because of Clytemnestra's adultery and the consequent events.

Aegyptus

Son of Belus, brother of Danaus. He was King of Egypt and Arabia. His fifty sons married the Danaides, the fifty daughters of Danaus. Learning of his sons' fate at the hands of the Danaids, he fled to Aroe where he died, and was buried at Patrae in the sanctuary of Serapis (Pausanias VII.21.6)

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) [Ibis:163-208](#) The [Danaids](#) his daughters in law.

Aeneades

Descendants of [Aeneas](#), a name applied to the Julian family, especially Augustus.

Aeneas

The [Trojan](#) son of [Venus](#) and [Anchises](#). Aeneas escaped from Troy at its fall, and travelled to [Latium](#). The Julian family claimed descent from his son Ascanius (Iulus). See [Virgil's Aeneid](#).

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Hated by [Juno](#).

[Book TII:253-312](#) The son of Venus and Anchises.

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) He carried his father Anchises out of Troy on his shoulders.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) [Ibis:413-464](#) His Trojan fleet.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) As the son of Venus he is the half-brother of [Amor](#).

### Aeolus

The son of Hippotes, and king of the winds. His cave was on the islands of Lipari (the Aeolian Islands) that include Stromboli, off [Sicily](#).

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) God of the winds.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) The grandfather of [Helle](#).

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) He helped Ulysses with fair winds, however Homer says Odysseus's crew opened the bag of the winds given him by Aeolus and the resultant storms blew them off course.

### Aerope

The wife of [Atreus](#), she was raped by his brother [Thyestes](#). Atreus killed her together with Thyestes and his children. She had previously born [Agamemnon](#) and Menelaus to Pleisthenes son of Atreus.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Raped by her brother-in-law.

### Aesculapius (Asclepius)

The Greek god of medicine, the father of Machaon and Podalirius who inherited his skills. Zeus was supposed to have killed him for restoring the dead to life. His cult was celebrated at Epidaurus and imported to Rome in 293BC

(See Ovid's Metamorphoses Book XV) at the urging of the Sibylline books, after a plague there.

Aeson

A [Thessalian](#) prince of Iolchos, son of Cretheus, father of [Jason](#). His half-brother [Pelias](#) usurped his throne.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Father of Jason.

Aesonides

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) [Jason](#), son of [Aeson](#).

Aethalis

[Book EII.III:49-100](#) An adjective applied to Elba.

Aethra

[Ibis:541-596](#) The daughter of Pittheus King of Troezen who bore [Theseus](#) to [Aegeus](#) of Athens.

Aetna

Mount Etna. The Volcano on [Sicily](#).

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) Its fires.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) Its caves a haunt of the Cyclopes.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Seen erupting by Ovid on his travels.

[Ibis:413-464](#) On Sicily.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Fuelled by the anger of the [giants](#) beneath it.

Agamemnon

The king of Mycenae, son of [Atreus](#), brother of Menelaüs, husband of [Clytaemnestra](#), father of [Orestes](#), [Iphigenia](#), and [Electra](#). The leader of the Greek army in the [Trojan War](#). See [Homer](#)'s *Iliad*, and Aeschylus's *Oresteian* tragedies.

[Book TII:361-420](#) He desired [Cassandra](#) and took her back to Greece with him.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) [Book EII.VI:1-38](#) The father of Orestes, the son being famous for loyalty to his friend [Pylades](#).

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) [Ibis:311-364](#) Murdered by his wife.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Famous through the poets.

[Ibis:465-540](#) [Orestes](#) was his son.

Agenor

King of [Sidon](#). The father of [Phineus](#), and [Cadmus](#).

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Father of Cadmus.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Father of Phineus.

Agenorides

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Cadmus](#), son of [Agenor](#).

Agrippina

The youngest daughter of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, [Augustus](#)'s general and friend, and Augustus's daughter [Julia](#). She married [Germanicus](#). [Tiberius](#) ultimately banished her to the island of Panadataria in 29AD where she starved herself to death in 33AD. Caligula was one of her surviving children.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Germanicus fighting alongside Tiberius in Germany in AD10.

Agrius

The father of [Thersites](#) the ugliest man among the Greeks at Troy.

[Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) Father of Thersites.

Ajax

The Greater, the son of Telamon, and mightiest of the Greeks at [Troy](#) save for Achilles.

[Book TII:497-546](#) Represented in his wrath over the armour of [Achilles](#).

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) Ajax held off the Trojan assault when [Hector](#) attempted to fire the Greek ships.

Albanus

Alban, from Alba Longa, a town on the Alban Mount founded by Ascanius, and not far from [Rome](#).

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Severus](#) had an estate there.

Albinovanus

Probably the Albinovanus Pedo, a soldier who served with [Germanicus](#) in Germany, and a poet known for his epigrams (a fragment survives).

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) The friend addressed here *might* be Pedo, following Seneca's comment in *Controversiae* (2.2.12) of Ovid being asked to cut out three lines, disliked by his friends, from his early verse. He agreed if he could

retain three he specifically liked. They proved identical. (One of them was the half-man, half-bull line from *Ars Amatoria* II.24: *semibovemque virum, semivirumque bovem*, and all three were probably similar verbal tricks). Seneca claimed to have had the story from Pedo, one of the friends, and Ovid may be referring to the incident pointedly here.

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#) This letter addressed to Pedo explicitly.

### Alcathous

The son of [Pelops](#), founder of the city of Megara, hence Megara is called urbs Alcathoi.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) Exiles from Heracleia in Bithynia founded by Megara, also founded Callatis, now *Mangalia*, on the *Minerva*'s course.

### Alcestis

The daughter of [Pelias](#), and wife of [Admetus](#), who consented to die in place of her husband but was saved by [Hercules](#).

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) His wife's response to her husband's fate brought about her fame.

[Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) A paragon of loyalty, bringing help in distress.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Her act of loyalty.

### Alcides

A name of [Hercules](#).

### Alcinous

The king of the Phaeacians (Phaeacia is probably Corcyra, =Corfu), on whose coast [Ulysses](#) was washed ashore. The father of Nausicaa. One of his ships was turned to stone. His orchards were famous. See Homer, The Odyssey XIII. [Book EII.IX:39-80](#) His generosity in helping a stranger. [Book EIV.II:1-50](#) His apple orchards.

### Alcmaeon

[Ibis:311-364](#) The son of [Amphiaraus](#), who killed his mother Eriphyle for causing the death of his father, and was maddened by the [Furies](#). He married Callirhoe daughter of the river-god Achelous.

### Alcmene

The daughter of Electryon king of Tiryns, wife of Amphitryon, and mother of [Hercules](#) by the god [Jupiter](#). Jupiter caused the night to double in length as he seduced her.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Seduced by Jupiter.

### Aleus

[Ibis:465-540](#) The king and founder of Tegea in Arcadia, and father to Auge, who bore [Telephus](#) to [Hercules](#). There was an ancient statue of Alean [Athene](#) at Tegea that [Augustus](#) moved to Rome after the defeat of [Antony](#), and which was placed in the Forum Augustum (vowed at Philippi in 42BC and consecrated forty years later.)

[Ibis:251-310](#) Scene of [Philopoimen](#)'s last defeat.

Alexander the Great

Alexander III of Macedon (356-323BC) the son of Philip II and conqueror of Greece, and the Persian Empire.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) His famous city of [Alexandria](#) in Egypt.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) Showed mercy in victory.

Alexandria

The capital of Egypt, founded by [Alexander](#) the Great and the site of his tomb.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) Founded by Alexander.

Allia

A tributary of the [Tiber](#). The Romans were crushed by the Gauls under Brennius in a battle by the river on 18th July 390BC, leading to the capture and sacking of [Rome](#). It was a day of national mourning (*dies ater*) when no public business was transacted.

[Ibis:209-250](#) A black day.

Althaea

The mother of Meleager, and wife of Oeneus, king of Calydon. The sister of the Thestiadae, Plexippus and Toxeus. She sought revenge for their deaths at the hands of her own son, Meleager, and threw into the fire the piece of wood that was linked to Meleager's life, and which she



had once rescued from the flames, at the time of the [Fates](#) prophecy to her.

[Book TI.VII:1-40](#) [Ibis:597-644](#) She destroyed her own son, and proved a better sister than a mother.

Amaryllis

A character in [Virgil](#)'s Bucolic poems.

[Book TII:497-546](#) A character in the Eclogues.

Amastris

[Ibis:311-364](#) A town in Paphlagonia in Asia Minor, on a peninsula jutting into the [Black](#) Sea. It was mentioned by Homer (Iliad, II, 853), was a flourishing town in the time of Trajan (98-117), and was of some importance until the seventh century AD. Lenaeus was a title of [Bacchus](#) as lord of the wine-press. The reference is obscure.

Amazons

A race of warlike women living by the River [Thermodon](#), probably based on the [Sarmatian](#) warrior princesses of the [Black Sea](#) area (See Herodotus). In particular Hippolyte the mother of [Hippolytus](#) by [Theseus](#).

[Book EIII.1:67-104](#) Their battle-axes.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) Mentioned obliquely.

Ambracia

[Ibis:251-310](#) The region of western Greece in Epirus, round the Gulf of Ambracia.

### Amor (Cupid)

The god of love, son of [Venus](#) (Aphrodite). He is often portrayed as a blind winged child armed with a bow and arrows, and carrying a flaming torch.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Metaphorically he drove [Pelops](#)'s chariot, when Pelops snatched [Hippodamia](#).

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) The archer god of love.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Ovid regrets his role as the teacher of Love.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) A vision of the god of Love.

### Amphiaraus

A Greek seer, one of the heroes, the Oeclides, at the Calydonian Boar Hunt. The son of Oecleus, father of Alcmaeon, and husband of Eriphyle.

Fighting in the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#) he was swallowed up alive by the earth.

[Book EIII.1:1-66](#) Made more famous by his fate.

### Amyntor

[Ibis:251-310](#) King of Ormenium, near Mount Pelion. His concubine Phthia accused his son [Phoenix](#) of violating her. Amyntor blinded him and cursed him with childlessness.

### Anacreon

The Greek elegiac, iambic and lyric poet of Teos, Ionia, born c. 570BC. His patrons included Polycrates of Samos and the Athenian Hipparchos. He was in Thessaly in 514 before returning to Athens.

[Book TII:361-420](#) His lyric eroticism. The Teian bard.

Anapus

A [Sicilian](#) river, the Anapo, converging with the Cyane, now, to the south of [Syracuse](#) inland from the Great Harbour.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Visited by [Ovid](#) and [Macer](#).

Anchialus

A Greek town on the [Thracian](#) (west) coast of the [Black Sea](#) south of [Tomis](#) and subject to [Apollonia](#) further north. Modern *Pomerie*.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s course.

Anchises

The son of Capys, and father of [Aeneas](#) by the goddess [Venus](#). Aeneas rescued him from the fall of [Troy](#). See [Virgil](#)'s *Aeneid*.

[Book TII:253-312](#) The lover of Venus.

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) Rescued from Troy by his son Aeneas.

Andromache

The wife of [Hector](#), daughter of Eetion King of Cilician Thebes. See Euripides' *The Trojan Women* and Racine's *Andromache*.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) [Book TV.V:27-64](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) [Ovid](#) compares his wife to her for probity and strength of character.

[Book TIV.III:1-48](#) Another comparison of his wife's sorrow to hers.

#### Andromeda

The daughter of Cepheus, the Ethiopian King, and Cassiope, who was chained to a rock and exposed to a sea-monster Cetus because of her mother's sin. She is represented by the constellation Andromeda which contains the Andromeda galaxy M31 a spiral like our own, the most distant object visible to the naked eye. Cetus is represented by the constellation of Cetus, the Whale, between Pisces and Eridanus that contains the variable star, Mira. She was chained to a rock for her mother's fault and [Perseus](#) offered to rescue her. (See Burne-Jones's oil paintings and gouaches in the Perseus series, particularly The Rock of Doom). He killed the sea serpent and claimed her as his bride. He is represented by the nearby constellation with his name.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Danae](#)'s daughter-in-law.

#### Anser

An Augustan erotic poet, a friend of Mark Antony and critic of [Virgil](#).

[Book TII:421-470](#) His dubious erotic verse.

#### Antaeus

[Ibis:365-412](#) The King of Lybia, son of [Neptune](#) and Earth, whom [Hercules](#) defeated by lifting him off the

ground in a wrestling match. He gained strength from touching the ground. [Busiris](#) was his brother.

Antenor

A Trojan noble, the reputed founder of Padua.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Mentioned, as the aged Trojan.

Anticyra

The Greek city in Phocis.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) The mountains there produced white and black hellebore used as purgatives. Common hellebore (*helleborus cyclophyllus*) is a spring wildflower on nearby Parnassus. The black hellebore *helleborus niger* also possibly flourished there. Dioskorides (*Materia Medica* 4.148) says the best black and white hellebore grew there. Strabo (9.3.3) says that people went to Anticyra to be purged. See Pausanias (10.36.3).

Antigone

The daughter of [Oedipus](#), King of [Thebes](#). She performed the burial rites for her brother [Polynices](#), though King Creon had forbidden it because of her brother's role in the war of the Seven against Thebes. See Sophocles' *Antigone*.

[Book TIII.III:47-88](#) She buried her brother despite the King's ruling.

[Ibis:251-310](#) She acted as guide to her blinded father Oedipus.

### Antilochus

The son of [Nestor](#) and close friend of [Achilles](#).

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) His great friendship with Achilles.

### Antimachus

An epic and elegiac poet of Colophon (or Claros) fl.c.400BC. His most famous work the *Lyde* was written to console himself for the loss of his wife.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) Mirrors [Ovid](#)'s love for his wife.

### Antiphates

The king of the [Laestrygonians](#). He incited his people, who were cannibals, to attack [Ulysses](#) and his crew.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) A hostile savage.

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) Cursed for his inhumanity and abuse of strangers.

### Antonius (Marcus)

Mark Antony, the Roman general and triumvir, who seized the inheritance at Julius Caesar's death, despite his will, and who was defeated by [Octavian](#) at Mutina in Cisalpine Gaul, and Octavian's naval commander, Vispanius Agrippa, at the naval battle of Actium in 31BC. Lover of Cleopatra VII, Queen of Egypt.

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) A writer of political pamphlets against his opponents.

### Anytus

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) An Athenian democrat, one of the accusers of [Socrates](#). See Plato's *Apology*.

### Aonia

Originally a district of Boeotia near Phocis, containing Mount [Helicon](#), then a poetic term for all of Boeotia. Helicon and the [Muses](#) are often called Aonian.

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) [Book EIV.II:1-50](#) An epithet for the Muses.

### Apelles

The painter of Cos and Ephesus, 4th century BC, and court painter to Alexander the Great, who depicted [Venus](#) Aphrodite, rising from the waves, wringing the sea-water from her hair. He seems to have specialised in portraits and allegories, aiming at realistic representation. He also painted Alexander as Zeus, and his style of portraiture was a major influence for two centuries.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) The painter of Cos, and creator of the Venus (Aphrodite) Anadyomene, brought to Rome from Cos by [Augustus](#) and dedicated to the deified Caesar.

### Apollo

Son of [Jupiter](#) and [Latona](#) (Leto), brother of [Diana](#) (Artemis), born on [Delos](#). God of poetry, art, medicine, prophecy, archery, herds and flocks, and of the sun.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) He supported the [Trojans](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) Apollonia, named for him, a town on the west coast of the Black Sea, and on the *Minerva's* course.

A Milesian foundation it was famous for a giant statue of the god that Lucullus had transported [to Rome](#).

[Book TII.I:1](#) Patron of the Secular Games, the [Ludi Saeculares](#). They were held to inaugurate the *pax Augusta*, in 17BC, with a hymn by [Horace](#) sung by a mixed choir of boys and girls on the [Palatine](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Cassandra](#) was his prophetic priestess at Troy.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) [Augustus](#) dedicated his victory at Actium to Apollo, since there was a temple to the god at [Leucadia](#) nearby. The laurel was sacred to Apollo: see the myth of Daphne in *Metamorphoses* [BookI:525](#)

[Book TIII.I:47-82](#) The figures of [Danaus](#) and his daughters in the temple of Apollo built by Augustus on the [Palatine](#), in which he also established a library.

[Book TIII.II:1-30](#) The god of the arts, including poetry.

[Book TIII.III:1-46](#) [Book TIV.III:49-84](#) The god of medicine.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Phoebus Apollo's sacred laurel wreathed the heads of victorious soldiers.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) The god of poetry, who empowers poetic achievement.

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) Apollo's oracle at [Delphi](#) proclaimed [Socrates](#) as wiser than others: he concluded, ironically, that it was because he knew his own ignorance. (Plato, *Apol.* 21A)

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) The laurel was sacred to Apollo: see the myth of Daphne in *Metamorphoses* [BookI:525](#)



[Book EII.V:41-76](#) Laurel was chewed to induce prophetic trance in the rites of Diana, and was sacred to Apollo the god of the Arts.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) His sister was Diana.

[Ibis:105-134](#) The god of prophecy.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) The god of both strings, those of the bow and the lyre.

[Ibis:251-310](#) [Tiresias](#) was gifted with prophecy, Apollo's art.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Sacrificed to at the altars.

[Ibis:541-596](#) The father of [Linus](#).

Appia (Via)

The first great Roman Road from [Rome](#) to Capua (132miles) built c. 312 BC by Appius Claudius Caecus and later extended by way of Beneventum, and Tarentum to Brundisium (Brindisi) by the middle of the 3rd century. It was later fully paved.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) The route to [Alba Longa](#).

[Book EII.VII:1-46](#) Hollowed by the passage of wheels.

Aquilo

The north wind. As a god he is [Boreas](#).

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) [Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Ibis:163-208](#) A storm wind in winter.

Arctos

The twin constellations of the Great and Little Bear, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, individually or together. They never set.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) The circum-polar stars.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) The Great Bear is [Parrhasian](#), from the [Callisto](#) myth.

[Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Book TV.V:27-64](#) Northern constellations.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) The Cynosurian or Little Bear. Ursa Minor.

### Arcturus

The Bearkeeper, a star in the constellation [Bootes](#), the fourth brightest star in the sky. Its rising signifies the stormy seasons of autumn and winter.

[Book EII.VII:47-84](#) An autumn and winter star.

### Arethusa

A nymph of [Elis](#) and attendant of [Diana](#)-Artemis. She was loved by the river god Alpheus and pursued beneath the sea to [Sicily](#). See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book V:572.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) The fountain visited by [Ovid](#) and [Macer](#).

### Argo

The ship of [Jason](#) and the Argonauts, built with the aid of [Athene](#). The Argonauts sailed her to the Black Sea to find the Golden Fleece.

[Book TII:421-470](#) In the *Argonautica* of [Varro](#).

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) Built under the protection of [Minerva](#). The first Greek ship to enter the [Black Sea](#). Its arrival at [Tomis](#) on its way back to Greece.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Athene-Minerva protected the Argo, and her sacred dove was sent ahead through the clashing rocks to guide the ship.

### Ariadne

A daughter of Minos. Half-sister of the [Minotaur](#), and sister of [Phaedra](#) who helped [Theseus](#) escape the Cretan Labyrinth. She fled to Dia with Theseus and he abandoned her there, but she was rescued by [Bacchus](#), and her crown was set among the stars as the Corona Borealis. (See Titian's painting – Bacchus and Ariadne – National Gallery, London: and Annibale Carracci's fresco – The triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne – Farnese Palace, Rome)). The Northern Crown, the Corona Borealis, is a constellation between [Hercules](#) and Serpens Caput, consisting of an arc of seven stars, its central jewel being the blue-white star Gemma.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Her crown of stars, the Corona Borealis, set in the sky by Bacchus.

[Ibis:251-310](#) This a variant of her fate.

### Aristaeus

The son of [Apollo](#), the patron of dairy-farming, apiculture etc.

[Book EIV.II:1-50](#) His honey.

Aristarchus

The [Homeric](#) scholar and critic of second century BC [Alexandria](#), born on Samothrace. He was the tutor of Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator and Director of the great library. He retired to Cyprus in 145BC. He also made critical recensions of Hesiod and Pindar.

[Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) Inferior to those he criticised.

Aristides (1)

The [Athenian](#) statesman, exiled in 482BC.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) He fled to [Sparta](#).

Aristides (2)

The author (2nd century BC) of the [Milesian](#) Tales, a sort of *Decameron*, of which some fragments survive in [Sisenna](#)'s Latin translation.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Not exiled for his risqué tales.

[Book TII:421-470](#) Translated by Sisenna.

Ars

[Ovid](#)'s poem *Ars Amatoria* (The Art of Love) a contributory reason for his exile to [Tomis](#).

Artemis ([Diana](#))

The daughter of Zeus and Leto and the sister of [Apollo](#). Associated with childbirth, virginity, hunting, wild creatures, and the moon. At Brauron in Attica young girls were involved in her bear-cult. At Ephesus she had a famous temple (as Diana). In the Tauric Chersonese she

was associated with human sacrifice. See Frazer's *The Golden Bough*.

Asclepius, Aesculapius

The son of Coronis and [Apollo](#), hence great grandson of [Saturn](#), and named Coronides. He was saved by Apollo from his mother's body and given to [Chiron](#) the Centaur to rear. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Ophiucus near Scorpius, depicting a man entwined in the coils of a serpent, consisting of the split constellation, Serpens Cauda and Serpens Caput, which contains Barnard's star, having the greatest proper motion of any star and being the second nearest to the sun. He restored [Hippolytus](#) and others to life. He saved [Rome](#) from the plague, and becomes a resident god. (His cult centre was [Epidaurus](#) where there was a statue of the god with a golden beard. Cicero mentions that Dionysius the Elder, Tyrant of Syracuse wrenched off the gold. ('On the Nature of the Gods, Bk III 82). Asclepius himself was killed and restored to life by [Jupiter](#)-Zeus.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Great grandson of Saturn, via [Jupiter](#) and Apollo.

Ascra

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) The Boeotian town where [Hesiod](#) was born.

Astyanax

[Ibis:465-540](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) The son of [Hector](#) and [Andromache](#), who at the fall of Troy was hurled from the citadel onto the rocks below, or as some sources say leapt to his death.

#### Atalanta

The daughter of King Schoeneus of Boeotia, famous for her swift running. Warned against marriage by the oracle, her suitors were forced to race against her on penalty of death for losing. She fell in love with [Hippomenes](#). He raced with her, and by use of the golden apples, won the race and her. (See Guido Reni's painting – Atalanta and Hippomenes – Naples, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte)

[Book TII:361-420](#) A tale of passion.

[Ibis:365-412](#) The golden apples.

#### Atarneus

[Ibis:311-364](#) A city in [Mysia](#) in Asia Minor, opposite Mytilene the city of [Lesbos](#). Herodotus I.160. The incident described is obscure.

#### Athamas

[Ibis:311-364](#) The son of [Aeolus](#), who married [Ino](#), [Cadmus](#)'s daughter. He was maddened by [Hera](#) (See Metamorphoses IV:512). Ovid also refers to the myth in which Cadmus and his wife Harmonia were turned into serpents. (See Metamorphoses IV:563)

Athene ([Minerva](#))

The patron goddess of [Athens](#), born fully grown and armed from the head of Zeus. Associated with virginity, olive-cultivation, domestic arts (spinning, weaving, and pottery etc) wisdom, learning, technology and the mind.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) Her statues by [Phidias](#) on the Acropolis. The chryselephantine statue on the Parthenon, and the bronze Athena Promachos ('The Champion') presented to Athens by the allies after Marathon, which supposedly stood in the great square at Constantinople until 1203 when it was destroyed. Both were more than lifesize.

Athens

The chief city of Attica in Greece, sacred to [Minerva](#) (Pallas [Athene](#)).

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) Ovid visited the city, as a student, and parts of Asian Minor.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) The honey of Mount Hymettos in Attica, near Athens, was famous in ancient times, and sweeter than the honey of Taygetos near Sparta.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Diogenes](#) the Cynic was exiled, and lived in Attica.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) The Athenian citadel the Acropolis, guarded by [Athena](#).

Athos

A high promontory of the Macedonian Chalcidice, on a peninsula in the northern Aegean.

[Book EI.V:1-42](#) Ovid suggests he is being asked to perform the impossible, equivalent to Mount Athos appearing in the distant Alps.

[Ibis:163-208](#) Snow covered in winter.

Atia (Minor)

[Augustus](#)'s maternal aunt, and the wife of Lucius Marcius Philippus.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) Mother of [Marcia](#), Maximus [Paullus](#)'s wife, to whom Ovid's third wife was a companion.

Atlantis

Atlantian is an epithet for the Great Bear, since [Callisto](#) represented by the constellation was descended from Atlas.

Atreus

King of Mycenae, the son of [Pelops](#) and [Hippodameia](#), and brother of [Thyestes](#). The father of [Agamemnon](#) and Menelaüs. His wife was Aerope.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) An example of cruelty. The feud between the brothers over the kingship of Mycenae was long and complex, and gave rise to a network of myths. Thyestes committed adultery with Aerope, and Atreus in revenge killed Thyestes' children, cooked the flesh, and served it to him at a banquet. Later Thyestes' son [Aegisthus](#) killed Atreus, and subsequently Agamemnon.

[Book EI.VII:1-70](#) His sons Agamemnon and Menelaus.



Atticus

A friend to whom Ovid addresses two of the poems.

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) Addressed to him explicitly.

[Book EII.VII:1-46](#) The second letter addressed explicitly to him.

Attis

[Ibis:413-464](#) A [Phrygian](#) shepherd, loved by [Cybele](#). An incarnation of the vegetation god, the consort of the Great Goddess. He castrated himself and became a sexless follower of hers. See Catullus:63.

Augustus

The Emperor Augustus Caesar (63BC –14AD). (The title was also granted to Tiberius). Augustus was Julius Caesar's grand-nephew, whom Julius adopted and declared as his heir, Octavius Caesar (Octavian). (The honorary title Augustus was bestowed by the Senate 16th Jan 27BC). He married Scribonia and then [Livia](#). He exiled [Ovid](#) to the Black Sea region in 8AD for 'a poem and a mistake' (*carmen et error*). The poem probably the *Ars Amatoria*, the mistake probably something to do with the notorious Julias' set (the younger [Julia](#), Augustus's granddaughter, was banished as was the Elder [Julia](#) his daughter), that Ovid knew of and repeated. He may possibly have witnessed 'an illegal', that is politically unacceptable, marriage between Julia the Younger and her lover. (She subsequently had an illegitimate child while in exile).

[Book TI.I:1-68](#) Ovid hopes for greater leniency, despite the sparing of his life. A subtle double-entendre as to which Caesar might grant it.

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) He fears further attention from Augustus. Once bitten, twice shy.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Augustus's anger. Augustus did not judge Ovid's fault (*culpa*) to be deserving of the death sentence.

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) [Book TIV.III:49-84](#) Augustus identified with [Jupiter](#) (Jove).

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#) Augustus noted for his admiration of loyalty even amongst enemies.

[Book TII.I:1](#) His banning of *Ars Amatoria* (the text is uncertain here).

Perhaps also a reference to Augustus's re-dedication of the temple of [Cybele](#) ([Ops](#)) on the [Palatine](#), after it burnt down in AD3. Augustus was granted the title *pater patriae*: Father of the Country on 2nd February 2BC.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Augustus attached a library to the temple of [Apollo](#) on the [Palatine](#), and built one in the Portico of Octavia in memory of her son Marcellus.

[Book TII:421-470](#) Augustus's accession was 26BC.

[Book TII:547-578](#) See the close of the *Metamorphoses* Book XV:745-870 where [Ovid](#) celebrates Julius Caesar and Augustus.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) The doorposts of his house on the [Palatine](#) were hung with wreaths of laurel and oak, triumphal insignia. The wreath of oak, the civic crown (*civica corona*) was awarded to Romans who saved others' lives in battle, and Augustus was treated as the

saviour of the country. The oak was sacred to [Jupiter](#) of Dodona, and Ovid continually identifies Augustus with Jupiter in the conventional way.

[Book TIII.VI:1-38](#) 'The man' is Augustus.

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) Augustus was said to be (spuriously) descended from [Aeneas](#).

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) Ovid celebrates the Julian succession, with its divine characteristics. The problem of Ovid's past double-entendres in his works concerning Augustus is that one is inevitably tempted to read them into the later works too, but Ovid may in fact be 'playing it straight' here.

[Book EII.I:68](#) [Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) Augustus's Justice was personified as a goddess, *Justitia Augusta* and awarded a marble temple on the 8th January AD13.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) Augustus is also [Jupiter](#) Capitolinus, the [Tarpeian](#) Thunderer.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) Augustus was embarrassed by the fragility of the succession, and his own lack of direct heirs through Livia. Here the younger women of the house, and granddaughters include [Livilla](#) wife of [Drusus](#) the Younger: [Agrippina](#) the Elder wife of [Germanicus](#): Antonia the widow of the Elder [Drusus](#): and the Younger [Julia](#). The great-grandsons are Germanicus's three sons by Agrippina (Caligula, Drusus Caesar and Nero Caesar, the latter not the Emperor Nero.)

[Book EII.V:1-40](#) The *pax Augusta*, the tranquillity of the Empire within established borders.

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) [Cotta](#) Maximus sent Ovid portraits of Augustus, Tiberius and Livia. The Livia-Augustus relationship is mocked in The Metamorphoses by portraying them as Juno and Jupiter. Here Ovid lightly and ironically highlights the relationships, Tiberius being only his son by adoption, and Germanicus in turn an adopted son of Tiberius.

[Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) The implication is that gladiators were not allowed to fight to the death in Augustus's presence. (Suetonius *Divus Augustus*:45)

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) His (mythical) descent from [Aeneas](#) stressed.

[Ibis:1-40](#) He allowed Ovid to retain his possessions.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) [Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) The Forum of Augustus was north-east of the [Capitol](#) at the foot of the Quirinal Hill. Augustus dedicated it in May 2BC. The Julian Temple was the Curia Julia begun by Caesar in 45BC flanking the Forum Romanum and dedicated by Augustus in 29BC.

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) [Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) [Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) [Book EIV.XII:1-50](#) [Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) Augustus had died on 19th August AD14, and was deified on 17th September.

[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) The consuls receive extra authority from the deified Augustus.

Aurelia

[Book EII.III:49-100](#) The wife of Marcus Valerius Corvinus [Messalla](#).

## Aurora

The goddess of the dawn (Greek Eos) the daughter of Hyperion, spouse of Tithonus, and mother of [Memnon](#).

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) The Dawn, mother of Memnon.

## Ausonia

A Greek name for the land of the Aurunci, later a poetic term for [Latium](#) and Italy.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) [Book TII.I:1](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#)

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) [Ovid](#)'s Italy.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) The Italian lyre.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) The Roman people.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) The Roman military machine.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) [Rome](#), the Ausonian city.

## Auster

The South Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Zephyrus the West Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind. A storm-wind.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) A favourable wind for navigating the [Bosporus](#) from south-west to north-east.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) A rain-bearing wind in winter.

[Book EII.1:68](#) A cloudy southerly bringing rain.

[Book EII.III:49-100](#) A late winter rain, melting the snow.

[Book EIV.XII:1-50](#) A warm wind.

## Automedon

The charioteer of [Achilles](#), who according to [Virgil](#) (Aeneid II.476) later fought alongside Neoptolemus ([Pyrrhus](#)) Achilles' son.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) Loyal to Achilles.

Axenus

'Inhospitable' an adjective applied to [Pontus](#) (The Black Sea).

[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) His place of exile.

Babylon

The ancient Mesopotamian capital of the Babylonians, in modern Iraq.

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) Its heat.

Bacche

A Bacchante, one of the female followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus, noted for their ecstatic worship of the god.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) They celebrated the rites on Mount [Ida](#), ululating, shrieking wildly, in ecstatic dances.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) The female followers of Bacchus.

Bacchus, Dionysus

The god [Dionysus](#), the 'twice-born', the god of the vine.

The son of [Jupiter](#)-Zeus and [Semele](#). His worship was celebrated with orgiastic rites borrowed from [Phrygia](#). His female followers are the [Maenades](#). He carries the *thyrsus*, a wand tipped with a pine-cone, the [Maenads](#) and [Satyrs](#) following him carrying ivy-twined fir branches as *thyrsi*.

(See Caravaggio's painting – Bacchus – Uffizi, Florence)  
He was equated by the Romans with [Liber](#) the fertility god. See Euripides' *Bacchae*. Also called Lenaeus, 'of the winepress'.

[Book TI.VII:1-40](#) The ivy-crowned god.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Dionysopolis](#) named for him.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Son of Semele.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) His *thyrsus* wand. A god of inspiration.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) His feast of the Liberalia on March 17th is the occasion for this poem. He was born prematurely, and then a second time after being nourished sewn into [Jupiter](#)-Zeus's thigh. The evergreen ivy was sacred to Bacchus-Dionysus. Ovid mentions elements of his myth, his mother Semele, the antipathetic [Lycurgus](#) and [Pentheus](#) punished for denying his worship, his rescue of [Ariadne](#), and his identification with Liber.

[Book EII.V:41-76](#) The *thyrsus* as a symbol of inspiration from the god. Here apparently poetic inspiration.

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) [Book EIV.II:1-50](#) God of the grape, and the vine. Falernian wine was prized.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) He was celebrated in India through which he conducted a triumphal procession.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Nursed by Persephone and by the nymphs of Mount Nysa.

Bassus

An iambic poet and member of Ovid's circle, otherwise unknown, though he could be the Bassus of Propertius I.4.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Mentioned.

Basternae

A Germanic or Celtic people living along the [Danube](#) from the Carpathians to the [Black Sea](#).

[Book TII:155-206](#) They held the land on the border of the Roman area.

Bato

A Dalmatian, chieftain of the Daesitiatae, who fought against [Rome](#) AD 6-9. He obtained immunity and was allowed to live in Ravenna.

[Book EII.I:68](#) A captive in [Tiberius](#)'s Pannonian triumph.

Battiades

[Callimachus](#) the poet, a descendant of Battus.

[Book TII:361-420](#) His love poetry.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) A lost reference in his works.

[Ibis:41-104](#) Ovid used a poem of Callimachus as a model and adopted the name of [Ibis](#) for his enemy.

Battus

[Ibis:541-596](#) A countryman changed by [Mercury](#) into a flint (touchstone, the 'informer') See *Metamorphoses* II:676

Belides

See [Danaides](#)

Bellerophon



He was entertained by Proetus King of Argos and rejected the advances of Stheneboea his hostess who falsely denounced him in revenge. The King gave him to Iobates to be killed, but Iobates not daring to kill him forced him to fight the fire-breathing [Chimaera](#) which he destroyed.  
[Book TII:361-420](#) Brought near to death by Stheneboea.

### Bessi

A [Thracian](#) people living on the upper [Hebrus](#). Distributed according to Strabo (7.5.12, C.318) along the southern slopes of the Haemus range, from the [Black Sea](#) as far as the Dardani north of Macedonia. They had a reputation as brigands.

[Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Book TIV.I:49-107](#) Ovid living among them.

### Bistonii

A [Thracian](#) people of the Aegean coast around Abdera and Dicaea, and as far west as the Nestos. Used by [Ovid](#) and others as a term for the Thracians generally.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) [Thrace](#). Ovid sailed from [Samothrace](#) to the Bistonian shore to continue his journey.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) Thracian horses.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Thracian spears.

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) [Cotys](#) king of Thrace.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Thracian swords a threat.

### Bittis

‘The Beloved.’ The wife of [Philetas](#) the poet.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) A loved wife.

[Book EIII.1:1-66](#) Ovid's wife will be as famous as she is.

## Bootes

The constellation of the Waggoner, or Herdsman, or Bear Herd. The nearby constellation of Ursa Major is the Waggon, or Plough, or Great Bear. He holds the leash of the constellation of the hunting dogs, Canes Venatici. He is sometimes identified with Arcas son of [Jupiter](#) and [Callisto](#). Arcas may alternatively be the Little Bear. Contains the star Arcturus.

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) The constellation sets in the stormy winter waters.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) Winter stars.

## Boreas

The North Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Zephyrus is the West Wind, and Auster is the South Wind. He was identified with [Thrace](#) and the north.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) The warring of the winds.

[Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Book TIII. X:41-78](#) [Book EIV.XII:1-50](#)  
The wintry north wind.

[Book TIII. XI:1-38](#) [Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#) Associated with the Great Bear and the north.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) The North wind is less powerful by the time it reaches Rome.

## Borysthenes

The Dneiper.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

### Bosporus

The strait separating Europe and Asia Minor, connecting the [Black Sea](#) (Euxine) with the [Propontis](#) (Sea of Marmara). [Byzantium](#) on its west bank, Chalcedon on its east. It is distinguished as the [Thracian](#) Bosporus from the Cimmerian Bosporus in the Crimea the passage between the Black Sea (Euxine) and the Maeotic Lake (Sea of Azov).

[Book TII:253-312](#) [Juno](#) drove Io over the sea.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) The southern limit for Ovid of the region round Tomis.

### Briseis

Hippodameia, the daughter of Briseus of Lyrnesus, and the favourite slave of [Achilles](#), whom [Agamemnon](#) forced him to relinquish, initiating the famous quarrel described in the *Iliad*.

[Book TII:361-420](#) The quarrel described in the *Iliad*.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) Achilles saddened.

### Broteas

[Ibis:465-540](#) A son of [Tantalus](#). He committed suicide in the flames because of his ugliness, or as some say on being driven mad by [Artemis](#).

### Brutus (1)

Marcus Junius Brutus co-leader of the conspiracy to assassinate Julius Caesar, and a writer on philosophy and rhetoric.

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) A moralist and essayist on various subjects.

Brutus (2)

A friend addressed by [Ovid](#) who acted as his editor, otherwise unknown.

[Book TI.VII:1-40](#) Probably TI:VII is addressed to him. He acted as Ovid's editor and took responsibility for his works. Brutus issued the first three books of the *Tristia* on their completion.

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) This letter addressed to him explicitly.

[Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) This letter addressed to him explicitly.

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) This letter addressed to him explicitly.

Busiris

A king of Egypt who sacrificed strangers to [Jupiter](#), killed by [Hercules](#). He was the brother of [Antaeus](#) of Libya.

[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) [Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) An example of cruelty.

Byblis

[Ibis:311-364](#) The daughter of Miletus, and Cyanee, twin sister of Caunus. The twins were noted for their beauty. Byblis fell in love with Caunus and wooed him incestuously. See *Metamorphoses* IX:439.

## Byzantium

The city founded on the west side of the [Bosporus](#) in the mid 7th century BC. Renamed Constantinople (330AD by Constantine), and now named Istanbul (1457AD by the Ottoman Empire). The city now lies on both sides of the southern end of the Bosporus.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s route.

## Cacus

[Ibis:465-540](#) The three-headed giant who lived in a cave, stole [Hercules](#)' cattle, and was killed by him. The bellowing of the stolen bulls gave him away.

## Cadmus

The son of the Phoenician king [Agenor](#), who searched for his sister [Europa](#) stolen by [Jupiter](#). The founder of (Boeotian)[Thebes](#). The father of [Semele](#).

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) He rescued Semele's child, [Bacchus](#).

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) The founder of Thebes.

[Ibis:413-464](#) [Athene](#) commanded him to sow the teeth of the serpent (from the snake of the Castalian Spring, that he had killed) in the soil of Thebes. The Sparti or sown men were born from the soil, and they fought each other until only five were left.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Grandfather of [Pentheus](#).

## Caesar

Ovid uses *Caesares*, the Caesars, of two or more members of the Imperial house.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Here [Augustus](#) and [Tiberius](#) the heir apparent.

[Book EII.VI:1-38](#) [Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) The Imperial House.

Calamis, Calamus

An [Athenian](#) artist c.460BC famous for metalwork.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) Famous for his bronze horses.

Cales

Probably a Bithynian river south of Herakleia.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Callimachus

The scholar and poet of [Alexandria](#) (c. 305-240BC) who claimed descent from Battus the founder of Cyrene in North Africa. He was admired by [Ovid](#), [Propertius](#) and [Catullus](#). He was a prominent member of the library of Alexandria under Ptolemy II Philadelphos, where he produced a catalogue (the *Pinakes*) of the library's holdings. His *Hymns* and fragments of *Aitia* etc survive.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Called [Battiades](#). His erotic epigrams?

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) A lost reference in his works.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Imitated by [Proculus](#) a poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Calliope

The [Muse](#) of epic poetry. The mother of [Orpheus](#).

[Book TII:547-578](#) [Ovid](#)'s Muse. Calliope often represents all the Muses, being the primal Muse.

[Ibis:465-540](#) The mother of Orpheus.

## Callisto

A nymph of Nonacris in Arcadia, a favourite of Phoebe-[Diana](#). The daughter of [Lycaon](#), and descended from Atlas. [Jupiter](#) raped her and pregnant by him she was expelled from the band of Diana's virgin followers by Diana as Cynthia, in her Moon goddess mode. She gave birth to a son Arcas, and was turned into a bear by [Juno](#). Her constellation is the Great Bear.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) Her constellation, the Atlantian Bear.

[Book TII:155-206](#) Callisto is the Parrhasian virgin, [Parrhasia](#) being a name for Arcadia.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Her constellation, the [Erymanthian](#) Bear.

[Book TIII. XI:1-38](#) The Maenalian Bear from Mount Maenalus in Arcadia.

[Book TIV.III:1-48](#) Ursa Major the Great Bear was used by the Greeks for navigation, as Ursa Minor the Little Bear was used by the Phoenicians. Both the circumpolar constellations can be used to find the location of the north celestial pole.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#) Ursa Major, also called the Wain.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Callisto the daughter of Lycaon.

## Calvus

Gaius Licinius Macer Calvus (82-46?BC) the orator, poet and friend of [Catullus](#). He was a man of small stature with a fierce courtroom manner. As a poet he wrote epigrams, lampoons etc. His oratory was compared with Cicero's. Catullus called him the *salaputium disertum*, the 'eloquent manikin'

[Book TII:421-470](#) His love poetry.

Calydon

The town in Aetolia, a few miles inland. The site of the Calydonian Boar Hunt.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) The birthplace of [Tydeus](#).

Calypso

The goddess who loved [Ulysses](#) and detained him on her island for a number of years. Odysseus was impatient to leave her. See [Homer](#)'s Odyssey.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Driven by passion for Ulysses. (Odyssey V:13).

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) An easy time for Ulysses.

Camena

A Roman term for [Muse](#).

Camerinus

An Augustan epic poet, otherwise unknown.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.



## Campania

The region of southern Italy consisting of the coastal plain along the Tyrrhenian Sea, and mountains in the interior, and the Sorrento peninsula. It's modern capital is Naples.

[Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) Sextus [Pompey](#)'s land there.

## Campus (Martis)

The great recreation ground of ancient [Rome](#), the Field of Mars, just outside the ancient city to the north-west along the [Tiber](#). Originally it was open pasture outside the city boundary (*pomerium*) in the bend of the Tiber south of the Pincian Hill and east of the Janiculum, used for army musters and political assemblies. It took its name from the altar of [Mars](#) located there. It was encroached on by public buildings later including the Portico of Octavia and the Theatre of [Pompey](#), but still retained its function as a park and exercise ground.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) [Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) An extensive grassy plain. The gardens it faced were those of Agrippa and the Horti Pompeiani.

## Canace

The daughter of [Aeolus](#), God of the Winds and Enarete. Her ill-fated love for her brother [Macareus](#) was the theme of Euripides' *Aeolus*.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Ibis:311-364](#) Her illicit love.

## Capaneus

The son of Hipponous and Astynome. One of the seven leaders who attacked [Thebes](#). He was killed by [Zeus](#)'s lightning bolt when attempting to scale the walls (or attack the Electra Gate). His wife [Evadne](#) threw herself into his funeral pyre.

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) His wife did not disown him.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Driven from the wall by [Jupiter](#)-Zeus.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) His wife's response to his fate brought about her fame.

[Book EIII.1:1-66](#) Made more famous by his fate.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Blasted by Jove's lightning.

### Capella

An Augustan poet who wrote elegiac verse, otherwise unknown.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Caphereus

A rocky promontory on the northern coast of [Euboea](#) where the Greek fleet came to grief while returning from [Troy](#).

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) [Book TV.VII:1-68](#) A peril to the Greek fleet.

### Capitolium

The southern summit of the Capitoline Hill of Rome, but used as a name for the whole Hill.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) [Ovid](#)'s house is located near the Capitol.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) The Temple of [Jupiter](#) there, identified with [Augustus](#).

[Book EIV.IX:1-54](#) The procession to the Capitol at the inauguration of a consul.

Carus

A friend of [Ovid](#)'s and a poet, who had charge of the education of [Germanicus](#)'s sons (Nero and Drusus III). Possibly also a pseudonym for another of his friends.

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) Carus is possibly the addressee of this poem based on the *carissime* in line 3, and the statement of tokens instead of a name in line 7.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Again possibly addressed to Carus based on the *care* in line 1.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) A third poem addressed to Carus based on this strong hint. The point may well be that Carus, the true name, is itself merely a pseudonym, which is likely considering the caution Ovid displayed in dragging his friends into his misfortunes.

[Book TIII.VI:1-38](#) *Carissime* here refers as we shall see to an old friend not the recent friend of TIII.V, so clearly every reference of this kind is not to the same pseudonymous Carus. Possibly here the influential [Cotta](#), close supporter of the Emperors, is meant.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) The use of *carior* and the remembrance of the tears shed over his disgrace is reminiscent of TIII.IV, see above, and suggests that TV:IV is addressed to the same friend.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) The use of *carissime* may again be significant, but note the comments above.

[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) Carus again addressed and his tutelage of Germanicus's sons mentioned.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Caspios Aegisos

The founder of [Aegisos](#).

Cassandra

The daughter of [Priam](#) and Hecuba, gifted with prophecy by [Apollo](#), but cursed to tell the truth and not be believed. She was raped by Ajax the Lesser in the sanctuary of [Athene](#) at the Fall of [Troy](#) and then taken back to Greece by [Agamemnon](#) and killed there with him by [Clytemnestra](#) and [Aegisthus](#). (See Aeschylus: *The Agamemnon*)

[Book TII:361-420](#) Desired by Agamemnon.

Cassandreus

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) Resembling Apollodorus the cruel lord of Cassandreia in Macedonia. Apollodorus was a democratic leader in the city in the Chalcidice peninsula, known in Thucydides' time as Potidaea. He seized power with the help of a band of Gaulish mercenaries and ruled from c279-276BC.

[Ibis:413-464](#) His fate.

Castor

The son of [Tyndareus](#) of Sparta and Leda, and twin brother of [Pollux](#).

The brothers of Helen. Castor was an expert horseman, Pollux a noted boxer. They came to be regarded as the protectors of sailors, and gave their names to the two major stars of the constellation Gemini, The Twins.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) Worshipped on [Samothrace](#).

[Book TIV.V:1-34](#) His affection for his brother. Note that Ovid's naming of these gods is consistent with the shipwreck imagery earlier in the poem.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) Their temple in the Forum was close to that of the deified Julius Caesar. It was rebuilt by [Tiberius](#) in AD6 and dedicated in his and his brother [Drusus](#) the Elder's names.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) Uncle to [Hermione](#), daughter of his sister Helen.

## Cato

Gaius Valerius Cato (not the more famous Marcius Portius Cato), the Roman grammarian and poet an older contemporary of [Catullus](#), and influential as a teacher. He was a rhetorician known as 'the Latin Siren'. He flourished at Rome in the second half of the 1st century BC. Though at one time wealthy he ended his life in poverty.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His light verse.

## Catullus

Caius Valerius Catullus the Roman lyric poet (c.87-c54BC) the lyric and iambic poet and leading exponent of the neoteric movement with its emphasis on technique and allusiveness, following the poetry of Hellenistic [Alexandria](#). His erotic verse was addressed to [Lesbia](#), probably Clodia Metella, the sister of Publius Clodius Pulcher, and wife of Quintus Metellus Celer. Catullus also wrote epithalamia, epigrams and at least one epyllion, the *Marriage of Peleus and Thetis*.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His erotic and explicit verse.

Cayster

The major river of Lydia in Asia Minor, with its mouth near Ephesus and its sources in the Tmolus mountains.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) Noted for its swans, which [Homer](#) and many others mention (Iliad II:449). They were said (falsely) to sing their own death song. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* XIV:429.

Celsus

One of Ovid's closest friends. Possibly Albinovanus Celsus addressed by [Horace](#) (Epistle I.8) as [Tiberius](#)'s companion and secretary in 20BC and whom he accuses of plagiarism (Epistle I.13).

[Book EI.IX:1-56](#) [Cotta](#) writes to [Ovid](#) concerning Celsus' death.

Cenchreae

The eastern port of [Corinth](#) on the Saronic Gulf, and the main Asian trade harbour. It was linked with the Gulf of Corinth by the slipway, the *diolkos*, on which boats could be winched across the Isthmus.

[Book TI.IX:1-50](#) The harbour of Corinth where [Ovid](#) embarked for [Samothrace](#).

### Centaurs

Creatures, half-man and half-horse living in the mountains of [Thessaly](#), hence called *biformes*, *duplex natura*, *semihomines*, *bimembres*.

They were the sons of Ixion, and a cloud, in the form of [Juno](#). Invited to the marriage feast of [Pirithoüs](#) and [Hippodamia](#), Eurytus the Centaur precipitated a fight with the Lapithae.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the ‘unbelievable’ myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

[Ibis:365-412](#) The Centaurs [Nessus](#) and [Eurytion](#).

### Ceraunia, Acroceraunia

The dangerous headland on the Adriatic Coast of [Illyria](#) and Epirus.

[Book EII.VI:1-38](#) A symbolic place of danger.

### Cerberus

The three-headed watchdog of Hades.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the ‘unbelievable’ myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

Cercyon

[Ibis:365-412](#) A brigand who wrestled with travellers and crushed them to death. He was served in the same way by [Theseus](#), to [Ceres](#) great delight.

Ceres

The Corn Goddess. The daughter of Saturn and Rhea, and [Jupiter](#)’s sister. As Demeter she is represented in the sky by the constellation and zodiacal sign of Virgo, holding an ear of wheat, the star Spica. It contains the brightest quasar, 3C 273. (The constellation alternatively depicts Astraea.) The worship of her and her daughter Persephone, as the Mother and the Maiden, was central to the Eleusinian mysteries, where the ritual of the rebirth of the world from winter was enacted. Ceres was there a representation of the Great Goddess of Neolithic times, and her daughter her incarnation, in the underworld and on earth. Her most famous cult in [Rome](#) was on the Aventine, and dated from the 5th century BC.

[Book TII:253-312](#) She lay with [Iasion](#) in the ‘thrice-ploughed’ field.

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) Pregnant sows ritually sacrificed to her.

[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) Grain and bread are ‘gifts of Ceres’.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Her rites were the Eleusinian mysteries. The reference is obscure.



[Ibis:365-412](#) Her delight at the death of [Cercyon](#).

[Ibis:413-464](#) The mother of [Plutus](#).

## Chaos

The source and state of the Universe at its creation. See Ovid's Metamorphoses Book I.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Known of through the poets.

## Charybdis

The whirlpool between Italy and [Sicily](#) in the Messenian straits. Charybdis was the voracious daughter of Mother Earth and [Neptune](#), hurled into the sea, and thrice, daily, drawing in and spewing out a huge volume of water.

See [Homer](#)'s Odyssey Book XII.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) Ovid calls the whirlpool Zanclean, from Zancle the ancient name for the city of Messina.

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) Not as bad as the threat from [Thracian](#) tribes.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) Preferable to Pontus.

[Ibis:365-412](#) [Ulysses](#)' men caught in the whirlpool.

## Chimaera

A fire-breathing monster with a lion's head, she-goat's body and serpent's tail. Its native country is Lycia (or Caria) in Asia Minor.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Defeated by [Bellerophon](#).

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

## Chiron

One of the [Centaurs](#), half-man and half-horse. He was the son of Philyra and Saturn. Phoebus [Apollo](#) took his newborn son [Aesculapius](#) to his cave for protection since he was skilled in hunting, music, medicine and gymnastics. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Centaurus, which contains the nearest star to the sun, Alpha Centauri. The father of Ocyroë, by Chariclo the water-nymph. He was begotten by Saturn disguised as a horse. His home is on Mount [Pelion](#). [Achilles](#) was his pupil.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) He taught Achilles.

## Cilicia

[Ibis:163-208](#) The southeast coastal region of Asia Minor, incorporated into the Empire from 67BC when [Pompey](#) suppressed the endemic piracy of the coastal area. Famous for its saffron, derived from crocus flowers.

## Cimbri

The Teutonic horde defeated by [Marius](#).

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) Marius defeated the Cimbri and Teutones at Aquae Sextiae and Vercellae in 102-1BC.

## Cimmerii

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) A people living between the [Danube](#) and the [Don](#). Ovid calls the region of Tomis 'Cimmerian'. Also a fabled people who were said to live in caves in

perpetual darkness, 'beyond the north Wind.' See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book XI:573-649 where their country is the home of Somnus, Sleep.

### Cinna

Gaius Helvius Cinna, the neoteric poet and friend of [Catullus](#) and a student of Valerius Cato. His epyllion *Zmyrna* described the incest between [Myrrha](#) and her father Cinyras. He also wrote light verse. Mistaken for one of the conspirators, the praetor Lucius Cornelius Cinna, after Julius Caesar's assassination, he was killed by the mob. See Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His dubious light verse.

### Cinyphus

The river Cinyphs of North Africa flowing into the sea near the [Syrtes](#). In the *Metamorphoses* [Medea](#) uses one of its water snakes as an ingredient for her magic potion. Ovid also gives it as Juba's place of origin.

[Book EII.VII:1-46](#) The fertile fields alongside.

[Ibis:209-250](#) Cursed soil.

### Circe

The sea-nymph, daughter of [Sol](#) and Perse, and the granddaughter of Oceanus. (Kirke or Circe means a small falcon) She was famed for her beauty and magic arts and lived on the 'island' of Aeaea, which is the promontory of Circeii. (Cape Circeo between Anzio and Gaeta, on the west coast of Italy, now part of the magnificent *Parco*

*Nazionale del Circeo* extending to Capo Portiere in the north, and providing a reminder of the ancient Pontine Marshes before they were drained: rich in wildfowl and varied tree species.) Cicero mentions that Circe was worshipped religiously by the colonists at Circei. ('On the Nature of the Gods', Bk III 47)

(See John Melhuish Strudwick's painting – Circe and Scylla – Walker Art Gallery, Sudley, Merseyside, England: See Dosso Dossi's painting - Circe and her Lovers in a Landscape- National gallery of Art, Washington)

She transformed [Ulysses](#)'s men into beasts. Mercury gave him the plant *moly* to enable him to approach her. He married her and freed his men, staying for a year on her island. (*Moly* has been variously identified as 'wild rue', wild cyclamen, and a sort of garlic, *allium moly*. John Gerard's Herbal of 1633 Ch.100 gives seven plants under this heading, of which the third, *Moly Homericum*, is he suggests the *Moly* of Theophrastus, Pliny and [Homer](#) – Odyssey XX – and he describes it as a wild garlic). Circe was the mother by Ulysses of Telegonus.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Driven by passion for Ulysses. (Odyssey X:133).

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) A witch able to transform men into beasts.

### Circus Maximus

The huge circus in Rome between the Palatine and Aventine Hills used for pageants races etc.

[Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) Ovid refers to a Circus, not necessarily this one, and describes the preparations for a bullfight.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) A horse-racing venue.

Ciziges

A tribe living near the Danube.

[Book TII:155-206](#) A tribe of the [Danube](#) region.

Claudia

The Roman woman, Claudia Quinta, a Vestal Virgin, who was accused of unchastity, but fulfilled the oracle and showed herself a pure woman by freeing the stranded ship containing the image of [Cybele](#) that had stuck on the mud when arriving at Ostia in 204BC.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) She was superior to her reputation.

Clodia (Via)

A major Road in [Rome](#).

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) Mentioned. The junction with the [Via Flaminia](#) near the Milvian Bridge where Ovid had a small estate.

Clotho

One of the three [Fates](#). Clotho spins the thread. Lachesis measures it. Atropos wields the shears.

[Ibis:209-250](#) She spins [Ibis](#)'s fate.

Clytaemnestra, Clytaemestra, Clytemnestra

The wife of [Agamemnon](#), daughter of [Tyndareus](#) of Sparta, and Leda. Sister or half-sister of Helen, and of the [Dioscuri](#). Mother of [Orestes](#), [Electra](#) (Laodice), and [Iphigenia](#). She conspired with her lover [Aegisthus](#) to murder Agamemnon. She was in turn killed by her son Orestes.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Tragedy caused by her adultery and the consequent events.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Conspired to murder her husband.

Colchi

A tribe living near the Danube.

[Book TII:155-206](#) A tribe of the [Danube](#) region.

Colchis

The region at the eastern end of the [Black Sea](#), south of the Caucasus. Its King was [Aeetes](#), and it was the home of [Medea](#). Its main river the [Phasis](#), was a trade route to central Asia. Medea is called 'the Phasian'. Colchis was noted for timber, linen, hemp, pitch and gold-dust.

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) Home of Aeetes and Medea.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Its waters sailed by the [Argonauts](#).

Coralli

A [Moesian](#) tribe living near the [Danube](#).

[Book EIV.II:1-50](#) [Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) A blonde-haired tribe of the area.

Corinna

The unknown heroine of Ovid's *Amores*.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Ovid claims here that Corinna was sung throughout the City, and that he did not use her real name, suggesting that she was in fact a real and well-known person. The name Corinna refers back to the ancient Greece poetess (fourth century BC?) who claimed to have rivalled Pindar. This suggests a girl learned in verse. From this and a possible later identification of [Julia the Younger](#) and the [Muse](#), I would suggest the speculation, without any evidence, that Corinna was Julia. I don't suggest any direct affair between Ovid and Julia, merely that she was at least his literary pretext.

## Corinth

The city north of Mycenae, on the Isthmus between Attica and the Argolis. Built on the hill of Acrocorinth, it and Ithome were 'the horns of the Greek bull', whoever held them held the Peloponnese. It controlled both land and sea trade between Northern Greece and the Peloponnese and, by means of the famous slipway or *diolkos*, between the Saronic and Corinthian Gulfs. It sided with Sparta against Athens during the Peloponnesian War. It was destroyed by the Roman general Mummius in 146BC and rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 44BC as a Roman colony.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) The harbour of Corinth on the Saronic Gulf was [Cenchreae](#).

[Book TIII.VIII:1-42](#) [Medea](#) fled from there.

### Cornificius

A Roman erotic poet, possibly Quintus Cornificius friend of [Catullus](#) and Cicero, proscribed by the second Triumvirate, and killed defending his province of Africa Nova in 42BC.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His light verse.

### Coroebus

[Ibis:541-596](#) He destroyed the Harpy, Poene, visited on Argos by [Apollo](#) after [Crotopus](#)'s crime of killing [Linus](#) and [Psamathe](#). A plague then descended on the Argolis, which was ended by Corobeus confessing to his act at [Delphi](#), and being sent out to build a temple to Apollo wherever the sacred tripod he was carrying fell to earth.

### Cotta Maximus

Marcus Aurelius Cotta Maximus Messalinus (called Maximus or Cotta Maximus, and born not earlier than 24BC, possibly in 14BC) consul 20AD, the younger son of [Messalla](#), brother of [Messalinus](#), and patron and 'friend' of [Ovid](#). A poet and orator, condemned by Tacitus (*Annals*:6.5-6.7) for his extravagant life-style, his shameful behaviour, and his servility, he was a supporter of [Tiberius](#), and was successfully defended by him when prosecuted in 32AD, for accusing Gaius Caligula of homosexuality, ridiculing a banquet to the late Julia Augusta as a funeral feast, and boasting of Tiberius's protection when he went to law. Pliny (*Historia Naturalis*:10.52) describes him as an extravagant gourmet.



Juvenal (5.109, 7.94) makes him a patron of the arts. (Tacitus apart, he probably behaved no differently than any member of the Caesars' inner group of supporters, and appears to have been a continuing supporter of Ovid. Those who think he didn't do enough for the poet probably overestimate his power, and underestimate the distaste for Ovid's error at court.)

[Book TIV.V:1-34](#) This poem probably addressed to Cotta, given its consistency with other poems to Cotta (Ex Ponto I:V,IX and II:III,VIII and III:II,V), the mention of the blood brother, and the content of the preceding poem, probably addressed to [Messalinus](#).

[Book TV.IX:1-38](#) The imagery of shipwreck again and the perceived high rank of the recipient, who wishes to be strictly anonymous, suggests that as above this poem may be to Cotta.

[Book EI.V:1-42](#) Explicitly addressed to Cotta.

[Book EI.VII:1-70](#) Brother to Messalinus. Ovid stresses the relationship with him.

[Book EI.IX:1-56](#) Explicitly addressed to Cotta. He may have acted as a patron to [Celsus](#) in his literary efforts.

[Book EII.III:1-48](#) Explicitly addressed to Cotta. Ovid claims that Cotta accepted he had only made a mistake and not committed a crime.

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) Explicitly addressed to Cotta thanking him for sending likenesses of the Imperial family.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Explicitly addressed to Cotta. [Iphigenia](#) in Tauris.

[Book EIII.V:1-58](#) Explicitly addressed to Cotta. Compliments on his eloquence.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet and patron of poets in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Cotys

Several so-named Kings of [Thrace](#). Cotys IV, son of Rhoemetalces I, was ruler at the time of Ovid's exile. He shared Thrace with his uncle Rhescuporis, when [Augustus](#) divided the kingdom in 12AD. He was cultivated and Romanised. He was deposed and killed by his uncle in 19AD after Ovid's death. (Rhoemetalces had been supported by Augustus, Marcus Lollius providing military help, and Rome later had helped drive the Sarmatians back across the Danube).

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) This poem addressed to him explicitly.

### Croesus

King of Lydia (c560-546BC), famed for his wealth. He was defeated and captured by Cyrus of Persia at the taking of Sardis.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) An example of wealth.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) Rescued by his conqueror from the pyre (Herodotus 1.86)

### Crotopus

[Ibis:541-596](#) The Argive father of [Psamathe](#) who killed her son [Linus](#).

Cupido, Cupid, see [Amor](#)

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) The love-god and his arrows.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) The god of love helped [Jason](#).

Cyane

A fountain nymph of [Sicily](#) whose stream flows into the River [Anapis](#), near [Syracuse](#). She was loved by Anapis and wedded him. She obstructed Dis in his abduction of Proserpine and Dis opened up a way to Tartarus from the depths of her pool.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Visited by [Ovid](#) and [Macer](#).

Cyaneae Insulae, Symphlegades

The Greek Symplegades, the ‘clashing rocks’. Two rocky islands at the entrance to the [Euxine](#) Sea in the [Bosporus](#) channel, clashing rocks according to the fable, crushing what attempted to pass between them. The [Argo](#) had to avoid them. With [Athena](#)’s help the Argonauts passed through after which the rocks ceased to clash.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the route of the *Minerva*.

Cybele, Rhea

The Phrygian great goddess, Magna Mater, the Great Mother, personifying the earth in its savage state, worshipped in caves and on mountaintops. Merged with Rhea, the mother of the gods. Her consort was Attis, slain by a wild boar like Adonis. His festival was celebrated by the followers of Cybele, the Galli, or Corybantes, who were noted for convulsive dances to the music of flutes,

drums and cymbals, and self-mutilation in an orgiastic fury. Her worship was introduced at [Rome](#) in 204BC. She wore a many-turreted crown, and is often represented with many breasts.

[Book TII.I:1](#) Identified with [Ops](#) the Roman goddess of plenty.

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) Worshipped to the sound of flutes, pipes and horns.

[Ibis:413-464](#) Worshipped with ecstatic self-mutilation.

### Cychreus

[Ibis:251-310](#) The first king of Salamis, in some versions of myth the grandfather of Telamon. He killed, bred, or was killed by a serpent in various mythological variants. He is said to have appeared to the Greek fleet at the Battle of Salamis as a snake.

### Cyclades

The 'Encircling Isles' The chain of islands centred on [Delos](#) in the Aegean Sea, Naxos, Paros and Andros being the largest.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) [Ovid](#) passed them on his journey into exile.

### Cyclopes

A race of giants living on the coast of [Sicily](#) of whom Polyphemus, blinded by [Ulysses](#), was one. They had a single eye in the centre of their foreheads. They forged [Jupiter](#)'s lightning-bolts, using [Etna](#)'s fires.

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) The encounter with Ulysses.

Cycnus

[Ibis:413-464](#) The son of [Apollo](#) and Hyrie, a great hunter of Tempe. He is turned into a swan when he attempts suicide to spite Phylus by diving into a lake, thereafter called the Cycnean Lake. Ovid gives a variant myth here. See *Metamorphoses* VII:350

Cydippe

The lover of [Acontius](#).

[Book TIII. X:41-78](#) The place devoid of fruit-trees.

Cynapses

A river with unknown location.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Cyzicus

The [Milesian](#) colony founded in 756 BC situated on the island of Arctonessus in the [Propontis](#) (Sea of Marmara) and linked to the mainland by a sandy isthmus. It was famous for its electrum coinage (*staters*) known as 'Cyzicenes'. It was held for Rome against Mithridates in 74BC, the siege being raised by Lucullus, had a superb temple of Hadrian, and was ultimately destroyed by earthquakes. The uninhabited site is now known as *Bal-Kiz*.

[Book TLX:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s route. According to myth it was founded by the Argonaut Aeneus from Haemonia.

### Daedalus

The mythical Athenian architect who built the Labyrinth for King Minos of Crete, laid out the 'dancing floor' of Cnossos, and created the artificial wooden cow with which Pasiphae wooed the Bull from the Sea. (See Michael Ayrton's extended series of sculptures, bronzes, and artefacts celebrating Daedalus, [Icarus](#) and the [Minotaur](#)). He made wings of bee's-wax and feathers to escape from Crete. Warning Icarus, his son, to follow him in a middle course, they flew towards Ionia. Between [Samos](#) and Lebinthos Icarus flew too high, the wax melted, and he drowned in the Icarian Sea and was buried on the island of Icaria. He had previously caused the death of Talos, his nephew, the son of his sister Perdix, through jealousy throwing him from the Athenian citadel, but Pallas [Athene](#) changed the boy into the partridge, *perdix perdix*. He found sanctuary in [Sicily](#) (after reaching Cumae, where he built the temple of [Apollo](#)), at the court of King Cocalus who defended him from Minos. (He threaded the spiral shell for King Cocalus, a test devised by Minos, and made the golden honeycomb for the goddess at Eryx. See Vincent Cronin's book on Sicily – The Golden Honeycomb.). His name was synonymous with ingenuity, invention and technical skill. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book VIII.

[Book THH.IV:1-46](#) [Book THH.VIII:1-42](#) Made the wings of wax and feathers.

### Dalmatia

A Roman province bordering the eastern shore of the Adriatic.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) Separated out from Roman Illyricum after the [Pannonian](#) War.

### Damasichthon

[Ibis:541-596](#) Possibly Damasicthon son of Kodros, the Ionian.

### Danae

The mother of [Perseus](#) by [Jupiter](#), and daughter of Acrisius, King of Argos. She was raped by Jupiter in the form of a shower of gold, while imprisoned in a brazen tower by Acrisius, who had been warned by an oracle that he would have no sons but that his grandson would kill him. (See Titian's painting, Museo del Prado, Madrid: See the pedestal of Benvenuto Cellini's Perseus bronze, Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence, depicting Danaë with the child Perseus: See Jan Gossaert called Mabuse's panel – Danaë – in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich)

[Book THH:361-420](#) Raped by Jupiter.

### Danaides, Belides

The fifty daughters of Danaüs, granddaughters of Belus, king of Egypt.

They were forced to marry their cousins, the fifty sons of [Aegyptus](#), and, with one exception, Hypermnestra, who saved the life of Lynceus because he preserved her virginity, killed them on their wedding night. The others were punished in Hades by having to fill a bottomless cistern with water carried in leaking sieves.

[Book THII.I:47-82](#) The figures of Danaus and his daughters in the temple of [Apollo](#) built by [Augustus](#) on the [Palatine](#), in which he also established a library.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Murderesses.

[Ibis:163-208](#) [Ibis:311-364](#) Their crime and punishment.

Danaus, Danaan

A term originally applied to the people of Argos but later a general term meaning Greek. [BookEIV.VII:41](#) etc.

Danuvius, Danube, Hister

The great river of south-eastern Europe, running from Germany to its mouth on the west coast of the [Black Sea](#) some seventy miles north of Tomis. Ovid generally prefers the name Hister rather than Danuvius.

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Tomis](#) (Constantza) is south of the Danube estuary.

Dardania

A town, and region, on the Asian shore of the [Hellespont](#). The [Trojans](#) are often referred to as Dardanians.



[Book TI.X:1-50](#) Founded by Dardanus, [Zeus](#)'s son by the [Pleiad](#) Electra, a native of Arcadian Pheneus. He married Chryse the daughter of Pallas.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) [Priam](#), King of Troy is a Dardanian.

Dareus, Darius

Darius III, King of Persia (d 330 BC). He was defeated by [Alexander](#) the Great at Issus. Alexander subsequently gave Darius rites of burial after he had been murdered by his own kin.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) Alexander showed magnanimity in victory.

[Ibis:311-364](#) Ovid may intend Darius III (not the second, who was not historically significant) Codomannus, defeated by Alexander at the Issus in 333BC and Gaugamela in 331BC, and subsequently murdered by the satrap Bessus. The incident referred to is unclear.

Deianira

The daughter of Oeneus, king of Calydon, hence called Calydonis, and the sister of Meleager. She was wooed by [Hercules](#) and Acheloüs. She married Hercules, and was raped by Nessus, the Centaur. Trying to revive Hercules love for her she unwittingly gave him the shirt of Nessus soaked in the poison of the Hydra. (See Pollaiuolo's painting – The Rape of Deianira – Yale University Art Gallery) Hyllus was her son by Hercules. (See Sophocles *Trachiniae*)

[Book TII:361-420](#) Wife of Hercules, and in love with him.

## Deidamia

The daughter of Lycomedes, King of the Dolopians, on Scyros. She was the mother of Neoptolemus ([Pyrrhus](#)) by [Achilles](#), after Achilles was hidden on the island to avoid his being drafted for [Troy](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) Loved by Achilles.

## Delos, Delia tellus

The Greek island in the Aegean, one of the Cyclades, birthplace of, and sacred to, [Apollo](#) (Phoebus) and [Diana](#) (Phoebe, Artemis), hence the adjective Delian. Its ancient name was Ortygia. A wandering island it gave sanctuary to [Latona](#) (Leto). Having been hounded by jealous [Juno](#) (Hera), she gave birth there to the twins Apollo and Diana, between an olive tree and a date-palm on the north side of Mount Cynthus. (Pausanias VIII xlvii, mentions the sacred palm-tree, noted there in Homer's *Odyssey* 6, 162, and the ancient olive.) Delos then became fixed in the sea. In a variant she gave birth to Artemis-Diana on the islet of Ortygia nearby.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) Kind to Latona.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Diana's island. Possibly Ovid is referring obscurely to the Delian league and its sacking of the island of Thasos, which because of its gold mines was a source of riches.

## Delphi

The site of the oracle of [Apollo](#) in Phocis, on the lower slopes of Parnassus overlooking the Pleistos valley. Phoebus Apollo is therefore called Delphicus. The navel stone in the precinct at Delphi was taken as the central point of the known world. It continued as a shrine, diminishing in importance, until closed by Theodosius in 390AD.

[Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) The oracle.

Demodocus

[Ibis:251-310](#) The blind Greek bard who entertains the guests in [Alcinous](#)' palace in Phaeacia in [Homer](#)'s Odyssey VIII.

Dexamenus

[Ibis:365-412](#) King of Olenus. [Hercules](#) rescued his daughter Mnesimache from the Centaur [Eurytion](#), the king's son-in-law.

Dexithea

[Ibis:465-540](#) The Telchines, mythical craftsmen and wizards living on Ceos, angered the gods by blighting the fruits of the earth. Zeus and Poseidon (or Apollo) destroyed the island and its population, but spared Dexithea and her sisters, daughters of Damon (or Demonax), the chief of the Telkhines, because Macelo, Dexithea's sister, had entertained the two gods. Macelo's husband offended the gods, and they were both destroyed.

Diana, Artemis

Daughter of [Jupiter](#) and [Latona](#) (hence her epithet Latonia) and twin sister of [Apollo](#). She was born on the island of Ortygia which is [Delos](#) (hence her epithet Ortygia). Goddess of the moon and the hunt. She carries a bow, quiver and arrows. She and her followers are virgins. She is worshipped as the triple goddess, as Hecate in the underworld, [Luna](#) the moon, in the heavens, and Diana the huntress on earth. (Skelton's 'Diana in the leaves green, Luna who so bright doth sheen, Persephone in hell') [Callisto](#) is one of her followers. (See Luca Penni's – Diana Huntress – Louvre, Paris, and Jean Goujon's sculpture (attributed) – Diana of Anet – Louvre, Paris.) She was worshipped at the sacred grove and lake of Nemi in Aricia, as Diana Nemorensis, and the rites practised there are the starting point for Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' (see Chapter I et seq.) She hid [Hippolytus](#), and set him down at Aricia (Nemi), as her consort Virbius. The Romans identified the original Sabine goddess Diana with the Greek Artemis and established her cult on the Aventine. Strabo mentions the connection of the cult of Aricia with the Tauric Chersonese (5.3.12, C.239)

[Book TII:77-120](#) [Ibis:465-540](#) [Actaeon](#) saw her naked, bathing in a pool, and was changed to a stag, and torn to pieces by the hounds for unwittingly being present.

[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Book EI.II:53-100](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) The Diana of the [Tauric](#) Chersonese was worshipped with human sacrifice. Strabo (7.4.2) locates

her temple at Heracleia Pontica near modern Sevastapol, and Herodotus (4.103) describes the sacrifice.

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) Possibly the Diana of Ephesus is meant. Ovid implies no alms collecting was allowed the priestesses and prophets of the goddess.

[Book EII.III:1-48](#) This suggests a reference to the ritual prostitution of the followers of Diana at Ephesus and elsewhere.

[Ibis:465-540](#) [Delos](#) was her island.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Her pack of hounds. [Cerberus](#) was an incarnation of Hecate, a mask of Diana.

### Diogenes

The Greek philosopher of [Sinope](#) (412-322 BC) who founded the philosophical sect of Cynics. Influenced by Antisthenes he calimed total freedom and self-sufficiency for the individual, and had a disregard for social conventions.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Exiled to [Attica](#).

### Diomedes (1)

The son of Tydeus King of Argos, and a Greek hero in the [Trojan](#) War. He aided [Ulysses](#) against Rhesus and Palamades, and with him brought [Philoctetes](#) and his bow (that of [Hercules](#)) from [Lemnos](#).

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) He wounded [Venus](#) and [Mars](#) in the Trojan War.

Diomedes (2)

The [Thracian](#) King of the [Bistones](#) who fed his horses on human flesh. Their capture formed [Hercules](#)'s eighth labour.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) An example of cruelty.

Dionysius

Dionysius II, the Younger, the tyrant of [Syracuse](#) (in 367-356, and 347-344 BC) who was a patron of writers and philosophers and was taught briefly by Plato. He opened a school at Corinth after his expulsion.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) Ejected from the fortress of Ortygia by Timoleon, and ended as a schoolteacher in [Corinth](#).

Dionysopolis

A town on the [Moesian](#) coast of the [Pontus](#), south of [Tomis](#). Earlier known as Krounoi, 'the springs'. Now *Balchik* (40 kilometres north of *Varna*).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s course.

Dionysus, see [Bacchus](#)

Dirce

[Ibis:465-540](#) The wife of [Lycus](#), King of [Thebes](#), who mistreated her niece Antiope. Antiope was rescued by her sons Amphion and Zethus who tied Dirce to the horns of a wild bull and set it loose.

Dodona

The town in Epirus in north western Greece, site of the Oracle of [Jupiter](#)-Zeus, whose responses were delivered by the rustling of the oak trees in the sacred grove. (After 1200BC the goddess Naia, worshipped there, who continued to be honoured as Dione, was joined by Zeus Naios. The sanctuary was destroyed in 391AD.)

[Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) The oracle.

Dolon

The [Trojan](#) son of [Eumedes](#). He acted as a spy in the Greek camp and asked for the horses of [Achilles](#) as his reward. He was killed by [Ulysses](#) and [Diomedes](#) during their raid behind the enemy lines. See Iliad Book X.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) [Ibis:597-644](#) His desire for Achilles's horses.

Donnus

A Celtic chieftain, the ancestor of [Vestalis](#), a Celt who took service with the Romans.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) The grandfather of Vestalis.

Drusus (1)

Surnamed Germanicus, the younger son of [Livia](#) Augusta by her first husband (Tiberius Claudius Nero). The father of [Germanicus](#).

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) He was rewarded by the Senate with the title Germanicus for his German campaigns from 12BC to AD9. Ovid's 'fine son worthy of his father', may be a dig at [Augustus](#), since Livia was forced to divorce her

husband and marry Augustus when six months pregnant with Drusus.

[Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) Killed by illness or a fall from his horse, in Germany, in AD9.

Drusus (2)

Born 13BC. The son of [Tiberius](#) and Vipsania (daughter of Agrippa), and the cousin and brother of [Germanicus](#) through Germanicus's adoption by Tiberius. He married the Elder [Livilla](#).

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Ovid](#) offers a prayer for his safety.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Fighting alongside Tiberius in Germany in AD10.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) Praised with Germanicus.

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) As Livia's grandson worshipped by Ovid as divine.

Dryas

[Ibis:311-364](#) The son of [Mars](#), and brother of the Thracian [Tereus](#). If this is the Dryas referred to, the incident of his son is obscure.

Dryops

[Ibis:465-540](#) The father of Theiodamas, who ruled the area below Mount Parnassus, and who was easily defeated by [Hercules](#). The Dryopians were taken to the shrine of [Apollo](#) and made slaves.

Dulichium



An unidentified island, like Same, near [Ithaca](#), and belonging to [Ulysses](#). Ulysses (Odysseus) and his comrades are called 'Dulichian'.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) Often synonymous with Ithaca.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) The Dulichians, Odysseus's men, were drugged by the food of the Lotus-Eaters, see [Homer's](#) Odyssey IX:82

Dyrapses

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Echionius

Theban, from Echion the son-in-law of [Cadmus](#) founder of [Thebes](#).

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) Thebes.

Eetion

The king of Thebes, in [Mysia](#), and father of [Andromache](#), [Hector's](#) wife.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) Father of Andromache.

Elba, Ilva

Ilva the modern Elba, the island lying off the Etrurian coast in the Tyrrhenian Sea, famous for its iron ore mines.

[Book EII.III:49-100](#) Ovid last saw [Cotta](#) there in the autumn of AD8.

Elysian Fields

[Ibis:163-208](#) A region of the underworld for spirits in bliss, rewarding virtue in life.

### Electra

The daughter of [Agamemnon](#) and [Clytemnestra](#), sister to Chrysothemis, [Iphigenia](#) and [Orestes](#). Devoted to Orestes, hostile to [Aegisthus](#) and her mother. See Sophocles and Euripides (*Electra*).

[Book TII:361-420](#) Famous because of Clytemnestra's adultery and the consequent events.

### Elis

The region of the north-west Peloponnese famous for its horses. The Elians presided over the Games at [Olympia](#).

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) The Elean river Alpheus.

### Elpenor

A comrade of [Ulysses](#). The Odyssey describes his death when he tumbles from the roof of [Circe](#)'s house, the morning after a heavy bout of drinking. His ghost begs Ulysses for proper burial, and for the oar that he pulled with his comrades to be set up over his grave. His ashes were entombed on Mount Circeo.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Mentioned.

[Ibis:465-540](#) His fate.

### Elysium

Elysium or the Elysian Fields, identified with the Islands of the Blest, a paradise ruled by Rhadamanthys, apparently distinct from Hades.

Emathius

A poetic term for Macedonian, originally applied to the Emathian Plain.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) [Alexander](#) the Great of Macedonia.

Enceladus

One of the giants who stormed heaven, piling Mounts [Pelion](#), [Ossa](#) and [Olympus](#) on each other. He was overthrown by Pallas Athene ([Minerva](#)).

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) Ovid implies he had not joined in any plotting against [Augustus](#).

Endymion

A beautiful youth from Elis or Caria who was made to sleep for eternity in a cave on Carian Mount Latmos by [Zeus](#) for attempting to seduce [Hera](#). He was visited and kissed by the Moon (Selene/[Luna](#)/[Diana](#)/[Artemis](#)).

[Book TII:253-312](#) Visited by the Moon.

Ennius

Quintus Ennius (239-169BC) from Rudiae in Calabria, the important early Roman poet and tragedian. His chief work was the *Annales* an epic history of [Rome](#) including the Punic and eastern wars.

[Book TII:253-312](#) His *Annals* are probably referred to here.

[Book TII:421-470](#) A serious poet, talented but primitive.

Eous

[Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) [Book EII.V:41-76](#) [Book EIV.VI:1-50](#)

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) The dawn, 'eastern'.

Epidaurus

A city in Argolis, sacred to Aesculapius. The pre-Greek god Maleas was later equated with [Apollo](#), and he and his son Asklepios were worshipped there. There were games in honour of the god every four years, and from 395BC a drama festival. The impressive ancient theatre has been restored and plays are performed there. From the end of the 5th c. BC the cult of Asklepios spread widely through the ancient world reaching Athens in 420BC and [Rome](#) (as Aesculapius) in 293BC.

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) [Aesculapius](#) the Epidaurian was famed for his healing arts.

Erebus

The Underworld (also a god of darkness).

[Ibis:209-250](#) Source of the Furies' snake venom.

Erichthonius

A son of Vulcan (Hephaestus), born without a mother (or born from the Earth after Hephaestus the victim of a deception had been repulsed by [Athene](#)). Legendary king

of [Athens](#) (as Erechtheus) and a skilled charioteer. He is represented by the constellation Auriga the charioteer, containing the star Capella. (Alternatively the constellation represents the she-goat Amaltheia that suckled the infant Jupiter, and the stars ζ (zeta) and η (eta) Aurigae are her Kids. It is a constellation visible in the winter months.)

[Book TII:253-312](#) [Pallas](#)-Athene raised him.

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) Ancestor of [Eumolpus](#) and [Cotys](#).

Erigone

The daughter of [Icarius](#).

[Ibis:597-644](#) She hung herself on finding him dead.

Erymanthis

Arcadian from Mount Erymanthus in Arcadia.

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) [Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) An epithet for the Great Bear from [Callisto](#) the Arcadian girl transformed to that constellation.

Erysichthon

[Ibis:413-464](#) The son of the Thessalian king Triopas. His daughter was [Mestra](#). After living off Mestra's shape-changing skills he ended by consuming himself. See *Metamorphoses* VIII:725

Eteocles

The elder son of [Oedipus](#) and Iocasta, brother of [Polynices](#) who fought against him in the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#). The two brothers killed each other. Their sister was [Antigone](#).

[Book TII:313-360](#) [Book TV.V:27-64](#) Their mutual death.

Eubius

An unknown writer.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Apparently he wrote a story that involved abortion.

Euboea

One of the largest of the Aegean islands close to the south-east of Greece and stretching from the Maliac Gulf and the Gulf of Pagasae in the north to the island of Andros in the south. At Chalcis it is less than a hundred yards from the mainland.

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) [Book TV.VII:1-68](#) [Ibis:311-364](#) [Caphereus](#), the site of the shipwreck of the Greek fleet. [Ibis:465-540](#) [Lichas](#) hurled there.

Eumedes

The father of [Dolon](#).

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Mentioned.

Eumolpus

A mythical [Thracian](#) singer, the son of [Poseidon](#) and Chione (the daughter of Boreas and Oreithiya, making Eumolpus a descendant of [Erictheus](#), king of Athens), and a

priest of [Ceres](#)-Demeter, who brought the Eleusinian mysteries to Attica. He learned the mysteries from Demeter herself or from [Orpheus](#) (see *Metamorphoses* Book XI:85). The priestly clan of the Eumolpidae claimed descent from him, as the Kerkidae did from his son Keryx. His son Ismarus married a daughter of Tegyrius the King of Thrace, and Eumolpus himself succeeded to the throne on their death. He taught [Hercules](#) the lyre.

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) Ancestor of [Cotys](#), King of Thrace.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) A pupil of Orpheus.

[Ibis:251-310](#) His mother Chione hurled him into his father Neptune's sea to avoid Boreas's anger. Neptune saved him.

### Eupolis

[Ibis:465-540](#) A younger contemporary of Aristophanes, a comic poet and playwright. An Athenian poet of the Old Comedy, he flourished at the time of the Peloponnesian War (c. 446—411BC). Fragments of his plays survive. May be intended here.

### Euripides

The tragic poet c480-406BC, one of the three major writers of Attic tragedy, according to tradition born in Salamis on the day Xerxes' fleet was destroyed.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Eaten by dogs in the temple according to Hyginus *Fabula* 247.

### Europa

The daughter of [Agenor](#), king of Phoenicia, and sister of [Cadmus](#), abducted by [Jupiter](#) disguised as a white bull. (See Paolo Veronese's painting – The Rape of Europa – Palazzo Ducale, Venice).

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) She gave her name to the continent of Europe.

Eurus

The East Wind. Auster is the South Wind, Zephyrus the West Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) The warring of the winds.

Euryalus

The beautiful boy in [Virgil](#)'s Aeneid (IX:176) loved by [Nisus](#), son of Hyrtacus, who avenged his death by killing Volcens, before dying himself.

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#) [Book TV.IV:1-50](#) A paragon of friendship.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Died with his friend after killing the sleeping Rhamnes.

Eurydice

[Ibis:465-540](#) The wife of [Orpheus](#), who died after being bitten by a snake. Orpheus went to the Underworld to ask for her life, but lost her when he broke the injunction not to look back at her. See Metamorphoses Books X:1 and XI:1. (See also Rilke's poem, 'Orpheus, Eurydice, Hermes', and his 'Sonnets to Orpheus', and Gluck's Opera 'Orphée').



### Eurytion

[Ibis:365-412](#) The Centaur. [Hercules](#) rescued Mnesimache the daughter of King [Dexamenus](#) of Olenus from him, and apparently killed him, though Eurytion also appears in the myth of [Theseus](#)'s fight against the Centaurs.

### Eurylochos

[Ibis:251-310](#) Supposedly a companion of [Odysseus](#), who expelled Cychreus, son of [Neptune](#) and Salamis, daughter of the river god Asopus, from the throne of Salamis. Cychreus had killed a serpent to gain the kingdom, and bred one to defend it, and Ovid has some variant on what is a fragmentary myth whereby he was eaten by serpents.

### Euxinus

The Black Sea (Euxine) was called the [Pontus](#) Euxinus, the 'Hospitable Sea' for purposes of good omen.

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) The [Danube](#) delta was the Roman boundary on the west coast.

[Book TIII.XIII:1-28](#) [Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Book TV.X:1-53](#) Falsely named 'hospitable' as far as Ovid is concerned.

[Book TIV.I:49-107](#) [Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) [Book TIV.X:93-132](#)

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) [Book EII.II:1-38](#) The western or left-hand (*sinister*: unlucky) shore, Pontus on the left.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) Ovid describes the shoreline as *deformia*, shapeless, featureless, unlovely.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) [Book EII.VI:1-38](#) [Book EIII.VI:1-60](#)  
[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) [Book EIV.IX:1-54](#) His place of exile,  
from which he sent letters.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) The sea frozen in winter.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Bordered by the Tauric Chersonese  
and Thrace.

[Book EIII.VII:1-40](#) The place he is likely to die in.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) [Vestalis](#) possibly prefect there.

### Evadne

The daughter of Iphis and wife of [Capaneus](#) who had  
herself burned to death on her husband's funeral pyre,  
after he was struck by [Zeus](#)'s lightning bolt in the war of  
the Seven Against [Thebes](#).

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) She was loyal to her husband.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) Made famous by her husband.

[Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) [Book EIII.1:105-166](#) The daughter of  
Iphis, a paragon of loyalty and love.

### Evenus

[Ibis:465-540](#) Son of [Mars](#). He married Alcippe and had a  
daughter Marpessa. Suitors contended with him for her in  
a chariot race, the loser being killed. Idas stole her, and  
Evenus drowned himself in the river Lycormas which  
became the river Evenus.

### Fabia

Ovid's third wife was a bride from the House of the Fabii  
but it is not certain her name was Fabia, or that she was of

the family. She was a widow, or divorced, with a daughter [Perilla](#), when Ovid married her. She was loyal to him in exile.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) She grieves for him, but was sensibly left behind in Rome, probably to work on his behalf for mitigation of his sentence, and to prevent her being exposed to the hardships of life in exile.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) His leave-taking from her.

[Book TV.XI:1-30](#) One of the many letters to her, as she lived the life of an exile's wife in Rome, loyally defending his estate.

[Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) Ovid's guarantee of immortality to her.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) [Book EIII.1:67-104](#) She was a bride from the house of [Paullus Fabius](#). The lines suggest a close relationship between Ovid and Paullus, of a literary nature. There is no concrete evidence that she was herself a member of the family. She was one of [Marcia](#)'s companions, loved by her, and also previously in a similar relationship to her mother [Atia](#) Minor, [Augustus](#)'s maternal aunt.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) His thoughts of her and her daughter.

Fabius

Paullus Fabius Maximus. See [Maximus](#).

Falerii

The Etruscan city on the bank of the [Tiber](#) north-west of [Rome](#), beyond Mount Soracte, captured by Rome in

241BC. It was famous for its orchards, pastures and cattle. Ovid's second wife was from Falerii. *Falisca herba* is the 'grass of Falerii'.

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) [Book EIV.VIII:1-48](#) Oxen from its rich meadows.

### Fates

The three Fates, the Moirai, or Parcae, were goddesses born of Erebus and Night. Clothed in white, they spin, measure out, and sever the thread of each human life. Clotho (the Spinner) spins the thread. [Lachesis](#) (The Assigner of Destinies) measures it. Atropos (She Who Cannot Be Resisted) wields the shears. The Parcae were originally Roman goddesses of childbearing but were assimilated to the Fates who preside over birth marriage and death.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) Lachesis measured the thread of life.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Ibis:41-104](#) Spinners of the thread of life.

### Fauns

Woodland spirits.

[Ibis:41-104](#) Powers invoked by Ovid.

### Flaccus

Lucius Pomponius Flaccus the brother of Ovid's friend [Graecinus](#). He served in Moesia c.12AD and again as governor in 18 or 19AD. He was subsequently Governor

of Syria in AD32 (Tacitus *Annales* 6.27). He was an energetic soldier, close to [Tiberius](#).

[Book EI.X:1-44](#) This poem addressed to him explicitly.

[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) His command of the Danube shores.

### Flaminia Via

The Flaminian Way, the Roman road, ran from [Rome](#) to Ariminum (Rimini) on the Adriatic Coast. Gaius Flaminius completed it in 220BC. [Augustus](#) himself paid for its repair in 27BC, and statues of him were erected on the arches of the Mulvian Bridge over the [Tiber](#).

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) Mentioned. The junction with the [Via Clodia](#) near the Milvian (Mulvian) Bridge where Ovid had a small estate.

### Fontanus

An Augustan bucolic poet.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Fortuna

The Roman goddess of Fortune, Chance and Luck, identified with the Greek Tyche, and associated from early times with childbirth, fertility and women generally. Traditionally brought to [Rome](#) by Servius Tullius perhaps from Praeneste where she had an oracular shrine. Represented on a wheel or globe.

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) [Book EII.III:49-100](#)

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) Fortune as chance and fate.

[Book TV.VIII:1-38](#) [Book EIV.III:1-58](#) The Wheel of Fortune.

[Book EII.VII:1-46](#) Fortune's iniquitous arrows. Fickle by reputation but now constant in seeking his destruction.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Depicted as blind or blindfolded.

Fundi

*Fundanium solum*, a town on the [Appian Way](#) in southern Latium.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) Native town of [Rufus](#).

Furiae, the Furies

The Furies, Erinyes, or Eumenides (ironically 'The Kindly Ones'). The Three Sisters, were Alecto, Tisiphone and Megaera, the daughters of Night and Uranus. They were the personified pangs of cruel conscience that pursued the guilty. (See Aeschylus – *The Eumenides*). Their abode was in Hades by the [Styx](#).

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) They pursued [Orestes](#) for the murder of his mother, [Clytemnestra](#).

[Ibis:41-104](#) The Furies sat at the 'prison' gate of the city of Dis. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book IV:416

[Ibis:163-208](#) Their whips, snaky hair and smoking torches.

[Ibis:209-250](#) Their ministrations to the newborn [Ibis](#).

Gallio

Lucius Junius Gallio a rhetorician and friend of Ovid. Also a friend of the elder Seneca, and of [Messalla](#) Corvinus. He was removed as a senator and exiled to

[Lesbos](#) by [Tiberius](#) in AD32 but later summoned back to Rome.

[Book EIV.XI:1-22](#) This letter addressed to him explicitly.

### Gallus

Gaius Cornelius Gallus (69-27BC), one of the most brilliant and versatile figures of his time, general, statesman and elegiac poet, friend of [Virgil](#) who dedicated his tenth eclogue to him, and initially [Augustus](#) who appointed him first Prefect of Egypt (Cassius Dio: *The Roman History* 51.9 and 17). However his behaviour incurred Augustus's displeasure, he was recalled, exiled, and committed suicide to avoid prosecution for treason. He had taken up with [Antony](#)'s mistress Cytheris, and as [Lycoris](#) wrote her four books of love-elegies, of which a single line survives.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His celebration of Lycoris in his verse.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Senior to [Tibullus](#) and [Propertius](#).

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) A writer of love poetry.

### Ganges

The sacred river of northern India.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Visited by [Bacchus](#).

[Ibis:135-162](#) Its warm waters.

### Ganymede

The son of Tros, brother of Ilus and Assaracus, loved by [Jupiter](#) because of his great beauty. Jupiter, in the form of an eagle, abducted him and made him his cup-bearer,

against [Juno](#)'s will. Ganymede's name was given to the largest moon of the planet Jupiter.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Loved by Jupiter.

### Germanicus

Germanicus (15BC-AD19) was the handsome, brilliant and popular son of the elder [Drusus](#), grandson of [Antony](#), and adopted (4AD) son of [Tiberius](#), and husband of [Agrippina](#) (daughter of Agrippa, granddaughter of [Augustus](#)). He was consul in AD12, and commander in chief of campaigns in Germany in AD14-16. In AD17 he was appointed to govern Rome's eastern provinces and died in Antioch in mysterious circumstances, perhaps, as rumoured, through the effects of poison. He was the father of Caligula. Ovid re-dedicated the *Fasti* to him after Augustus's death.

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Ovid](#) offers a prayer for his safety.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Fighting alongside Tiberius in Germany in AD10.

[Book EII.I:68](#) Germanicus participated in Tiberius's Pannonian triumph in October AD12. Ovid prophesies a later triumph for him, which did in fact happen on 26th May 17AD, for victories over the German tribes. Ovid however does not appear to have written a poem about it before his own death sometime in the period lateAD16-AD18. (Last dateable reference in Ex Ponto is [Graecinus](#)'s consulship in early AD16. Ovid died in AD16 or 17 according to Saint Jerome's Chronicle of Eusebius, at the latest AD18 based on Fasti I:223-226 and its reference to



the restoration of the temple of Janus, but this may equally refer to an earlier year)

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) Celebrated for his courage and abilities.

[Book EII.V:41-76](#) [Salanus](#), his tutor in oratory.

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) Adopted son of Tiberius, the adopted son of Augustus, himself the adopted son of Julius Caesar. Ovid's irony is subdued.

Germanicus translated the Phaenomena of Aratus, a guide to the constellations.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Still a possible successor to Augustus, in early 14AD, and so mentioned by Ovid as a contact of Pompey's.

[Book EIV.VIII:1-48](#) [Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) [Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) A possible source of help after Augustus's death.

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) As Tiberius's adopted son worshipped by Ovid as divine.

## Geryon

The monster with three bodies, killed by [Hercules](#). In the Tenth Labour, Hercules brought back Geryon's famous herd of cattle from the island of Erythia after shooting three arrows through the three bodies. Geryon was the son of Chrysaor and Callirhoë, and King of Tartessus in Spain.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friend's disloyalty.

## Getae

A [Thracian](#) tribe occupying both banks of the lower [Danube](#) south and east of the Carpathians, considered of superior intelligence by Herodotus (4.92). [Alexander](#) defeated them. They were also called the Daci (Dacians). Strabo ( 7.3.11-12, C.304) considers them a merging of two tribes and aggressive by nature.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Book TIII.III:1-46](#) [Book TIII. X:1-40](#)  
[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) [Book TIV.I:49-107](#) [Book TIV.VI:1-50](#)

[Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) [Book TV.III:1-58](#) [Book TV.V:27-64](#)  
[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) [Book TV.XIII:1-34](#) [Book EI.I:1-36](#)  
[Book EI.VII:1-70](#) [Book EI.IX:1-56](#) [Book EII.I:68](#) [Book EII.X:1-52](#)

[Book EIII.VII:1-40](#) [Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#)  
[Ovid](#) exiled among them.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Book TV.I:1-48](#) A term for the shores around [Tomis](#).

[Book TII:155-206](#) A tribe of the [Danube](#) region.

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) Colonised by the Greeks.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) [Ovid](#) describes their lands as tree-less and vine-less.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) [Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) A hostile people.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) [Book TV.II:45-79](#) The languages of the region. The rhythms of Getic are different to those of Latin. Latin is relatively unknown, and the original Greek speech of the cities is submerged in Getic pronunciation.

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) [Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Book EIV.III:1-58](#)  
[Ibis:597-644](#) The Getic bowmen.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) [Book EII.VII:1-46](#) [Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#)

Ovid labels them fierce, stern, of a barbaric nation.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) [Book TV.X:1-53](#) [Book EIV.X:1-34](#)

The Getae: dominate the Greek admixture, are barely civilised, warlike, with long beards and hair, savage and aggressive. They dress in skins and loose Persian trousers, and are ignorant of Latin.

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Ovid learnt something of their language.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) [Tomis](#) not a significant place even to the Getae.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) His wish not to die at Getan hands.

[Book EI.V:1-42](#) [Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) A harsh place to expect the [Muse](#) to visit.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) An ironic judgement on their lack of poetry.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) The Getae captured the town of [Aegisos](#). Ovid also mentions the oxen used for ploughing.

[Book EI.X:1-44](#) No abundance of good food among them.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) [Book EII.VII:1-46](#) [Book EIII.IV:57-115](#)

[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) The Getae not fully conquered and pacified by Rome.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) He would make a worthless prize for them.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) They appreciate the virtues of loyalty and friendship. The Getae are not far from the Tauric Chersonese.

[Book EIII.V:1-58](#) [Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) The uncouth and uncivilised Getae.

[Book EIV.II:1-50](#) The long-haired, unshorn Getae.  
[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) [Vestalis](#) campaigned against them.  
[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) Ovid wrote a poem in Getic.  
[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) Ovid praises the people of Tomis but not the warlike tribes.

### Gigantes, Giants

Monsters, sons of [Tartarus](#) and Earth, with many arms and serpent feet, who made war on the gods by piling up the mountains, and overthrown by [Jupiter](#). They were buried under [Sicily](#).

[Book TII:43-76](#) [Book TII:313-360](#) [Ovid](#) may have intended to write a poem about the war. He appears to have started such a work and abandoned it.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Known of through the poets.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Buried beneath Sicily.

### Glaucus(1)

[Ibis:541-596](#) The son of [Sisyphus](#) and Merope, and father of [Bellerephon](#), who lived at Potniae near [Thebes](#). [Aphrodite](#) punished him for feeding his mares on human flesh by causing them to eat him alive.

### Glaucus(2)

[Ibis:541-596](#) The Boeotian son of Anthedon or [Poseidon](#) who tasted the herb of immortality and leapt into the sea

where he became a marine god. See *Metamorphoses* VII:179

Glaucus(3)

[Ibis:541-596](#) Ovid indicates another Glaucus, who drowned in honey. This was Glaucus son of Minos, who drowned in a jar of honey in the cellars of Cnossos, whom Polyeidus restored to life.

Gorgo, Gorgons, see [Medusa](#)  
[Book EIV.VIII:49-90 Pegasus](#), born of Medusa.

Graccus

Probably Titus Sempronius Graccus, a writer of tragedy and a descendant of the great Gracchi.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Graecinus

Publius Pomponius Graecinus brother of Lucius Pomponius [Flaccus](#) who was a distinguished soldier and became Governor of Syria. Publius was *consul suffectus* in May 16 AD. A soldier interested in literature, possibly the Graecinus mentioned in *Amores* II.10.

[Book EI.VI:1-54](#) This poem addressed to him explicitly.

[Book EII.VI:1-38](#) A second poem explicitly addressed to him.

[Book EIV.IX:1-54](#) Addressed to him and celebrating his consulship in AD16.

Grattius

An Augustan poet who wrote a poem on hunting *Cynegetica*, and bucolics.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Gyas

One of the [Giants](#), possessing a hundred arms.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the ‘unbelievable’ myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friend’s disloyalty.

Hadria

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) The Adriatic.

Haedi, the Kids

The constellation Auriga represents the she-goat Amaltheia that suckled the infant [Jupiter](#), and the stars ζ (zeta) and η (eta) Aurigae are her Kids. It is a constellation visible in the winter months, and indicative of stormy weather.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) Causing winter storms during [Ovid](#)’s journey.

Haemon

The son of Creon, King of [Thebes](#) and the nephew of Jocasta. [Antigone](#)’s betrothed in the Sophoclean version, he committed suicide at her death.

[Book TII:361-420](#) A victim of passion.

[Ibis:541-596](#) His fate.

Haemonia

The ancient name for [Thessaly](#), from Haemon father of Thessalos.

[Book TL.X:1-50 Cyzicos](#) was founded by the [Argonaut](#) Aeneus from Haemonia.

[Book TIII. XI:1-38](#) Here an epithet for the Thessalian horses of [Achilles](#).

[Book TIV.I:1-48 Achilles](#)' Thessalian lyre.

[Book EI.III:49-94 Jason](#)'s homeland.

### Haemus

A mountain in [Thrace](#) supposed to be a mortal turned into a mountain for assuming the name of a great god.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Ovid is retracing the journey to Rome.

### Halcyone, Alcyone

The daughter of [Aeolus](#), granddaughter of Polypemon, and wife of Ceyx, changed into a kingfisher or *halcyon*. They foolishly compared themselves to [Juno](#) and [Jupiter](#), for which the gods drowned Ceyx in a storm. Alcyone leapt into the sea to join him, and both were transformed into kingfishers. In antiquity it was believed that the hen-kingfisher layed her eggs in a floating nest in the Halcyon Days around the winter solstice, when the sea is made calm by Aeolus, Alcyone's father. (The kingfisher actually lays its eggs in a hole, normally in a riverbank, by freshwater and not by seawater.)

See Metamorphoses Book VII:350

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) Her lament for Ceyx.

### Halys



A large river, the longest in Asia Minor, flowing through central Asia Minor into the [Pontus](#). The modern Kizil-Irmak flowing into the Black Sea between Sinope and Amisos.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Hannibal

[Ibis:251-310](#) The great Carthaginian commander, son of Hamilcar Barca. Ovid may refer to the incident after Cannae when Hannibal sent ten Roman survivors under oath to discuss ransom terms with the Senate. One of the men sent broke his oath to return, when the Senate refused the plea, and they then sent him back forcibly to Hannibal, to be dealt with. They thereafter established a rule that Roman soldiers must conquer or die in the field. (Polybius *The Roman History* VI.57)

Harpagus

[Ibis:541-596](#) A Mede in the service of King Astyages, who disobeyed his orders and failed to destroy the infant Cyrus. He was cruelly punished by Astyages who served him his own child at a banquet. The story is told in full in Herodotus I.107-119.

Harpyia, Harpies

The ‘snatchers’, Aellopus and Ocypete, the fair-haired, loathsome, winged daughters of Thaumias and the ocean nymph Electra, who snatch up criminals for punishment by the [Furies](#). They lived in a cave in Cretan Dicte. They

plagued [Phineus](#) of Salmydessus, the blind prophet, and were chased away by the winged sons of [Boreas](#). An alternative myth has Phineus drive them away to the Strophades where Ovid has [Aeneas](#) meet the harpy Aëlle, and [Virgil](#), Celaeno. They are foul-bellied birds with girls' faces, and clawed hands, and their faces are pale with hunger. (See Virgil Aeneid III:190-220)

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

Hebrus

The chief river of [Thrace](#).

[Book EI.V:1-42](#) Ovid suggests he is being asked to perform the impossible, equivalent to the distant [Lixus](#) running into the Hebrus.

Hebe, [Juventa](#)

The daughter of Zeus-[Jupiter](#) and Hera-[Juno](#), born without a father. She was the wife of [Hercules](#) after his deification, and had the power to renew life. She was the cupbearer of the Olympians.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) Married Hercules.

[Book EI.X:1-44](#) Cupbearer to the gods.

Hector

The [Trojan](#) hero, eldest son of [Priam](#) and Hecuba, the husband of [Andromache](#) and father of Astyanax. After killing [Patroclus](#) he was himself killed by [Achilles](#) and his

body dragged round the walls of Troy. His body was yielded to Priam for burial, and his funeral forms the close of [Homer](#)'s Iliad.

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) He praised the loyalty of Patroclus to Achilles.

[Book TLX:1-50](#) 'Hector's city' was Ophryinion, the site of his purported grave.

[Book TIII. XI:1-38](#) [Book TIV.III:1-48](#) No longer Hector, dragged behind Achilles' horses.

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) He would have been unknown if not for the War.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) Priam his father grieving at his death.

[Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) Andromache, his faithful wife.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) Uncle to [Ascanius](#) the son of his brother [Aeneas](#).

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) Attempted to destroy the Greek ships with fire.

[Ibis:311-364](#) [Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) His body was dragged three times round the walls of Troy by Achilles' chariot.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Father of Astyanax.

Helen

The daughter of Leda and [Jupiter](#) ([Tyndareus](#) was her putative father), sister of [Clytemnaestra](#), and the [Dioscuri](#). The wife of Menelaüs. She was taken, by Paris, to [Troy](#), instigating the Trojan War.

[Diomedes](#) son of Tydeus was in love with her before her abduction. Ovid treats her as an adulteress, to be blushed for.

## Heliades

The seven daughters of the Sun god and Clymene. They mourned their brother [Phaethon](#). Two of them are named. Lampetia and the eldest Phaethüsa. Turned into poplars beside the River Po as they mourned Phaethon their brother, their tears become drops of amber. See *Metamorphoses* Book II:329

## Helicon

The highest mountain in Boeotia (5968 ft) near the Gulf of [Corinth](#), was the mountain where the [Muses](#) lived. It is a continuation of the Parnassus Range lying between Lake Copais and the Gulf. The sacred springs of Helicon were Aganippe and [Hippocrene](#) both giving poetic inspiration. (The Muses' other favourite haunt was Mount Parnassus in Phocis with its Castalian Spring. They also guarded the oracle at [Delphi](#).) [Hesiod](#)'s village of [Ascra](#) was on the lower slopes.

[Book TIV.I:49-107](#) The haunt of the Muses.

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) [Book TIV.X:93-132](#) [Book EIV.II:1-50](#)  
The symbolic place of poetry.

## Helle

The daughter of Athamas and Nephele, sister of Phrixus, and granddaughter of [Aeolus](#). Escaping from Ino on the golden ram, she fell into the sea and was drowned, giving her name to the Hellespont, the straits that link the [Propontis](#) with the Aegean Sea.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) Helle's sea: the Hellespont, and the corner of the north-west Aegean at its entrance. The *Minerva* sailed on through it, leaving [Ovid](#) to take his alternative route to [Tomis](#) from [Samothrace](#).

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) Carried by the ram, which here signifies the constellation Aries, the constellation of the spring equinox at that time.

Hemitheon

The probable author of the *Sybaritica*, tales of Sybaris.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Classed as containing obscene material.

Heniochi

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) A [Sarmatian](#) people who indulged in piracy.

Henna, Enna

The town in central [Sicily](#). Scene of the rape of Persephone by Dis. Its lake is the Lago di Pergusa. Also scene of the First Sicilian Slave War (135-132BC)

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Visited by [Ovid](#) and [Macer](#).

Hercules

(The following material covered by [Ovid](#) in the *Metamorphoses*). The Hero, son of [Jupiter](#). He was set in the sky as the constellation Hercules between Lyra and Corona Borealis. The son of Jupiter and [Alcmena](#), the wife of Amphitryon (so Hercules is of Theban descent, and a Boeotian). Called Alcides from Amphitryon's father

Alceus. Called also Amphitryoniades. Called also Tyrinthius from Tiryns his city in the Argolis. Jupiter predicted at his birth that a scion of [Perseus](#) would be born, greater than all other descendants. [Juno](#) delayed Hercules' birth and hastened that of Eurystheus, grandson of Perseus, making Hercules subservient to him. Hercules was set twelve labours by Eurystheus at Juno's instigation. The killing of the Nemean lion.

The destruction of the Lernean Hydra. He uses the poison from the Hydra for his arrows.

The capture of the stag with golden antlers.

The capture of the Erymanthian Boar.

The cleansing of the stables of Augeas king of [Elis](#).

The killing of the birds of the Stymphalian Lake in Arcadia.

The capture of the Cretan wild bull.

The capture of the mares of Diomedes of [Thrace](#), that ate human flesh.

The taking of the girdle of Hippolyte, Queen of the [Amazons](#).

The killing of Geryon and the capture of his oxen.

The securing of the apples from the Garden of the Hesperides. He held up the sky for Atlas in order to deceive him and obtain them.

The bringing of the dog Cerberus from Hades to the upper world.

He fought with Achelous for the hand of [Deianira](#). He married Deianira, killed Nessus, fell in love with [Iole](#), daughter of Eurytus who had cheated him, and received

the shirt of Nessus from the outraged Deianira. (See Cavalli's opera with Lully's dances – Ercole Amante). He was then tormented to death by the shirt of Nessus.

[Ibis:365-412](#) He killed King [Antaeus](#) of Libya, brother of [Busiris](#), who was a giant, child of mother Earth, by lifting him from the ground that gave him strength, and, cracking his ribs, held him up until he died. He also killed Busiris, King of Egypt brother of Antaeus, who sacrificed strangers at the altars, to fulfil a prophecy that an eight-year drought and famine would end if he did so.

He killed the servant Lichas who brought the fatal shirt, then built a funeral pyre, and became a constellation and was deified. (See Canova's sculpture – Hercules and Lichas – Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome). He had asked his son Hyllus, by Deianira to marry Iole. His birth is described when the sun is in the tenth sign, Capricorn, i.e. at midwinter, making him a solar god. His mother's seven night labour would also make his birth at the new year, a week after the winter solstice. He captured [Troy](#) and rescued Hesione, with the help of Telamon, and gave her to Telamon in marriage.

[Philoctetes](#) received his bow and arrows after his death, destined to be needed at Troy. [Ulysses](#) went to fetch Philoctetes and the arrows.

[Book TII:361-420](#) He loved Iole, married and was loved by Deianira.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) He was deified and married [Hebe](#).

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) The bluff, frank and open hero type. The [Fabii](#) claimed descent from Hercules.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) He attacked Oechalia when its king Eurytus refused him his daughter [Iole](#). He killed Eurytus and carried off Iole.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Sacrificing at the altars to Jupiter after taking Oechalia, Hercules put on the shirt of Nessus, and the poison of the Hydra tormented him, and corroded his flesh. Philoctetes received his bow. Taught the lyre by [Eumolpus](#) whom he defeated in contest. Hercules was the son of Jupiter connected with the shrine of Jupiter Ammon in Libya.

[Ibis:311-364](#) [Ibis:597-644](#) He endured the torment of the shirt of Nessus and built his funeral pyre on Mount Oeta, between Aetolia and Thessaly. (see Metamorphoses IX:159)

[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) Noted for his strength.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Persecuted by [Juno](#).

### Hermione

The daughter of Menelaus and Helen, niece of [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#), betrothed at [Troy](#) to Neoptolemus ([Pyrrhus](#)) son of [Achilles](#). Returning to Greece he found her married to [Orestes](#), who subsequently killed him when he demanded her back.

[Book TII:361-420](#) A victim of male passion.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) Castor was her uncle.

### Hesiod

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) The Greek poet (c 700 BC) of Ascra in Boeotia, on the slopes of Parnassus. To him are



attributed the *Theogony*, *Works and Days*, and *Shield of Hercules*.

Hesperia

[Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) The West, and Italy. Hesperius, ‘of the evening’.

Hippocrene

The fountain of the [Muses](#) on Mount [Helicon](#).

Hippodamia, Hippodameia

In one version of myth Hippodamia was the daughter of [Oenomaus](#), King of [Pisa](#). [Pelops](#) defeated the king in a chariot race and carried her off. He was assisted by [Myrtilus](#) the King’s charioteer, who was cursed by the King and in turn cursed Pelops leading to the feud between [Atreus](#) and [Thyestes](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) The ‘Pisan’ girl carried off by Pelops.

Hippolytus

The son of [Theseus](#) and the [Amazon](#) Hippolyte. He was admired by [Phaedra](#), his step-mother, and was killed at Troezen, after meeting ‘a bull from the sea’. He was brought to life again by [Aesculapius](#), and hidden by [Diana](#) (Cynthia, the moon-goddess) who set him down in the sacred grove at Arician Nemi, where he became Virbius, the consort of the goddess (as Adonis was of [Venus](#), and Attis of [Cybele](#)), and the King of the Wood (*Rex Nemorensis*). All this is retold and developed in Frazer’s

monumental work, on magic and religion, ‘The Golden Bough’ (see Chapter I et seq.). (See also Euripides’s play ‘*Hippolytos*’, and Racine’s ‘*Phaedra*’.)

[Book TII:361-420](#) Euripides’ play dealing with illicit love.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Venus made him fall in love with Phaedra. He died when his horses stampeded at the vision of a bull from the sea.

Hippomenes

[Ibis:311-364](#) The son of Megareus. Great-grandson of [Neptune](#). Falling in love with [Atalanta](#), he determined to race against her, on penalty of death for failure. By means of the golden apples he won the race and claimed Atalanta. He desecrated [Cybele](#)’s sacred cave with the sexual act and was turned, with Atalanta, into a lion. The reference to his daughter is obscure, if this is the Hippomenes’ Ovid intended.

Hister

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) The Danube, also called [Danuvius](#).

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Tomis](#) (Constantza) is south of the Danube estuary.

[Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) [Book EIV.X:1-34](#)

A barrier against the warring tribes.

[Book TIII. X:41-78](#) [Book EI.II:53-100](#) In winter the tribes attack across the frozen Danube, riding their swift horses.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) The [Sarmatians](#) drive their wagons over the frozen river.

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) [Book TV.VII:1-68](#) [Book EIII.III:1-108](#)

[Book EIII.IV:57-115](#) [Book EIII.V:1-58](#) The wide river of his exile.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) The [Scythian](#) Danube.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) [Book EII.IV:1-34](#) The river frozen in winter.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Its estuary is nearer to [Rome](#) by sea, by a few hundred miles, than [Colchis](#) at the far end of the [Black Sea](#) is to [Thessaly](#).

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) A region bereft of wit.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Far from Rome.

[Ibis:135-162](#) Its cold waters.

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) The delta is not far north of Tomis.

Homer

The Greek epic poet, (fl. c. 8th century BC? born Chios or Smyrna?), supposed main author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) [Book TII:361-420](#) He made [Penelope](#) famous as a loyal wife, through the *Odyssey*.

[Book TII:361-420](#) The story of the *Iliad* is centred around Helen's adultery.

He also tells of [Mars](#) and [Venus](#) trapped by Hephaestus, and of [Odysseus](#) seduced by [Circe](#) and [Calypso](#). (the last two in *Odyssey* V:13, X:133)

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) An example: the greatest poet.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Author of the *Iliad*, an immortal.

[Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) The greatest of epic poets.

[Book EIV.II:1-50](#) Blessed by his location in Greece.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) [Tuticanus](#) translated part of the Odyssey.

Horatius, Horace

Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65-8BC) son of a freedman, and Augustan lyrical poet and satirist. He enjoyed the patronage of Maecenas who granted him his beloved Sabine farm. He was befriended by [Augustus](#) who failed to persuade him to become his private secretary. His lyrics imitate Greek poets (e.g. [Sappho](#) and Alcaeus) in matter and metre.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) A member of [Ovid](#)'s poetic circle.

Hortensius

Quintus Hortensius Hortalus (114-50BC) was a prominent lawyer, but notorious for bribery. He defended Verres against Cicero but lost the case. He turned to a political career, becoming consul in 69 but after the formation of the First Triumvirate (60) he retreated from politics and returned to the law. His enormous wealth was accompanied by personal eccentricity. He also published erotic poetry.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His verse.

Hyades

The daughters of Atlas and Aethra, half-sisters of the [Pleiades](#). They lived on Mount Nysa and nurtured the infant [Bacchus](#). The Hyades are the star-cluster forming the 'face' of the constellation Taurus the Bull. The cluster

is used as the first step in the distance scale of the galaxy. The stars were engraved on [Achilles](#)'s shield. As an autumn and winter constellation the Hyades indicated rain. [Book TI.XI:1-44](#) A sign of rain, when combined with a southerly wind.

### Hybla

*Megara Hyblaea*, a small town in eastern [Sicily](#), near to and north of [Syracuse](#), famous for its sweet-scented honey. Modern Mellili.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) The bees of Hybla.

[Book TV.XIII:1-34](#) [Book EII.VII:1-46](#) Noted for its fragrant thyme on which the bees fed.

[Ibis:163-208](#) Its flowery meadows.

[Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) Its honeycombs.

### Hylas

The son of Theiodamas, King of the Dryopians. Theiodamas attacked [Hercules](#) who killed him but spared Hylas for his beauty. They joined the [Argonauts](#) voyage and the boy was stolen by Naiads near the River Ascanius.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Loved by Hercules.

### Hymen

The god of marriage who lived on [Helicon](#) with the [Muses](#).

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) He was symbolically present at a marriage.

Hypanis

A Sarmatian river, now the River Bug.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Hypsipyle

[Ibis:465-540](#) The daughter of [Thoas](#), who nursed Lycurgus's son Opheltes. The boy was attacked and bitten to death by a serpent.

Hyrtacides

[Nisus](#) son of Hyrtacus.

Iasion

Son of [Jupiter](#) and Corythus's wife Electra. [Ceres](#) fell in love with him and lay with him in the thrice-ploughed field. She wished she could obtain a renewal of his youth. She gave birth to Plutus by him.

[Book TII:253-312](#) Lover of Ceres.

Iazyges

A [Sarmatian](#) tribe living near the [Danube](#).

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) [Ibis:135-162](#) [Book EIV.VII:1-54](#)

Mentioned.

Ibis

The mysterious enemy of Ovid, subject of his curse-poem *Ibis* based on a poem of [Callimachus](#)'s. TIV.IX has close similarities with [Ibis:1-61](#).

[Ibis:41-104](#) Ovid adopts the name Ibis as a cover for his true enemy.

Icariotis

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) [Penelope](#) daughter of Icarius.

Icarius

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) The father of [Penelope](#).

[Ibis:541-596](#) [Odysseus](#) was the above's son-in-law.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Also Icarius or Icarus the father of [Erigone](#), killed by drunken shepherds.

Icarus

The son of [Daedalus](#) for whom his father fashioned wings of wax and feathers like his own in order to escape from Crete. Flying too near the sun, despite being warned, the wax melts and he drowns in the Icarian Sea, and is buried on the island of Icaria. ( See W H Auden's poem 'Musée des Beaux Arts' referring to Brueghel's painting, Icarus, in Brussels) See Ovid's Metamorphoses Book VIII:183

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) [Book TV.II:1-44](#) He gave his name to the Icarian Sea.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) He flew too near the sun.

Ida, Idaean 'measures'

The extensive range of mountains in western [Mysia](#), the highest peak Gargaros rising to over 4500 feet and commanding a fine view of the [Hellespont](#) and [Propontis](#). There is also a Cretan Mount Ida.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) The rites of the [Bacchantes](#), celebrated on the Mysian Mount Ida.

[Ibis:163-208](#) Heavily wooded.

Idmon

[Ibis:465-540](#) The seer, the son of [Apollo](#) and Cyrene. He was one of the Argonauts and was killed by a wild boar by the river [Lycus](#) on the Black Sea coast.

Ilia, Rhea Silvia

The daughter of [Aeneas](#) (Greek myth) or Numitor (Roman version), the [Vestal](#) who bore [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#), to the god [Mars](#).

[Book TII:253-312](#) She was impregnated by Mars. See the entry for Romulus.

Iliacus

Ilian, and so [Trojan](#).

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Used of [Macer](#) a poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Iliades

[Remus](#) son of [Ilia](#).

[Book TIV.III:1-48](#) Remus.

Illyria

Illyris, the district along the east coast of the Adriatic.

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) [Ovid](#) sails by on his way to exile.



[Book TII:207-252](#) [Tiberius](#) and [Germanicus](#) defeated the [Pannonian](#) and Illyrian rebels in the second Illyrian war of the summer of 9AD.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) The Roman Illyricum roughly the Eastern Balkans was divided after the Pannonian War into [Dalmatia](#) and Pannonia.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) Pitch obtained from there.

Ilva, Aethale, Aethalia

The island of [Elba](#).

Imbros

The north Aegean island to the south west of the [Thracian](#) Chersonese near [Samothrace](#) and [Lemnos](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Ovid](#) touched port there.

Iole

The daughter of Eurytus, king of Oechalia, whom [Hercules](#) was enamoured of. He carried her off after killing her father, causing Deianeira to give him the shirt of Nessus drenched in the Centaur's blood supposedly mixed with a love potion but in fact the Hydra's venom from Hercules's own arrow.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Loved by Hercules.

Ionium

The Ionian Sea, between Greece and southern Italy (not the coast of Ionia).

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) [Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Ovid crossed the wintry Adriatic on his way to exile.

[Book TII:253-312](#) [Juno](#) drove Io over the sea.

Iphias

[Evadne](#) the daughter of Iphis.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Evadne.

Iphigenia

The daughter of [Agamemnon](#), king of Mycenae, and [Clytaemnestra](#). She is called Mycenis. She was sacrificed by her father at Aulis, to gain favourable winds for the passage to [Troy](#) but snatched away by [Diana](#) to [Tauris](#), a deer being left in her place. [Orestes](#) her brother found her there and they fled to [Athens](#) with the image of the goddess. She later became priestess of Diana-Artemis at Brauron.

[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) The priestess of the altar of Diana in the Tauric Chersonese where human sacrifices were offered.

Irus

The Ithacan beggar with whom [Ulysses](#) had a boxing match on returning to his palace. His nickname Irus was a version of Iris since he was also a messenger, at the beck and call of the suitors.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) [Ibis:413-464](#) An example of poverty.

Isis

The Egyptian Goddess, in Greek mythology the deified Io and identified also with [Ceres](#)-Demeter. Goddess of the domestic arts. Her cult absorbed the other great goddesses and spread through the Graeco-Roman world as far as the Rhine. Isis was the star of the sea, and the goddess of travellers. Osiris was her husband, whom she searched for, in the great vegetation myth of Egypt. She carries the sacred rattle or sistrum, and on her forehead she carries the horns, moon disc, and ears of corn symbolising her moon, fertility and cow attributes. (In Sulla's time a college of priests had been founded in Rome and there was a shrine by 48BC. The cult did not receive State approval in [Augustus](#)'s time, due to his concern to revive traditional Roman values).

[Book TII:253-312](#) Identified with Io, Daughter of Inachus a river-god of Argolis, who was chased and raped by [Jupiter](#). She was changed to a heifer by Jupiter and conceded as a gift to [Juno](#). She was then guarded by hundred-eyed Argus. After Mercury killed Argus, driven by Juno's fury Io reached the Nile, and was returned to human form. With her son Epaphus she was worshipped in Egypt as a goddess. Io is therefore synonymous with Isis (or Hathor the cow-headed goddess with whom she was often confused), and Epaphus with Horus. Ovid suggests Juno drove her across the seas east of Greece.

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) The cult of Isis was associated with the island of [Pharos](#) near [Alexandria](#). The sacred rattle, the *sistrum* was a feature of the rites. Isis's followers dressed in white linen, in imitation of the Egyptian goddess.

## Ithaca

The Ionian island off the west coast of Greece between the Acarnian Coast and Cephallenia, the home of [Ulysses](#) (Odysseus). At the time of the Odyssey thickly wooded.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) The site of Ulysses' palace, synonymous with [Dulichium](#).

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) Ulysses, the Ithacan, also longed for home.

[Book EII.VII:47-84](#) Ulysses the Ithacan met with no stormier seas than Ovid on his journey.

## Itys

The son of [Tereus](#) and [Procne](#), murdered by his mother in revenge for Tereus's rape of [Philomela](#), and his flesh served to his father at a banquet.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Mourned by Procne.

## Iulus, Ascanius

The son of [Aeneas](#) from whom the Julian family claimed descent.

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) [Book EII.II:1-38](#) [Book EII.V:41-76](#) The supposed origin of the Julian clan.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) [Hector](#) was one of his uncles.

## Ixion

[Ibis:163-208](#) King of the Lapithae, father of [Pirithoüs](#), and of the [Centaurs](#). He attempted to seduce [Juno](#), but [Jupiter](#) created a false image of her, caught Ixion in the act with

this simulacrum, and bound him to a fiery wheel that turns in the Underworld.

### Janus

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) The [Roman](#) two-headed god of doorways and beginnings, equivalent to the Hindu elephant god Ganesh. The Janus mask is often depicted with one melancholy and one smiling face. The first month of the year in the Julian calendar was named for him, January (*Ianuaris*).

### Jason

The son of Aeson, leader of the [Argonauts](#), and hero of the adventure of the Golden Fleece. The fleece is represented in the sky by the constellation and zodiacal sign of Aries, the Ram. In ancient times it contained the point of the vernal equinox (The First Point of Aries) that has since moved by precession into Pisces. He reached [Colchis](#) and the court of King Aeetes where he accepted [Medea](#)'s help to secure the fleece and married her before returning to Iolchos.

He acquired the throne of [Corinth](#), and married a new bride Glauce. Medea in revenge for his disloyalty to her sent Glauce a wedding gift of a golden crown and white robe, that burst into flames when she put them on, and consumed her and the palace. Medea then killed her own sons by Jason, and fled his wrath. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book VII.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Exiled from [Thessaly](#) to Corinth.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Praised for his efforts in reaching the [Black Sea](#), but Ovid's journey was longer, since [Rome](#) is further from the [Danube](#) estuary, than [Thessaly](#) is from [Colchis](#).

[Book EIII.1:1-66](#) The first Greek to sail into the Black Sea.

Jugurtha

The Numidian King conquered by [Marius](#). He died in prison at Rome in 104BC.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) Marius defeated Jugurtha in Numidia, and held a triumph in 104BC.

Julia (1)

The only daughter (39BC-14AD) of [Augustus](#) and Scribonia. She married Marcellus and then Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa to whom she bore Gaius and Lucius Caesar, [Agrippina](#) who married [Germanicus](#), Agrippa Posthumus and [Julia the younger](#) (2). She then married [Tiberius](#). Augustus banished her to the island of Pandataria in 2BC for her dissolute lifestyle, and for political intrigue also. She was involved with Iullus Antonius the younger son of Mark [Antony](#) and Fulvia, educated at Rome by Augustus's sister Octavia. Julia and her associates planned to replace Tiberius with Antonius as consort to Augustus. Iullus was allowed to commit suicide when the plans were discovered. Scribonia followed Julia into exile and the plot probably centred on Scribonia's family faction. Julia was moved to Rhegium

(Reggio) on the mainland in 4AD but never released. Tiberius effectively had her starved to death (officially she committed suicide) in AD14.

### Julia (2)

The daughter (19BC-28AD) of the [elder Julia](#) (1) and Agrippa. She was married to Lucius Aemelius Paullus and shared his disgrace when his conspiracy against [Augustus](#) (aimed at [Tiberius](#)) was discovered in 6AD. He was executed and she was ultimately (8AD) banished to the island of Trimerum off the coast of Apulia (officially for adultery) and died there. Ovid's crime may well have been linked to her set, and a clandestine and unacceptable marriage (perhaps to Decimus Iunius Silanus her lover, with whom she had been accused of adultery: she had an illegitimate child in exile, not raised or recognised.) that he had witnessed or less likely some aspect of the plotting against Augustus. The date of his *relegatio* (banishment) is surely more than coincidental.

### Juno, Hera

The daughter of Rhea and Saturn, wife and sister of [Jupiter](#), and the queen of the gods. A representation of the pre-Hellenic Great Goddess. (See the Metope of Temple E at Selinus – The Marriage of Hera and Zeus – Palermo, National Museum.)

[Book TII:253-312](#) Her husband Jupiter noted for his adulteries. See the Metamorphoses. She persecuted Io, who was worshipped as [Isis](#).

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) [Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#). She persecuted [Hercules](#) who ended up married to [Hebe](#) her daughter.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) She protected [Jason](#) and the Argonauts. Ovid implies no deity protected him, which does not rule out his possibly being aided by lesser members of the Augustan or Julian families.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Ovid suggests [Livia](#) has the character and ways of Juno, a dubious compliment.

Jupiter, Zeus

The sky-god, the Greek Zeus, son of Saturn and Rhea, born on Mount Lycaeus in Arcadia and nurtured on Mount [Ida](#) in Crete. The oak is his sacred tree. His emblems of power are the sceptre and lightning-bolt. His wife and sister is [Juno](#) (the Greek Hera). (See the sculpted bust (copy) by Brassides, the Jupiter of Otricoli, Vatican)

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Book EI.VII:1-70](#) Equated with [Augustus](#).

[Book TII.I:1](#) [Book TII:120-154](#) [Book TII:313-360](#) [Book TIII.V:1-56](#) [Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) [Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) His weapon is the lightning-bolt.

[Book TII:253-312](#) Noted for his adulteries. See the *Metamorphoses*.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) The Temple of Jupiter Stator (the Stayer).

[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) His anger against [Ovid](#) is greater than [Neptune](#)'s against [Ulysses](#).

[Book TIV.IV:1-42](#) A reference to [Augustus](#) as Jupiter, and a dubious use of the verb *celebrare* which means to



frequent as well as celebrate. Possibly Ovid is making one of his traditional jibes at Augustus's supposed homosexuality in a letter to a man who might just appreciate it, but showing Ovid's dangerous willingness to tread the fine line. He follows it with a cleverly ambiguous comment on divinity. Is Augustus seen to be a god or only believed to be one?

[Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) Jupiter's sacred oak-tree and lightning bolt are connected by the occurrence of the natural phenomenon. Oak trees are particularly susceptible to lightning blasts.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) Augustus as Jupiter, the ruler of the world mirrors the ruler of the heavens and the gods.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Jupiter blasted [Capaneus](#) with lightning.

[Book EII.I:68](#) Jupiter Pluvius, the rain-bringer.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) [Augustus](#) is also Jupiter Capitolinus, the [Tarpeian](#) Thunderer, from Jupiter's Temples on the [Capitoline](#). The great temple was augmented by the lower temple to Jupiter Tonans, the Thunderer, in 22BC, the first of the two reached on climbing the Capitoline (Cassius Dio *The Roman History* 54.4)

[Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) The worship of images of Jupiter and other gods.

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) Ritual sacrifice of animals in front of Jupiter's temples.

[Ibis:209-250](#) In astrology a beneficent planet, ruling knowledge, travel etc. Jupiter was the father of [Mercury](#), by [Maia](#).

[Ibis:251-310](#) Jupiter's temple of Ammon in Libya where he was the ram-horned god.

[Ibis:311-364](#) Cambyses sent an army to attack the Ammonians and the temple of Jupiter at Ammon (Siwa Oasis, El Khargeh) but the army vanished in a sandstorm. (Herodotus III.26)

[Ibis:541-596](#) Married his sister Juno, and avenged his grandfather

Juventa

An ancient Roman goddess later identified with the Greek [Hebe](#).

[Book EI.X:1-44](#) Hebe.

Lacedaemon, Sparta

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) The chief city of Laconia on the River Eurotas, better known as Sparta.

Lachesis

See [Fates](#).

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) She measured the thread of life.

Laertes

[Book TV.V:1-26](#) The father of [Ulysses](#), and son of Arcesius.

Laestrygonians

A mythical race of cannibal giants appearing in Odyssey Book X. Under their king [Antiphates](#) they captured and

ate several of [Ulysses](#)'s men. Traditionally located in Magna Graecia, but perhaps from regions further north.

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) Their savage King Antiphates.

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) Not as bad as the [Thracian](#) tribes.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Attacked Ulysses' men.

### Lampsacus

A Greek town on the eastern shore of the [Hellespont](#) (Dardanelles) opposite Callipolis (Gallipoli), colonised in the 7th cent BC by Greeks from Phocaea. Artaxerxes I assigned the city to Themistocles. After the battle of Mycale (479) the citizens joined with the Athenians, and the city continued to flourish under the Greeks and the Romans. A good harbour and its position made it prosperous. The region is good for vines. It was a cult centre for the worship of the phallic god [Priapus](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s route.

### Laodameia

The daughter of the Argonaut Acastus, and granddaughter of [Pelias](#). She married [Protesilaus](#) the first Greek ashore at [Troy](#), fated to die on landing. She was granted three hours with him after his death when Hermes escorted him back from Hades. She then had a lifelike statue of him made which she loved in his place. Ordered by her father to burn the figure she threw herself into the flames.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) [Ovid](#) compares his wife to her for love and loyalty.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) Her response to her husband's fate brought her fame.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Followed her husband to the Shades.

### Lares

Beneficent spirits watching over the household, fields, public areas etc. Each house had a Lararium where the image of the Lar was kept. The Lares are usually coupled with the [Penates](#) the gods of the larder.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) [Ovid](#)'s wife prays before the Lares.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Book EI.VII:1-70](#) Household gods.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) [Book EI.I:1-36](#) The household or home, rather than merely a dwelling-place or temporary lodging.

[Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) Old weapons dedicated to them.

[Ibis:41-104](#) Powers invoked by [Ovid](#).

### Largus

An Augustan poet, who wrote an epic on the wanderings of [Antenor](#) (who founded Padua), sometimes identified with Valerius Largus the accuser of Cornelius Gallus.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in [Ovid](#)'s list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Larissa

[Ibis:311-364](#) Larisa was the daughter of Pelasgos, and two of the cities of [Thessaly](#) were named after her. There was an Aleuas of Larissa who organised the Thessalian League

in the seventh century BC, and claimed descent from [Hercules](#). The incident described is obscure.

#### Latium

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A country in Central Italy, containing Rome. (The modern Lazio region. It originally designated the small area between the mouth of the [Tiber](#) and the Alban Hills. With the Roman conquest it was extended south-east to the Gulf of Gaeta, and west to the mountains of Abruzzo, forming the so-called *Latium novum* or *adiectum*.)

#### Latona, Leto

Daughter of the Titan Coeus, and mother of [Apollo](#) and Artemis ([Diana](#)) by [Jupiter](#)-Zeus. Pursued by a jealous [Juno](#), she was given sanctuary by [Delos](#), a floating island. There between an olive tree and a date-palm she gave birth to Apollo and Diana-Artemis, by Mount Cynthus. Delos became fixed. A variant has Artemis born on the nearby islet of Ortygia.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) Her children, Apollo and Diana, slew [Niobe](#)'s children.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) She found refuge on Delos.

#### Leander

A young man of [Abydos](#) on the narrows of the [Hellespont](#) (Dardanelles) who fell in love with Hero, the priestess of [Aphrodite](#) in [Sestos](#) on the opposite bank. He would swim the Hellespont to visit her and eventually was drowned.

The subject of a poem by Musaeus (5th century AD) and treated by [Ovid](#) in the Heroides.

[Book TIII. X:41-78](#) If he'd been further north in winter he could have walked across!

### Lemnos

The north Aegean island south west of Imbros, and the home of Vulcan the blacksmith of the gods. [Philoctetes](#) was bitten by a snake there, and on [Ulysses](#) advice was abandoned there. He had inherited the bow and arrows of [Hercules](#) and Ulysses subsequently sailed for the island to bring them back to be used at [Troy](#). [Thoas](#) was once king there when the Lemnian women murdered their menfolk because of their adultery with [Thracian](#) girls. His life was spared because his daughter Hypsipyle set him adrift in an oarless boat.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) Philoctetes abandoned there.

[Ibis:365-412](#) The Lemnian women who killed their husbands.

### Lesbia

[Catullus](#)'s name for his sweetheart Clodia.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His pseudonym for her.

### Lesbos

The island in the eastern Aegean. Among its cities were Mytilene and Methymna. Famous as the home of [Sappho](#) the poetess, whose love of women gave rise to the term *lesbian*.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Sappho, the Lesbian.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) Sappho of Lesbos.

Lethe

A river of the Underworld, Hades, whose waters bring forgetfulness.

**Its stream flows from the depths of the House of Sleep, and induces drowsiness with its murmuring. (Hence the stream of forgetfulness).**

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) [Book TIV.I:1-48](#) [Book TIV.IX:1-32](#)

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) The waters of oblivion.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) The waters of forgetfulness.

Leucadia, Leucas

A large island near Acharnarnia in the [Ionian](#) Sea west of Greece, to the north of [Ithaca](#). Once joined to the mainland. (The [Corinthians](#) bored a channel through the isthmus in the 7th century BC, see Ernle Bradford's 'Ulysses Found' Appendix II)

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) [Augustus](#) dedicated his victory at Actium to [Apollo](#), since there was a temple to the god there.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) Criminals were hurled from the cliffs of the island near Apollo's temple to avert evil. (Strabo 10.2.9, Ovid Fasti V:630). This was also the mythical site of [Sappho](#)'s suicide, presumably because of the presence of Apollo's sacred site.

Leucon

[Ibis:251-310](#) There was a Leucon son of Athamas who sickened and died of disease. The reference is obscure.

Leucothea, Ino

The White Goddess, the sea-goddess into whom Ino was changed, who as a sea-mew helps [Ulysses](#) (See [Homer](#)'s Odyssey). She is a manifestation of the Great Goddess in her archetypal form. (See Robert Graves's 'The White Goddess'). Ino, the daughter of [Cadmus](#), wife of Athamas, and sister of [Semele](#) and Agave fostered the infant [Bacchus](#). She participated in the killing of [Pentheus](#) and incurred the hatred of [Juno](#). Maddened by [Tisiphone](#), and the death of her son Learchus, at the hand of his father, she leapt into the sea, and was changed to the sea-goddess Leucothoë by [Neptune](#), at [Venus](#)'s request.

[Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) She helped Ulysses. (Speculatively if Neptune is Augustus, and Juno is Livia, then Leucothea, that Ino who incurred Juno's hatred, is conceivably Scribonia, the elder Julia or one of her set, who aided Ovid after the disaster).

[Ibis:465-540](#) As Ino she nursed the infant [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus.

Liber, see [Bacchus](#)

An ancient rural god of Italy who presided over planting and fructification. He became associated (as Liber Pater) with Bacchus-Dionysus.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) [Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Identified with [Bacchus](#).



## Libertas

Liberty. The Atrium Libertatis, north of the Forum, was where Asinius Pollio established a public library.

[Book TIII.I:47-82](#) [Ovid](#)'s books banned from the libraries.

## Libya

The coastal district of North Africa, west of Egypt.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) [Ovid](#)'s daughter by his second wife travelled there with her husband, Cornelius Fidus, the provincial senator.

[Ibis:163-208](#) Extensive coastal waters.

## Lichas

[Ibis:465-540](#) The servant who brought [Hercules](#) the gift of [Nessus](#) given to [Deianira](#), the envenomed shirt that killed him. Hercules killed Lichas, throwing him from the Euboean heights.

## Linus

[Ibis:465-540](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) The son of [Psamathe](#) daughter of [Crotopus](#) of Argos. Linus was torn to pieces by Crotopus's hounds. Not to be confused with the Poet Linus brother of Orpheus.

## Livia Augusta

Livia Drusilla (58BC-29AD), the daughter of Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus, who became Empress. Her first husband was Tiberius Claudius Nero (who fought against

Octavian-Augustus in the Perusine War) to whom she bore [Tiberius](#), later Emperor and [Drusus](#) the father of [Germanicus](#), who was Octavian's future general in Germany. She married Octavian, the future [Augustus](#), in 38BC, while he was Triumvir, he having forced Claudius to relinquish her. She bore Augustus no children, but exercised great power over him and the succession, helping to secure it for Tiberius. [Ovid](#) may have been involved in the anti-Claudian party and so have crossed Livia or her supporters, preventing any chances of reprieve from his exile.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) Ovid's third wife had some acquaintance with Livia, presumably through the household of Paullus Fabius [Maximus](#), and his wife [Marcia](#). She may have been a relative of the Fabian house, and editors have dubbed her [Fabia](#) (though on scant evidence).

[Book TII:155-206](#) Livia married Augustus (17 January 38BC) after her enforced divorce from Tiberius Claudius Nero by whom she was already pregnant. Ovid is perhaps alluding to this and Augustus's bachelor adventures.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Her son Tiberius fighting in Germany.

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) *Livor*, Envy, here may possibly be a veiled reference to Livia, but that is highly speculative.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) A reference to Livia, possibly barbed.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) A further mention of her.

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) [Cotta](#) Maximus sent Ovid portraits of Augustus, Tiberius and Livia.

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) Even in this eulogy there is a mischievous sub-text. The relations between Livia and Augustus are lightly touched on.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Ovid suggests his wife approaches Livia on his behalf.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) [Book EIII.IV:57-115](#) The mother of Tiberius.

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) As the deified Augustus's widow worshipped by Ovid as divine.

[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) Compared to [Vesta](#).

### Livilla

Claudia Livilla Julia the Elder (b. 13BC), sister to [Germanicus](#) and the future emperor Claudius, and daughter of [Drusus](#) Senior (Nero Claudius Drusus), [Livia](#)'s son. She married Gaius Caesar grandson of [Augustus](#), and after his death her first cousin [Drusus](#) Junior the son of [Tiberius](#) by Vipsania, whom she is said to have poisoned in 23 at the instigation of her lover Sejanus, the ambitious praetorian prefect.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Drusus the younger, fighting alongside Tiberius in Germany in AD10.

### Lixus

A river flowing to the sea on the west coast of Mauretania.

[Book EI.V:1-42](#) Ovid suggests he is being asked to perform the impossible, equivalent to the Lixus running into the Hebrus (Maritza) which flows through [Thrace](#).

## Lucifer

The morning star (the planet [Venus](#) in dawn aspect).

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) Risen while [Ovid](#) was saying his farewells.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) Herald of the [sun](#).

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) The dawn, the day.

[Book EII.V:41-76](#) The morning star.

## Lucretius

Titus Lucretius Carus (c95-c54BC) the greatest Roman didactic poet and author of the *De Rerum Natura* a verse treatise in six books on Epicurean theory.

[Book TII:253-312](#) [Ovid](#) quotes the first words of *De Rerum Natura*, '*Aeneadum genetrix*'.

[Book TII:421-470](#) He dealt scientifically with the elements, and atomic theory, following Epicurus.

## Luna

The moon goddess. A manifestation of Artemis-[Diana](#)-Phoebe, sister of [Apollo](#)-Sol-Phoebus.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) The moon. She drives a chariot pulled by black horses.

[Book TII:253-312](#) She loved [Endymion](#).

## Lupus

An Augustan poet who wrote about the homecoming of [Helen](#) and Menelaus.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Lyaeus

An epithet of [Bacchus](#) meaning 'the deliverer from care'.

[Book EI.X:1-44](#) Wine, the gift of Bacchus.

Lycaon

Son of [Pelagus](#). Lycaon was a king of primitive Arcadia ([Parrhasia](#)) who presided over barbarous cannibalistic practises. He was transformed into a wolf by [Zeus](#), angered by human sacrifice. His sons offered Zeus, disguised as a traveller, a banquet containing human remains. They were also changed into wolves and Zeus then precipitated a great flood to cleanse the world. The father of [Callisto](#) who was changed into the Great Bear, hence the north pole is 'Lycaonian' or 'Parrhasian'.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) The Great Bear is Parrhasian.

[Book TIII.II:1-30](#) The northern pole.

[Ibis:465-540](#) His barbaric banquets.

Lycophron

[Ibis:465-540](#) An Alexandrian Greek poet, of the early 3d cent. BC born in Chalcis, one of the Pleiad, a group of seven tragic poets of Alexandria who flourished under Ptolemy II Philadelphus. His only extant poem *Cassandra* or *Alexandra*, is an obscure and difficult work in iambic verse. In ancient times his tragedies were highly esteemed. May be intended here.

Lycoris

The mistress of Cornelius [Gallus](#) (probably his pseudonym for her).

[Book TII:421-470](#) Mentioned.

Lycurgus(1)

King of the Edonians (Edoni) of [Thrace](#) who opposed [Bacchus](#)' entry into his kingdom at the River [Strymon](#) and tried to cut down the god's vines. Lycurgus was driven mad and killed his own son Dryas with an axe thinking he was a vine, and hewed at his own foot thinking it one. He pruned the corpse, and the Edonians, horrified, instructed by Bacchus, tore Lycurgus to pieces with wild horses on Mount Pangaeum. There are many variants of this myth.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) His offence against Bacchus.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Ovid appears to give an alternative myth of Dryas's death if this is the Lycurgus intended.

Lycurgus(2)

[Ibis:597-644](#) Ovid may refer to the Athenian orator (c.396-325BC). Pupil of Plato and Isocrates, Lycurgus became a successful financier, statesman and orator in Athens. He increased the wealth of Athens after readministrating its finances, and had several buildings built or refurbished. He was on Demosthenes side in the orator's opposition to Philip II of Macedon.

Lycus(1)

Rivers of that name in Bithynia and in [Pontus](#).

[Ibis:41-104](#) Arrows stained in [Scythian](#) blood.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Lycus(2)

[Ibis:465-540](#) The King of [Thebes](#) whose wife was [Dirce](#), and niece was Antiope.

Lyde

The wife of [Antimachus](#).

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) A loved wife.

Macareus

[Ibis:541-596](#) Son of [Aeolus](#). He slept with his sister [Canace](#), whom Aeolus in horror drove to suicide.

Macer (1)

Aemilius Macer, a poet who wrote of birds, serpents and plants, and was an old man in [Ovid](#)'s day.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Mentioned.

Macer (2)

An epic poet who wrote about [Troy](#), who travelled with [Ovid](#) in [Sicily](#) and was known to his third wife.

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) [Book EIV.III:1-58](#) Possibly the faithless friend depicted here.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Addressed explicitly to him.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Machaon

Son of [Aesculapius](#) the Greek god of medicine, who inherited his father's skills along with his brother [Podalirius](#).

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) He cured [Philoctetes](#) the archer.

[Book EIII.IV:1-56](#) His medical skill.

Maenads, Maenades, Bacchantes

The female followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus, noted for their ecstatic worship of the god. Dionysus brought terror and joy. The Maenads' secret female mysteries may indicate older rituals of ecstatic human sacrifice. They dressed in fawn skins, wreathed themselves with ivy, and carried the *thyrsus* a ritual wand tipped with a pine-cone. See Euripides' *The Bacchae*.

Maeonides

[Homer](#), so called from Maeonia a name for Lydia in Asia Minor where he was born according to one legend, or because his father was Maion.

[Book TI.I:1-68](#) Homer too would fail faced with similar troubles.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) He made [Penelope](#) famous as a loyal wife, through the *Odyssey*.

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) Even this greatest of poets died poor.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) [Book EIV.XII:1-50](#) The epic poetry of Homer.

Maeotia



The kingdom of [Thrace](#), from the Maeotes who lived near the Sea of Azov, but used as a general term for the [Pontus](#) region.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) The Black Sea region.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) [Thoas](#) the King of Thrace.

Maia

The daughter of Atlas, a [Pleiad](#), and mother of [Mercury](#) by [Jupiter](#).

[Ibis:209-250](#) [Ibis:465-540](#) The mother of Mercury. The second reference is to Iasion, son of Maia's sister Elektra, whom, according to one tradition, Zeus killed with a flash of lightning when he slept with Demeter. (See: Hom. Od. v. 125, &c.; Hes. Theog. 969, &c.; Apollod. 1. c.; Diod. v. 49, 77; Tzetz. ad Lycoph. 29; Conon, Narrat. 21.)

Manes

The *di manes*, the good deities, a generic term for the gods of the lower world and later for the shades of the dead who were regarded as divine.

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) Visited by [Theseus](#).

Marcia

The daughter of Lucius Marcius Philippus and wife of Paullus Fabius [Maximus](#). [Fabia](#), Ovid's third wife, had been a member of the household and was a friend of Marcia.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) [Book EIII.1:67-104](#) Ovid's third wife was one of her companions.

Marius (1)

Gaius Marius, the consul, conqueror of the [Cimbri](#), [Jugurtha](#) etc. When Sulla entered Rome in 88BC, Marius hid in the marshes of Minturnae and later escaped to Africa.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) He defeated Jugurtha in Numidia, and held a triumph in 104BC. He defeated the Cimbri and Teutones at Aquae Sextiae and Vercellae in 102-1BC, and held a record seven consulships, the last being in 86.

Marius (2)

An Augustan poet.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Mars, Ares

The war god, son of [Jupiter](#), the Roman name for the Greek god Ares. An old name for him is Mavors or Mamers. In his military aspect he became known as Gradivus.

[Book TII:253-312](#) His great temple in [Rome](#) was that of *Mars Ultor*, Mars the Avenger, in the *Forum Augusti* built as a result of Octavian's vow at Philippi in 42BC to avenge Julius Caesar's murder. It was dedicated in 2BC. The statues of Mars and [Venus](#) were inside the shrine while Vulcan's was in the lobby. The statues of Venus Genetrix and Mars by Arcesilaus were linked by the

descending figure of Cupid. The goddess was depicted fully clothed, perhaps in armour.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Famously caught in the act by Hephaestus (Vulcan) Venus's husband.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) A synonym for war.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) The warlike [Sarmatians](#) and [Getae](#) are Mars incarnate.

[Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) The god who determines death in battle.

[Ibis:209-250](#) In astrology a maleficent planet, ruling war, passion, and sexuality.

### Marsus

Domitius Marsus, an Augustan poet, known for his epigrams. He wrote an epitaph on [Tibullus](#) and an epic on the [Amazons](#).

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Marsyas

A [Satyr](#) of [Phrygia](#) who challenged [Apollo](#) to a contest in musical skill, and was flayed alive by the God when he was defeated. (An analogue for the method of making primitive flutes, [Minerva](#)'s invention, by extracting the core from the outer sheath) (See Perugino's painting – Apollo and Marsyas – The Louvre, Paris). He taught the famous flute-player, Olympus.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) He taught [Olympus](#).

[Ibis:541-596](#) A river named after him in Asia Minor.

Maximus (1)

Marcus Aurelius Cotta Maximus. See [Cotta](#).

Maximus (2)

Paullus Fabius Maximus (born not later than 45BC, died 14AD). His wife was [Marcia](#), the daughter of Lucius Marcius Philippus and a first cousin of Augustus. She was a friend of [Ovid](#)'s third wife. Paullus Maximus was of the famous patrician clan of the Fabii, which included Paullus Aemilius and Fabius Cunctator. An orator, he was consul in 11BC and a trusted friend of [Augustus](#). He journeyed with Augustus to the island of Planasia at the end of Augustus's life in the spring of 14AD, the island where Agrippa Postumus, his grandson, the son of Agrippa and [Julia](#) the Elder, was imprisoned. Tacitus has it that mutual affection was expressed between grandfather and grandson, and that Fabius reported as such to his wife Marcia, who in turn told [Livia](#) who knew nothing of the journey. When Fabius died not long afterwards Marcia was supposedly heard to reproach herself at her husband's funeral for inadvertently causing his death. This story led to a suggestion that Fabius committed suicide, and links him to the factions around Julia. The evidence however is flimsy.

[Book EI.II:1-52](#) Addressed to Paullus. Ovid refers to the battle of 18th

July 477BC near the River Cremera, against the Veientes, when more than three hundred of the Fabii clan were said to have fought and only one survived. (Livy II:48)

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) [Book EI.II:101-150](#) He asks Paullus to plead for him with Augustus.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) This letter addressed to him explicitly, recounting Ovid's vision of [Love](#).

[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) Probably addressed to Paullus, given the reference to purple robes. He was consul in 11BC. The arrows are perhaps intended for their mutual enemies, those opposed to Julia's faction.

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) Ovid is concerned that pleading his case may have been a reason for Paullus's death, though playing down his own importance. This letter certainly reiterates the close tie with Paullus, and the Fabian House, and Ovid's realisation that the Julian hopes are finished with [Tiberius](#)'s accession.

## Medea

The daughter of Aeetes, king of [Colchis](#) and the Caucasian nymph Asterodeia. She is called Aeetias. A famous sorceress. She conceived a passion for [Jason](#) and agonised over the betrayal of her country for him.( See Gustave Moreau's painting 'Jason and Medea', Louvre, Paris: Frederick Sandys painting 'Medea', Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, England: and Castiglione's painting, 'Medea casting a spell', Wadsworth Athanaeum, Hartford, Connecticut). She determined to help Jason to win the Golden Fleece and made him swear on the altar of Triple

Hecate to marry her. She gave him magic herbs to facilitate his tasks (probably including the Colchian crocus, meadow saffron, *colchicum autumnale*, that sprang from the blood of the tortured Prometheus. The plant is highly toxic, and the seeds and corms were collected for the extraction of the narcotic drug *colchicine*, *tinctura colchici*, used as a specific against gout.) Jason carried out his tasks using the magic herbs, including magic juice (juniper?) to subdue the dragon, and took Medea back with him to Iolchos. When he subsequently abandoned her, she killed Glauce her rival, and then sacrificed her own sons, before fleeing to Athens where she married King Aegeus. She attempted to poison [Theseus](#) using aconite, but Aegeus recognised Theseus's sword as his own, and dashed the cup away in time. Medea vanished in a mist conjured by her magic spells. [Ovid](#) tells part of her story in Book VII of the *Metamorphoses*, and wrote a lost play *Medea* about her.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Her killing of her own children, driven by anger through slighted love.

[Book TII:497-546](#) Her intention to kill her children.

[Book TIII.VIII:1-42](#) Her chariot drawn by dragons.

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) The myth of the [Argo](#) at [Tomis](#), and Medea's dismemberment of her brother [Absyrtus](#).

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) Caused by [Amor](#) to fall in love with [Jason](#).

Medusa, Gorgo

One of the three [Gorgons](#), daughter of Phorcys the wise old man of the sea. She is represented in the sky by part of the constellation [Perseus](#), who holds her decapitated head. [Athene](#) turned her into a monster because she was raped by [Neptune](#) in Athene's temple. The sight of her face turned the onlooker to stone. She was killed by Perseus, who used his shield as a mirror. Her head decorated Athene's *aegis* breastplate.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

[Book EI.II:1-52](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) Her power to transform those she looked at to stone including many of the Ethiopians, or Cepheneas after her death when Perseus wielded her decapitated head.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Her snaky locks.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) [Pegasus](#), born of Medusa.

[Ibis:413-464](#) Medusa had various cousins, including the Harpies.

Melanippus

[Ibis:465-540](#) The son of Astacus, the Theban. He helped defend Thebes in the War of the Seven, and was killed by [Tydeus](#) who ate his brains.

Melanthus

A river in Pontus or Sarmatia.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

## Melissus

Gaius (or Cilnius) Melissus, a freedman of Maecenas, grammarian, poet and librarian. He wrote *Trabeatae*, comedies of Roman manners among the Equestrian order, developing an Augustan form of the old *Togatae*. He was a protégé of Maecenas and organised the library in the Portico of Octavia for [Augustus](#). He compiled jokebooks in old age.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

## Memmius

Gaius Memmius, governor of Bithynia in 57BC, praetor 58. [Lucretius](#) dedicated the *De Rerum Natura* to him as patron. [Catullus](#) travelled to Bithynia with him in 57 and is none too complimentary about the corruption of his 'court'. He was an orator and himself a poet. He married the dictator Sulla's daughter, Fausta. Convicted of bribery he went into exile at Mytilene in 54.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His erotic verse.

## Memnon

The son of Tithonus and [Aurora](#), he fought for [Troy](#) in the Trojan War with Greece to support his uncle [Priam](#). He was King of Ethiopia, and traditionally was of a black pigmentation. He killed Antilochus in the war, and was himself killed in turn by [Achilles](#), but his mother Aurora, the Dawn, begged [Jupiter](#) for funeral honours, and he created the warring flock of birds, the Memnonides, from



his ashes. Aurora's tears for him are the morning dew. See *Metamorphoses* Book XIII:576

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) The son of Aurora, the Dawn.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) Black-skinned.

### Menander

The Athenian playwright (c341-c290BC). The most celebrated dramatist of the New Comedy he wrote on romantic and domestic themes. His single surviving complete play is the *Dyscolus*, recovered from an Egyptian papyrus in 1958, but many of his plays are known in adaptations by the Roman dramatists [Terence](#) and Plautus.

[Book TII:361-420](#) His plays contained love scenes but were basically moral with endings involving marriage.

### Mercury

The messenger god, Hermes, son of [Jupiter](#) and the [Pleiad Maia](#), the daughter of Atlas. He is therefore called Atlantiades. His birthplace was Mount Cyllene, and he is therefore called Cyllenius. He has winged feet, and a winged cap, carries a scimitar, and has a magic wand, the caduceus, with twin snakes twined around it, that brings sleep and healing. The caduceus is the symbol of medicine. (See Botticelli's painting *Primavera*.)

[Ibis:209-250](#) In astrology a beneficent planet of mind and communication.

### Merops

King of Ethiopia, husband of Clymene. Putative father of [Phaethon](#).

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Putative father of Phaethon, and his sisters.

Mesembria

A Graeco-Thracian town on the west coast of the [Black Sea](#), south of [Tomis](#), and about half way between Tomis and [Byzantium](#), at the foot of the Haemus Range, on the frontier of Roman [Moesia](#). Modern *Nesebur*.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s course.

Messalinus

Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus the elder son of [Mesalla](#) Corvinus, born 36BC, consul 3BC, legate of Illyricum in 6AD. He served under [Tiberius](#) in the Pannonian campaign of 6-9AD. A talented orator known for his extreme flattery of [Augustus](#), [Cotta](#) was his younger brother. On Tiberius's accession he embraced the new regime, proposing a gold statue of the new Emperor for the temple of [Mars](#) Ultor.

[Book TIV.IV:1-42](#) This poem addressed to him. It is unlikely that he was a friend of [Ovid](#), who probably addressed him as the son of his father, brother of his friend Cotta, and a man of influence with the regime.

[Book EI.VII:1-70](#) A second poem addressed to him, playing on Ovid's relationship with his father, Messalla.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) A third poem addressed to him, focusing on Messalinus's close relationship with Augustus and

Tiberius. He and his brother Cotta were perhaps Ovid's best hope of leniency, but equally both were sensitive to the political difficulties of showing any favour to Ovid. I am reminded of the attitude to John Donne after his less crippling disgrace: the disgraced individual is an embarrassment, an object of suspicion, and a source of irritating pleas for remembrance and assistance.

### Messalla

Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus (64BC-8AD) distinguished soldier, statesman and supporter of the arts, a patron of [Ovid](#) and [Tibullus](#), Lygdaus, Valgius Rufus and Aemilius Macer. Sulpicia was his niece. He switched sides adroitly during the Civil Wars fighting for Octavian at Actium in 31. He celebrated a triumph as proconsul of Gaul in 27, was city prefect in 25, Rome's first overseer of aqueducts in 11, and nine years later proposed the title *pater patriae*: Father of the Country for [Augustus](#). Noted for public works he was with Paullus [Fabius Maximus](#) the most influential of Ovid's patrons. The father of [Messalinus](#) and his younger brother [Cotta](#).

[Book TIV.IV:1-42](#) A probable reference to him, assuming this poem is addressed to Messalinus.

[Book EI.VII:1-70](#) Father of Messalinus, and patron of Ovid who wrote his funeral dirge. Ovid stresses the relationship.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) Ovid again stresses his past relationship with Messalla.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Father of Cotta.

Mestra

[Ibis:413-464](#) The daughter of [Erysichthon](#) who could change her shape at will.

Metella

[Ticidas](#)'s mistress whom he called [Perilla](#). Probably one of the Caecillii Metellii family. Possibly the wife of Publius Lentulus Spinther who divorced her in 45BC and had affairs with Cicero's son-in-law Dolabella and Aesopus the actor's son.

[Book TII:421-470](#) Mentioned.

Metrodorus

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) Metrodorus of Skepsis in [Mysia](#): a philosopher and statesman who served Mithridates Eupator c. 100 BC. He was called the 'Rome Hater'. He later transferred his allegiance to Tigranes of Armenia.

Mettus

Or Mettius Fufetius, an Alban commander who was torn apart by horses for treachery in the war with Fidenae, on the orders of Tullus Hostilius.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) An analogy for Ovid's feelings at separation.

Miletus, Milesian

The Ionian city south west of [Samos](#) and across the Latmian Gulf from the River Maeander. A commercial

port from the Bronze Age, it helped colonise the [Black Sea](#) region (800-600BC). It was the home of leading philosophers including Thales, and Anaximander. It declined after the Ionian Revolt in 494, and was crippled by the silting up of its harbour.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) It founded a number of cities, in the Black Sea region, including [Tomis](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Aristides](#) of Miletus.

### Minerva

The Roman name for [Athene](#) the goddess of the mind and women's arts (also a goddess of war and the goddess of boundaries – see the Stele of Athena, bas-relief, Athens, Acropolis Museum). Originally an Italic goddess of handicrafts and arts, she was early identified with the virgin [Pallas](#) Athena.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) [Book TI.V:45-84](#) She protected [Ulysses](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) The ship [Ovid](#) embarked on took its name from Minerva's painted helmet: the ship's *tutela*, or protective emblem, being a figure of armed Minerva on the sternpost. Ovid intends to offer her the sacrifice of a lamb if the ship reaches [Tomis](#) safely (after he had disembarked at [Samothece](#)). The ship's name was fitting since Minerva protected the Argo, the first Greek ship to sail into the Black Sea, and curiously appropriate since Ovid was born during her festival, see below.

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) The [Argo](#) was built under her protection.

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) Ovid was born during her festival, the Quinquatrus, on her traditional birthday March 20th.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Ovid seems to refer to a cult of [Thracian](#) Minerva, though the detail sounds more like that of [Diana](#) at Ephesus, whose veil might not be lifted, and in the Chersonese, where she was the object of human sacrifice.

[Ibis:597-644](#) The reference is possibly to the substitution of a phantom for [Iphigenia](#) at Aulis, but that is usually attributed to Artemis-Diana and not Athene-Minerva. Alternatively it may refer to Ajax the Lesser's rape of [Cassandra](#) in [Athene](#)'s temple during the sack of Troy which caused Athene to delay the Greek's return voyage.

### Minotaur

The son of Pasiphaë, wife of Minos, and the white bull from the sea. A man-headed bull, imprisoned in the Labyrinth ('the place of the axe') built by [Daedalus](#) at Cnossos, who was destroyed by [Theseus](#). (See the sculpture and drawings of Michael Ayrton, and Picasso's variations on the theme in the Vollard Suite)

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Destroyed by Theseus.

### Minyae

The Minyae, a people named from their king Minyas who ruled Orchomenus in Boeotia. A name for the [Argonauts](#) since they sailed from Iolchos in Minyan territory.

[Book TIII.IX:1-34](#) The Argonauts under [Jason](#).

Moesia

A Roman province covering roughly the area of modern Bulgaria and Serbia, taking its name from the [Thracian](#) tribe, the Moesi on the lower [Danube](#). It was subdued fully under Tiberius, but remained a border province. A protective wall was built eastwards from Axiopolis to [Tomis](#), to protect against incursion. It became more civilised after Ovid's time, with Latin as a *lingua franca*.  
[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) [Flaccus](#) maintained peace there.

Montanus

Julius Montanus a friend of [Tiberius](#). The elder Seneca considered him an excellent poet.  
[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Mulciber

The 'Melter'. A name for Vulcan, the smith, as a metal-worker.

(See Milton's Paradise Lost Book I, as the architect of the towers of Heaven. 'From Morn to Noon he fell...'). Identified with fire.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) He opposed the [Trojans](#).

Muses, Musae

The nine Muses were the virgin daughters of [Jupiter](#) and Mnemosyne (Memory). They are the patronesses of the

arts. Clio (History), Melpomene (Tragedy), Thalia (Comedy), Euterpe (Lyric Poetry), Terpsichore (Dance), [Calliope](#) (Epic Poetry), Erato (Love Poetry), Urania (Astronomy), and Polyhymnia (Sacred Song). Mount Helicon is hence called Virgineus. Their epithets are Aonides, and Thespiades.

[Book TI.VII:1-40](#) [Book TII.I:1](#) His past works (*Amores*, *Ars Amatoria* etc) condemned him, such that he came to detest the Muses, poetry, temporarily.

[Book TII:120-154](#) His art pleased the Muses.

[Book TII:313-360](#) [Book TII:471-496](#) [Book TIV.I:1-48](#)

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) [Book TIV.X:93-132](#) [Book TV.I:1-48](#)

[Book TV.IX:1-38](#) [Book EI.I:1-36](#)

[Book EI.V:1-42](#) [Book EI.V:1-42](#) [Book EIII.IV:57-115](#)

[Book EIII.V:1-58](#) [Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) [Book EIV.II:1-50](#)

[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) [Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) His own artistic skill, his personal ‘Muse’. There is perhaps a hint in TIV:I:1-48, and elsewhere here, that the helpful ‘Muse’ may have been a real ‘learned girl’, perhaps Julia the Younger herself, and so associated with his error. Again TV:1-48, and EIII:V:1-58 hint at the adulterous lightness (why was ‘my Muse’ ‘playful’, *iocosa*, in *Ars Amatoria* and why did she ‘play around’) of his ‘Muse’, and his ‘Muse’ as a cause of exile. EIII.IX:1-56 again has a slight hint of a real Muse and witness, behind the poetry.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Anacreon’s ‘Muse’.

[Book TIII.II:1-30](#) [Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) [Book EII.IX:39-80](#)

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) The patronesses of poetry.



[Book TIV.I:49-107](#) His companions, the Muses of [Helicon](#). Perhaps also a suggestion of real ‘divine’ women who helped his journey, maybe the two [Julias](#) via their friends ([Julia](#) the Elder was still in custody but on the mainland). The ‘rest of the gods’ being also the rest of the Imperial family.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) His Muse is not eager for applause, he hasn’t written for the theatre.

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) The Nine Sisters.

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) A play on the word: poetic work, the personal Muse, and a literary mistress.

[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) The Muse of Scythia is a patron of war.

[Ibis:1-40](#) His work harmless to others.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) [Germanicus](#) a poet also. The suggestion that the Muse is associated with [Jupiter](#), i.e. [Tiberius](#) now, in Germanicus’s mind may be an allusion to the fact that Germanicus’s marriage to [Agrippina](#) the Elder united the two branches of the Imperial family, those through [Livia](#) and Scribonia, as had Tiberius’s marriage to the [elder Julia](#). Ovid is hinting again I think that the [younger Julia](#), now Germanicus’s sister-in-law was his ‘Muse’.

Myron

The sculptor of Eleutherae, one of the greatest of the Greek artists (c. 450BC). His sculpted cattle were famous.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) His sculptures of cattle. [Augustus](#) transferred a statue of a heifer from the [Athenian](#) Agora to the temple of Peace in [Rome](#).

Myrrha

[Ibis:311-364](#) The daughter of Cinyras, mother of Adonis, incestuously, by her father.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Subject of a poem by [Cinna](#).

Myrtilus

[Ibis:365-412](#) The charioteer of King [Oenomaus](#), who traitorously caused the King's chariot to crash, killing him and allowing [Pelops](#) to claim the king's daughter [Hippodameia](#). Pelops subsequently threw Myrtilus into the sea. He was set among the stars as the constellation of Auriga the Charioteer, and gave his name to the Myrtoan Sea that stretches from Euboea past Helene to the Aegean.

Mysians

The people of the country of Mysia in Asia Minor containing the city of Pergamum.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) [Telephus](#) was their leader.

Naides

The water nymphs, demi-goddesses of the rivers, streams and fountains.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Mentioned as a subject for verse in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Naso

[Ovid](#), who always so names himself.

[Book TI.VII:1-40](#) Distant from his friends.

Natalis

[Book TIII.XIII:1-28](#) The Genius, the spiritual counterpart of every man that watches over him, worshipped especially on the birthday. The birthday god.

Nemesis, Rhamnusia

The Goddess of retribution. She punishes mortal pride and arrogance (*hubris*) on behalf of the gods. Her shrine was at Rhamnous in Attica.

[Book TV.VIII:1-38](#) She punished *hubris*.

Neptune, Poseidon

God of the sea, brother of [Pluto](#) and [Jupiter](#). The trident is his emblem. (see Leonardo Da Vinci's drawing of Neptune with four sea-horses, Royal Library, Windsor: See the Neptune Fountain by Bartolomeo Ammannati, Piazza della Signoria, Florence.) Identified with the Greek Poseidon.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) [Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Book TIII. XI:39-74](#)

Pursued [Ulysses](#) (for his attack on the [Cyclops](#))

[Book EII.IX:1-38](#) The god of the sea, able to bring about calm waters.

[Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) Caused Ulysses to be shipwrecked. Identified with Augustus.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Neptune caused Ceyx to be drowned, and him and his wife Alcyone to be turned into birds, the *halycons*. Ceyx was son of Lucifer (Phosphorus, the Morning Star), Alcyone was the daughter of [Aeolus](#), god of the winds. The significance of *frater* here is not clear to me. Athamas was Alcyone's brother, as a son of Aeolus, and Ceyx was his brother-in-law (*uxoris frater*). Athamas too suffered extensively, his wife Ino being turned into the sea-mew, the sea-goddess [Leucothea](#), who is mentioned in the next verses.

Neritus

[Ulysses](#), so called from Mount Neritus on [Ithaca](#).

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) Ovid compares his troubles to those of Ulysses.

Nessus

[Ibis:365-412](#) The [Centaur](#) killed by [Hercules](#) for carrying off [Deianira](#). See Metamorphoses IX:89

[Ibis:465-540](#) The fatal gift of the poisoned shirt steeped in Nessus's blood, which contained the venom of the Hydra from Hercules' arrow.

Nestor

King of [Pylos](#), son of Neleus. The oldest and wisest of the Greek leaders at [Troy](#). He was a companion of [Hercules](#) in his youth, and held Messenia in the south-west of Greece. He entertained Telemachus at his palace in Pylos, in the Odyssey.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) [Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) His long life.  
[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) The father of [Antilochus](#).

## Nilus

The river Nile and its god. The river was noted for its seasonal flooding in ancient times. (See the Hellenistic sculpture, ‘The Nile’, in the Vatican, from the Temple of Isis in the Campus Martius, Rome)

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) The region was a tourist attraction for the Romans.

## Niobe

The daughter of the Phrygian king [Tantalus](#), and Dione one of the [Pleiades](#), daughters of Atlas. The wife of Amphion, king of [Thebes](#). She rejected [Latona](#) and boasted rashly about her fourteen children. Her seven sons were killed by [Apollo](#) and [Diana](#), the children of Latona (Leto), and her husband committed suicide. Still unrepentant, her daughters were also killed, and she was turned to stone and set on top of a mountain in her native country of Lydia where she weeps eternally. (A natural stone feature exists above the valley of the Hermus, on Mount Sipylus, which weeps when the sun strikes its winter cap of snow – See Freya Stark ‘Rome on the Euphrates’ p9. Pausanias also lived nearby at one time, and saw the rock.) See Metamorphoses Book VI:146

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) [Book TV.XII:1-68](#) Her children killed by Apollo and Diana.

[Book EI.II:1-52](#) Happy in becoming senseless stone.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Turned to stone.

Nireus

[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) The most beautiful of the Greek soldiers at [Troy](#) (after [Achilles](#)). King of the island of Syme, and a former suitor of [Helen](#).

Nisus(1)

The son of Hyrtacus. He and [Euryalus](#), followers of [Aeneas](#) were noted for their friendship. They died together after entering [Turnus](#)'s camp and killing Rhamnes the Rutulian who was sleeping, and his followers, see [Virgil](#)'s Aeneid (IX:176).

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#) An example of true friendship.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Died with his friend, after killing the sleeping Rhamnes.

Nisus(2)

[Ibis:311-364](#) The King of Megara, besieged by Minos. He had a purple lock of hair on his head, on which his life, and the safety of his kingdom, depended. His daughter was Scylla. Scylla cut off the sacred lock and betrayed the city.

Notus

The south wind, that brings rain.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) A fierce Aegean wind blowing [Ovid](#)'s words away.

The warring of the winds.

[Book EII.I:68](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#) The south wind from distant Italy.

Nox

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) The goddess of Night.

Numa (1)

Numa Pompilius, the second king of [Rome](#) (trad. 715-673BC). He searched for knowledge. Having been instructed by [Pythagoras](#) (a fable), he returned to [Latium](#) and ruled there, teaching the arts of peace. His wife was Egeria, the nymph.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) His palace became the residence of the Pontifex Maximus.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) [Cotta](#)'s maternal line stretches back to him, perhaps through the Calpurnian clan.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) A pupil of Pythagoras (in myth).

Numa (2)

An Augustan poet, otherwise unknown.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Nyctimene

[Ibis:311-364](#) The daughter of Epopeus king of [Lesbos](#) who unknowingly slept with her father. She fled to the woods and was changed by [Minerva](#) to her sacred bird the

Little Owl, often depicted on ancient [Athenian](#) coins. See *Metamorphoses* II:566

Odesos

A port on the [Thracian](#) coast of the [Black Sea](#) about eighty miles south of [Tomis](#). Now *Varna*.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s course.

Odrysii, Odrysae

A [Thracian](#) tribe, friendly to [Rome](#), who spread as far as the [Danube](#) delta. Marcus Primus governor of Macedonia (25-24BC) was accused of making war on them and in his defence claimed [Augustus](#) had ordered it.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Aegisos](#) was their city, captured by the [Getae](#).

Oeagrus

[Ibis:465-540](#) The [Thracian](#) king, father of [Orpheus](#) by [Calliope](#) the [Muse](#).

Oechalia

A city in Euboea. Ruled by King Eurytus who offered his daughter [Iole](#) to whoever won an archery contest, but he refused [Hercules](#) the prize. Hercules killed his eldest son Iphitus, and fell in love with Iole. He had to appease [Jove](#) for this breach of his role as a guest.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Hercules captured it.

Oedipus



King of [Thebes](#), who unwittingly killed his father and married his mother. See Sophocles great trilogy *The Theban Plays*.

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) A parricide.

[Ibis:251-310](#) He blinded himself, and was led around by his daughter [Antigone](#).

Oenomaus

[Ibis:365-412](#) King of [Pisa](#) in Elis, son of [Ares](#) and the father of [Hippodameia](#). He caused her suitors to race against him in their chariots, killing the losers. He was eventually killed by [Pelops](#).

Olympiad

The period of five years covering successive Games at Olympia, celebrated every fifth year inclusive from 776BC, and therefore a useful measure of time.

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) Ovid is starting his sixth year in [Tomis](#).

Olympus

A famous [Phrygian](#) flute-player who learned his art from [Marsyas](#).

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) A disciple of Marsyas.

Opheltes

[Ibis:465-540](#) The son of Lycurgus devoured by a serpent. The Nemean games were founded in his memory.

Ops

The goddess of agricultural abundance, goddess of plenty.  
[Book TII.I:1](#) Identified with [Cybele](#) by the Romans, who wore a turreted crown. [Ovid](#) may refer to [Augustus](#)'s re-dedication of her temple on the [Palatine](#) after it was destroyed by fire and re-built in 3AD.

### Opus

The capital of the Opuntian Locrians.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) The birthplace of [Patroclus](#).

### Orestes

The only son of [Agamemnon](#) and [Clytemnestra](#), brother of [Electra](#), [Iphigenia](#) and Chrysothemis. [Pylades](#) was his faithful friend. He avenged the murder of his father by killing Clytemnestra and her lover [Aegisthus](#). He brought back his sister Iphigenia from the Tauric Chersonese, and the image of [Artemis](#) from her temple there to Athens, or in Roman myth to Aricia. The rites of the sanctuary there, at Nemi, are the starting point for Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' (see Chapter I et seq.)

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#) [Book EII.III:1-48](#) His friendship with Pylades stressed. He was pursued by the [Furies](#) for the murder of his mother Clytemnestra.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Famous because of Clytemnestra's adultery and the consequent events.

[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) He visited the Crimea, and brought Iphigenia home.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) A paragon of friendship.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Pylades' loyalty to him.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) The Oresteian goddess is Artemis-Diana.

[Ibis:311-364](#) Maddened by the Furies.

[Ibis:465-540](#) There seems to be a variant myth here of Clytemnestra's dream of a serpent, interpreted as Orestes, who killed her and Aegisthus.

Orestes is killed by a snake according to Apollodorus.

### Orpheus

The mythical musician of [Thrace](#), son of Oeagrus and [Calliope](#) the [Muse](#). His lyre, given to him by Apollo, and invented by Hermes-Mercury, is the constellation Lyra containing the star Vega. (See John William Waterhouse's painting – Nymphs finding the head of Orpheus – Private Collection, and Gustave Moreau's painting – Orpheus – in the Gustave Moreau Museum, Paris: See Peter Vischer the Younger's Bronze relief – Orpheus and Eurydice – Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg: and the bas-relief – Hermes, Eurydice and Orpheus – a copy of a votive stele attributed to Callimachus or the school of Phidias, Naples, National Archaeological Museum: Note also Rilke's - Sonnets to Orpheus – and his Poem - Orpheus, Eurydice and Hermes.) See Ovid's Metamorphoses Books X and XI. He summoned [Hymen](#) to his wedding with [Eurydice](#). After she was stung by a snake and died he travelled to Hades, to ask for her life to be renewed. Granted it, on condition he does not look

back at her till she reaches the upper world, he faltered, and she was lost. He mourned her, and turned from the love of women to that of young men. He was killed by the [Maenads](#) of Thrace and dismembered, his head and lyre floating down the river [Hebrus](#) to the sea, being washed to [Lesbos](#). (This head had powers of prophetic utterance) His ghost sank to the Fields of the Blessed where he was reunited with Eurydice. He taught Midas and [Eumolpus](#) the [Bacchic](#) rites.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) He drew the trees and rocks to his singing.

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) The great poet of [Thrace](#).

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) He taught [Eumolpus](#) the mysteries.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Eurydice stung by the snake.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Killed by the Bacchantes.

Ossa

A mountain in [Thessaly](#) in Northern Greece.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) The [Giants](#) piled [Pelion](#) on Ossa to attack the heavens. Ovid implies he never thought to attack [Augustus](#).

[Ibis:251-310](#) [Thessalus](#) apparently died there.

Ovid

The author, Publius Ovidius Naso, born March 20th 43BC, at [Sulmo](#) (Sulmona), ninety miles or so from [Rome](#).

**His Crime, ‘Carmen et error’: references:**

[Book TI.I:1-68](#) [Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) His life is a gift of [Augustus](#)'s, the god, who has mitigated his punishment. The implication is that Ovid's error might have been considered a capital offence. His case is poor, and unlikely to be arguable in a court of law. He still can't resist a subtle double entendre though, waiting for leniency, '*lenito Caesare*', from a Caesar who has softened, or equally a more lenient Caesar to come! He acknowledges that his verse (*Amores*, *Ars Amatoria* etc) has hurt him, and contributed to his exile.

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#) [Book TII.I:1](#) The three books of *Ars Amatoria* again referred to, as texts to be hidden, and texts that have injured him. Ovid maintains that his own life and conduct were other than that described in the *Ars*, and that they were written in a light vein, as exercises in wit.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) [Book TI.II:75-110](#) [Book TI.III:1-46](#) [Book TIII.I:47-82](#) [Book TIII. XI:1-38](#) [Book TIV.I:1-48](#) [Book TIV.IV:1-42](#)

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) [Book EI.VII:1-70](#) [Book EII.II:1-38](#) His error is a fault (*culpa*) rather than a crime (*scelus*) and not ultimately judged by Augustus to merit death. He accepts guilt but denies criminal intent (*facinus*). An *error* has misled him. He was stupid (*stultus*) not wicked (*sceleratus*). He stresses his loyalty to 'Caesar and the Caesars' who would include [Tiberius](#), [Drusus](#) (Tiberius's son by Vipsania), and [Germanicus](#). Gaius and Lucius ([Julia](#) the Elder's sons by Tiberius) were already dead (4AD and 2AD), Agrippa Posthumus (Julia the Elder's son

by Agrippa) was in exile. He characterises himself as unwise and cowardly (*non sapiens, timidus*) and this suggests foolishness in having become involved in something, and cowardice in not reporting it.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) He is aware, and presumably Augustus may have indicated this to him, that the location of Tomis for his exile is part of his punishment. The ultra-civilised poet to be sent to the edge of civilisation to see how the Empire was maintained and expanded.

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) Ovid denies fostering any armed opposition to Augustus and claims his error involved naivety, rather than disloyalty.

[Book TI.VII:1-40](#) [Book TV.II:45-79](#) [Book TV.IV:1-50](#)

[Book TV.XI:1-30](#) He describes himself as a *relegatus* (relegated, banished) rather than an *exul* (exile). *Relegatio* was milder than *exilium*, in that property was not confiscated and civic rights were retained. Ovid's friends were not formally tainted by association, his name was allowed to be mentioned, he could correspond, and publish, he was however confined to [Tomis](#), whereas an *exul* often merely needed to keep a certain distance from Rome.

[Book TII.I:1](#) Tristia II is in the form of a *suasoria* or formal argument concerning the charge that *Ars Amatoria* etc. were corrupting, with an *exordium* to placate the judge, a *propositio* outlining the brief, and a *tractatio* or treatment expounding the case, consisting in turn of a *probatio* or proof by evidence, and *epilogus* or first

conclusion asking for mitigation, a *refutatio* rebutting the charge, and a second *epilogus* asking for mercy.

[Book TII:77-120](#) Ovid claims his ‘error’ was to have seen something, unwittingly. The result was to be punished for that mischance, like [Actaeon](#). He does not suggest that he was punished for failing to tell the authorities about it, but for the mere act of being a witness to it.

[Book TII:120-154](#) He explains that he was upbraded by Augustus personally, his life was spared, he was not brought before Senate or law-court, and was a *relegatus*, with place of exile specified but retaining his rights and possessions, particularly important for his wife.

[Book TII:207-252](#) The ‘*carmen et error*’ passage. The specific charge of promoting adultery through the poem (*Ars Amatoria*) suggests that adulterous behaviour may also have been involved in the error. (This author favours the view that Ovid inadvertently witnessed an unacceptable marriage or a related ceremony, involving the younger Julia and a lover, perhaps Decimus Iunius Silanus, with whom she had been accused of committing adultery while her husband Lucius Aemilius Paullus was alive. His presence would have been regarded by Augustus as a seal of approval, by the ‘doctor of adultery’, to an affair that potentially threatened the future succession to the Imperial throne, remembering the many candidates who had died, and the limited number of possible heirs. Julia was part of the anti-Tiberius faction. ) Ovid claims his book was written to exclude virtuous

women and he ‘quotes’ *Ars Amatoria* I:31-34, but with the sneaky amendment of ‘*what is lawful*’ for ‘*safe love*’.

[Book TII:253-312](#) He defends the *Ars Amatoria* again as written for courtesans and not for noblewomen, and uses the classic defence of eroticism and pornography that it does not corrupt, but attracts the already corrupted, and that everything prompts lewd thoughts in a lewd mind. (Note Euripides, in the *Bacchae*: ‘In the Bacchic ritual as elsewhere a woman will be safe from corruption if her mind is chaste.’)

[Book TIII.I:47-82](#) His books banned from the libraries.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) A key statement again regarding the nature of his offence, that is was something seen, that he had not spoken inadvisedly, that he witnessed a *crimen* (an ‘offence’ rather than a ‘crime’, i.e. something that offended Augustus rather than something against the law, fine shades of difference?) but that one of his offences was an error.

[Book TIII.VI:1-38](#) Ovid says that what led up to the error which ruined him was a ‘secret’ and that suggests a more conspiratorial involvement than he would have us believe elsewhere. He repeats that the cause of his ruin was an error, that is is a long tale to tell, and not a safe one (presumably others were involved who were not revealed) and that he witnessed a ‘fatal’ evil. The word used *funestus* might link to its use (as an oxymoron) in *Heroides* XII:140 where [Medea](#) refers to marriage. It would be like Ovid to provide a subtle reference via Medea, the Black Sea witch of tragedy, to a clandestine



marriage he had witnessed, a fateful and fatal one for those involved.

[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) In denying any *facinus*, that is deed, act or crime, and any *consilium*, that is plan or stratagem, in his *peccatum*, sin, Ovid seems to preclude his error having been any kind of active participation in a plot against Augustus or Tiberius. That is consistent with his claim to have seen something whose significance (in a political sense?) escaped him.

[Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) Ovid again stresses that his rights as a citizen remain to him. Is there a hint here in *modo sit sospes: if only he (Augustus) is safe/lives/is favourable like an omen*, that Ovid was hopeful of Augustus relenting, but not of [Tiberius](#), who was by now his obvious successor? Was the error (for example if it concerned [Julia](#) the Younger's remarrying and bearing a rival successor) specifically harmful to Tiberius's status as successor, and therefore to Augustus's wishes for that succession?

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) A very suggestive and intriguing comment that the cause of his exile was *only too well known*, and was triggered by the wickedness of friends' and the harm done him by servants. It is possible that while Julia the Younger's *adultery* was given as the ostensible reason for her banishment, and Ovid was perhaps tarnished by association, so that the cause of his exile was known to all, as was hers (and *Ars Amatoria* was dragged into it as a morally corrupting text), he may have witnessed a clandestine *marriage* which legitimised the child she was carrying, and would have offered another

*heir* to the throne of Scribonia's and not Livia's line, and thus a threat to Tiberius. This comment suggests that his presence (at a marriage?) might have been betrayed by friends and servants. (the servants perhaps under harsh questioning?).

[Book TV.VIII:1-38](#) Ovid goes on hoping for remission of his sentence, based on the nature of his error, and Augustus's reputation for being merciful to his enemies.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) A reiteration of the nature of his offence, judged by Augustus not to merit the death penalty.

[Book EI.VI:1-54](#) A repetition again that the history of his offence is long and not safe to write about, that it is a fault and not a crime, but that perhaps every fault involving the gods is a crime.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) Ovid urges himself to silence over the details of the matter, wishing to bury knowledge of his ruin himself.

[Book EII.III:1-48](#) Ovid claims that [Cotta](#) accepted he had only made a mistake and not committed a crime. Cotta initially and instinctively sided with Augustus, but still gave Ovid some support.

[Book EII.VII:47-84](#) Ovid was absent when the blow fell. This is interesting coupled with his last meeting with Cotta on [Elba](#).

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) The double offence of the *Ars Amatoria* and something else that is concealed by the banning of the book, not something illegal but something even weightier, and Augustus was lenient. The implication

is that the offence was a combination of the morally dubious and the politically disloyal, rather than an explicit criminal action against Augustus.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) Ovid defends the *Ars Amatoria* from the charge of being a corrupting influence, implies that the error was more serious a crime than the banned book, that the error should not be explained, and that the penalty was appropriate.

Dating of the Poems: references

[Book TI.IV:1-28](#) Ovid is ploughing the Adriatic late in the winter months on his way into exile (winter of 8-early 9AD).

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) Tristia I was written on the journey. He was in the Adriatic in December (8AD) and therefore was in Tomis early the following year (9AD).

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Book TII:207-252](#) [Ovid](#) is anticipating victory in Pannonia. [Tiberius](#) and [Germanicus](#) defeated the Dalmatian and [Pannonian](#) rebels in the second [Illyrian](#) War of summer AD9. Tristia II therefore dates to this year.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) Ovid is anticipating victory in Germany after the defeat of Varus, in late AD9 and the transfer of Tiberius there. Tristia III is therefore dated to AD9-10.

[Book TIII.XIII:1-28](#) Ovid's Birthday in Tomis. He was 52 years old in the spring of AD10, see previous note. (March 20th, having been born in 43BC).

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) [Tiberius](#) is still campaigning in Germany, with [Germanicus](#) and [Drusus](#). Tristia IV dates to AD10-11.

[Book TIV.VI:1-50](#) Ovid has spent two full summers away from Rome, so we are in the autumn of AD10.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) The Sun is in Pisces, in February/March of AD11. The second winter of exile (in Tomis) is completed. (Ignoring the winter of AD9 when he was still travelling, and given the preceding poem that covers two full summers also.).

[Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) [Book TIV.X:93-132](#) He refers to his age, over fifty.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Ovid is celebrating the Liberalia, the feast of [Bacchus](#), on March 17th, in the spring of AD12.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) The spring of AD12 in Tomis after his third winter.

[Book EI.II:1-52](#) Ovid is in [Tomis](#) for the fourth winter, that of AD12/13.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) Written in the late autumn of AD12, when the [Pleiades](#) have risen. This suggests the poems of Ex Ponto may not be in strict chronological order.

[Book EII.I:68](#) [Book EIII.III:1-108](#) Ovid hears of [Tiberius](#)'s Pannonian triumph of October AD12, so we are in late 12 or more likely early AD13.

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) After the July AD13 elections to office when [Pompey](#)'s consulship of AD14 was known. Presumably we are in the late summer of AD13.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Pompey is already consul, so we are in AD14, but before [Augustus](#)' death in the August of that year.

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) [Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) Augustus died on the 19th August AD14 and was deified on the 17th September. We are in Ovid's sixth year in Tomis, AD14, so it is late autumn, early winter.

[Book EIV.IX:1-54](#) Ovid anticipates [Graecinus](#)'s consulship. The letter seems intended to reach him by May AD16 when he took office, and therefore allowing for potential delays may have been written early that year.

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) Written in the sixth summer, early autumn, i.e. AD14.

Friends and Patrons: references

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) Ovid's faithful friends were probably [Brutus](#), [Atticus](#), [Celsus](#) and [Carus](#), of whom little is known.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) This and the previous poem probably addressed to 'Carus' indicate the loyalty and strength of friendship provided by at least this friend.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) This poem is probably addressed to Gaius Julius Hyginus director of the Palatine library, a patron of poets, and friend of Ovid's.

**Self and Family: references**

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) Ovid's third wife (possibly [Fabia](#)). His daughter was his only child, his daughter by his second wife. She was married to a senator Cornelius Fidus and went to Africa with him, a senatorial province. Ovid's house was situated near the Capitoline Hill.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) Ovid's third wife had some acquaintance with Livia, presumably through the household of Paullus Fabius [Maximus](#), and his wife [Marcia](#). She may have been a relative of the Fabian house, and editors have dubbed her [Fabia](#) (though on scant evidence).

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) He suggests that his physique was relatively slight and delicate.

[Book TII:77-120](#) [Book EIII.V:1-58](#) [Augustus](#) preserved the custom of granting a horse to member of the equestrian order, and reviewed them, including Ovid, at an annual parade (the *equitum transvectio* of the *equites Romani* wearing their special dress, the *trabea*). An unworthy member could be deprived of his horse. Ovid was a member of the *centumviral* court, mostly dealing with property cases and probate. As an *eques* of good standing he was also a private arbiter.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Another tribute by Ovid to his wife's love and her faithfulness to him in his adversity.

[Book TIV.I:49-107](#) He avoided military matters in his youth, and now has to help defend Tomis as an elderly man.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty. It suggests that the *Metamorphoses* are retold 'stories', and that Ovid gives many or all of them little or no factual credence. That also undermines his exaltation of the Caesars as gods towards the end of Book XV.

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) Ovid's autobiography begins. He was born on the second day of the festival of [Minerva](#), Goddess of the Mind, the Quinquatrus (March 19-23), on the first of the days (March 20th) when armed combats took place. The year was 43BC when both the Consuls, namely Aulus Hirtius and Gaius Vibius Pansa, died in defeating Mark [Antony](#) at Mutina. Ovid mentions his elder brother born on the same day a year earlier who died at age twenty. Ovid was drawn to poetry, and held minor office on one of the boards of *tresviri* (*monetales*, overseeing the public mint, or *capitales*, the prisons and executions) but held back from public office in the Senate. He had adopted the *tunica laticlavia* for the sons of senators and *equites* destined for public office, but reverted to the *angusticlavia* of a plain *equites*.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Ovid's autobiography continues. He mentions the poets in his circle of friends, his poems to Corinna, his susceptible heart but blameless life, his three marriages, his daughter by his second marriage, see above, and the deaths of his parents.

[Book EIII.VII:1-40](#) Resignation is creeping over him by this stage of his exile (AD13).

His Other Works: references

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) [Book TI.VII:1-40](#) [Book TII:43-76](#) [Book TII:547-578](#) The fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses*, 'saved' from his ruin. Ovid says he burnt his copy of the work because it represented 'poetry' which had condemned him, and/or because it was not completely finished. It survived as he knew in other copies though.



Polite references to Augustus will be found in *Metamorphoses* Book XV:857 et al, but [Jupiter](#) and [Juno](#) are a gentle parody of [Augustus](#) and [Livia](#) throughout the work and so Ovid is still being a little cheeky.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) A remembrance of his writing in his Roman garden, or on his familiar couch.

[Book TII:43-76](#) [Book TII:313-360](#) Ovid may have intended to write a *Gigantomachia*, the story of the war between the gods and the [giants](#). If so written it might not have helped his case! He had apparently started, and then abandoned it.

[Book TII:547-578](#) The six surviving books of the *Fasti*, covering six months of the Roman year, are mentioned here, originally dedicated to Augustus, and partially revised in AD14, at Augustus's death, to re-dedicate the work to Germanicus. I don't think the Latin here indicates that a second set of six was drafted for the other months of the year. Six books only, in six rolls, seems clear enough. And the work was broken off, as he states. The tragedy is the lost *Medea*.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) Compare the last verses of the *Metamorphoses*.

[Book TIII.VIII:1-42](#) Compare *Amores* III.6 for a similar wish, concerning both [Medea](#)'s and [Triptolemus](#)'s (lent him by [Ceres](#)) chariots. Ovid uses myths that refer to the Black Sea region in both cases.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) He makes a plea for his books to be kept in the public library. He mentions the baned *Ars*



Amatoria, the Metamorphoses, and the Tristia itself, plus his considering writing in Getic and corrupting his Latin.

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) He uses the formula here of the closing lines of the Metamorphoses to assert his immortality.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) He denies having written anything for the theatre, implying that someone has adapted his verses for the stage.

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) He wishes the *Ars Amatoria* had been thrown into the fire since it has ruined its author.

Life At Tomis

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) He travelled to [Tomis](#) by way of the Adratic and the Corinthian Gulf, crossing the Isthmus to reach [Cenchreae](#), the harbour of [Corinth](#) on the Saronic Gulf. There he took ship (the *Minerva*?) to [Samothrace](#) in the northern Aegean. The ship continued to Tomis, but he took another ship to [Tempyra](#) on the [Thracian](#) coast, and then finished the journey to Tomis by land.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) A description of life in Tomis among the barbarians. Ovid has learned to speak Sarmatian and his Latin is growing rusty. He stresses the savagery of the people whose Greek admixture is drowned by the Getic semi-nomadic and warlike culture.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) Ovid portrays the local people as barbaric savages who have lost the culture of the original Greek colony, and apply rough justice. They wear Persian trousers, dress in sheepskins, are unable to understand Latin, and are malicious in their speech about Ovid

himself. Not a picture likely to arouse their enthusiasm for him if the contents got back to them, as we shall see later!

### Paeligni

An Italian people whose capital, [Sulmo](#), was [Ovid](#)'s birthplace.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) The countryside there.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) His homeland.

### Paeones, Pannonia

The Pannonians, a group of [Illyrian](#) tribes south and west of the bend of the [Danube](#), organised as a province c. 10AD covering roughly the area between Vienna and Belgrade.

[Book TII:207-252](#) [Tiberius](#) and [Germanicus](#) defeated the Pannonian and Illyrian rebels in the second Illyrian war of the summer of 9AD.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) Ovid uses the term Paeonian (Macedonian) loosely to describe the Pannonians further towards the Danube estuary.

### Paestum

A city of Lucania in Italy. The site is near modern Agropoli on the Bay of Salerno, a ruin in a wilderness, with Doric temples that surpassed those of [Athens](#). Originally called Poseidonia, the city of [Neptune](#), it was founded by Greeks from Sybaris in the 6th c. BC. It became Paestum when it passed into the hands of the Lucanians in the 4th century. It was taken by the Romans

in 273BC. In antiquity it was famous for its roses, which flowered twice a year, and its violets. Malaria eventually drove away its population.

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) Its roses.

Palamedes

[Ibis:597-644](#) The son of Nauplius whom [Ulysses](#)' wrongfully had stoned to death, after making it appear that he had been a traitor and received enemy gold.

Palatine, Palatium

The most important of [Rome](#)'s seven hills and traditionally the site of the earliest settlements adjacent to the [Tiber](#), south-east of the [Capitoline](#) and north of the Aventine. It became a highly fashionable residential area, and [Augustus](#) lived there in a house that had belonged to the orator Quintus Hortensius. Other residents included Cicero and Mark Antony.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) The Porta Mogunia was the way to the Palatine Hill from the [Via Sacra](#).

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) [Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) The site of Augustus's palace, decked with garlands for a triumph.

Palicus

The sons of [Jupiter](#) and the nymph Thalia were worshipped in [Sicily](#) at Palica, between [Syracuse](#) and [Enna](#), where a temple and two lakes were sacred to them. Dis passed through the sulphurous swamps there while

abducting Proserpine. The modern Lago di Naftia between Catania and Caltagirone

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Visited by [Ovid](#) and [Macer](#).

Palinurus

[Aeneas](#)'s helmsman who fell into the sea while asleep and drowned. See [Virgil](#)'s Aeneid.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) A metaphor for abandoning any project.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Drowned in sight of land according to Ovid.

Pallas, Minerva

See [Athene](#)

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Hostile to the [Trojans](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Minerva](#).

[Book TII:253-312](#) She raised [Erichthonius](#).

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) Her sacred image at Troy, which fell from the sky, was the Palladium. Stolen by [Ulysses](#) and [Diomedes](#), it guaranteed the safety of Troy while the Trojans possessed it. Alternatively, it was eventually taken to Rome by [Aeneas](#), and housed in the Temple of Vesta.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) Pallas was born from the head of Zeus, and released into the world by a blow from Haephaestus's axe.

[Book TIV.V:1-34](#) The olive and its oil were sacred to her.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Minerva protected the [Argo](#).

[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) Goddess of the domestic arts, for example spinning wool.

[Ibis:251-310](#) She protected the [Argo](#), and her sacred dove was sent ahead through the clashing rocks to guide the ship.

Pandion

A king of [Athens](#), father of [Procne](#) and [Philomela](#). He married Procne to [Tereus](#), king of [Thrace](#).

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) His daughters turned into birds.

Parcae

The [Fates](#).

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Ovid speculates that a dark Fate was present at his birth.

[Book EIII.VII:1-40](#) He is fated to die in exile.

Parrhasius

See [Lycaon](#).

[Book TII:155-206](#) A term for Callisto the Arcadian.

Parthenius

A river in eastern Bithynia, flowing into the [Pontus](#).

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Parthus, Parthian

Roughly, Persian. The eastern boundary of the Empire, and a source of trouble during Augustus's reign.

[Book TII:207-252](#) Ovid recalls the offer of the return of Roman standards captured by the Persians from Crassus at Carrhae (53BC) and from others in 40 and 36. The offer

was made by a nervous Phraates IV of Parthia after Armenia had become a friendly state to Rome in 20BC under Tigranes. The capture of the standards was not too clever a subject for Ovid to raise.

### Pasiphae

The daughter of the Sun and the nymph Crete (Perseis). She was the wife of King Minos of Crete and mother of [Phaedra](#) and [Ariadne](#).

She was inspired, by [Poseidon](#), with a mad passion for a white bull from the sea, and [Daedalus](#) built for her a wooden frame in the form of a cow, to entice it. From the union she produced the [Minotaur](#), Asterion, with a bull's head and a man's body.

[Ibis:41-104](#) Named as a source of an accursed race.

### Passer

An Augustan poet.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries. Note that the text is corrupt at this point. Passer, a poet, is assumed.

### Patroclus

The son of Menoetius, and grandson of Actor. [Achilles'](#) beloved friend whose death, at the hands of [Hector](#), caused Achilles to re-enter the fight against the [Trojans](#). See Iliad Book 16.

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) His loyalty to Achilles stressed.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) [Book EII.III:1-48](#) A paragon of friendship. Called Menoetiades from his father.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) A fugitive when young he found refuge with Achilles' father Peleus, after killing Cleitonymus, son of Amphidamas.

Pedo

See [Albinovanus](#).

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Pegasus

The winged horse, created by [Neptune](#)'s union with [Medusa](#) and sprung from her head when [Perseus](#) decapitated her. At the same time his brother Chrysaor the warrior was created. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Pegasus. The sacred fountain of Hippocrene on Mount [Helicon](#), haunt of the [Muses](#), sprang from under his hoof. Pegasus was tamed by [Bellerephon](#).

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) Hippocrene.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) His swiftness.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Born of Medusa. Hippocrene created by him.

Pelasgi

The Greeks. Originally an ancient Greek people (Pelasgi) and their king Pelasgus, son of Phoroneus the brother of Io. He was the brother of [Agenor](#) and Iasus.

[Book TII:361-420](#) The Greeks at Troy.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Possibly Pelasgus is intended here.

### Pelias

The half-brother of Aeson whom he drove from the throne of Iolchos in [Thessaly](#). He sent Aeson's son [Jason](#) in search of the Golden Fleece. [Medea](#) pretended to rejuvenate him but instead employed his daughters to help destroy him.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) His daughter [Alcestis](#).

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) He sent Jason to [Colchis](#).

[Ibis:413-464](#) Failed rejuvenation.

### Pelion

A mountain in [Thessaly](#) in Northern Greece.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) The [Giants](#) piled Pelion on [Ossa](#) to attack the heavens. Ovid implies he never thought to attack [Augustus](#).

### Pelops

The son of [Tantalus](#), and brother of [Niobe](#). He was cut in pieces and served to the gods at a banquet by his father to test their divinity. [Ceres](#)-Demeter, mourning for Persephone, did not perceive the wickedness and ate a piece of the shoulder. The gods gave him life again and an ivory shoulder. He gave his name to the Peloponnese. He was a famous horseman and charioteer. Later he carried off [Hippodamia](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) His abduction of Hippodamia.

[Ibis:163-208](#) The son of Tantalus.



[Ibis:541-596](#) Brother of Niobe.

### Penates

The old Latin household gods, two in number, whose name derives from *penus* a larder, or storage room for food. They were closely linked to the family and shared its joys and sorrows. Their altar was the hearth, which they shared with [Vesta](#). Their images were placed at the back of the atrium in front of the Genius, the anonymous deity that protected and was the creative force in all groups and families, and, as the Genius of the head of the house and represented as a serpent, was placed between the Lar (Etruscan guardian of the house) and Penates. At meals they were placed between the plates and offered the first food. The Penates moved with a family and became extinct if the family did. See [Lares](#).

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) [Ovid](#)'s wife prays to the Penates.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) The deserted gods he leaves behind.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#) Gods of the household, and synonymous with it.

### Penelope

The wife of [Ulysses](#), and daughter of [Icarius](#) and the Naiad Periboa.

(See J R Spencer Stanhope's painting- Penelope – The De Morgan Foundation). See Homer's Odyssey.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) [Book TII:361-420](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) [Homer](#) made Penelope famous as a loyal wife, through the *Odyssey*.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) Ovid compares his wife's character to hers.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) Made famous by her response to her husband's fate.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) She kept the suitors at bay.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries wrote Ulysses' letters home to her, presumably imitating Ovid's *Heroides*.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Her maids and the suitors killed at the end of the *Odyssey*.

Penius

A River in Colchis.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Pentheus

The son of Echion and Agave, the grandson of [Cadmus](#) through his mother. He was King of [Thebes](#). Tiresias foretold his fate at the hands of the [Maenads](#) (Bacchantes). He rejected the worship of Bacchus-Dionysus and ordered the capture of the god. He was torn to pieces by the [Bacchantes](#) for his impiety.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) His offence against Bacchus.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Torn to pieces by his mother and the other Bacchantes.

Perilla (1)

The pseudonym of [Metella](#) the mistress of [Ticida](#).

[Book TII:421-470](#) Mentioned.

Perilla (2)

[Ovid](#)'s stepdaughter, the daughter of his third wife. She married Marcus Suillius [Rufus](#) not later than AD16, and had a son Marcus Suillius Nerullinus.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) Ovid talks about his encouragement of her poetic leanings.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) His thoughts of her and her mother.

Perillus

See [Phalaris](#).

[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) The maker of the brazen bull.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) [Book TV.XII:1-68](#) [Ibis:413-464](#)  
Tormented by his own invention.

Perseus

The son of [Jupiter](#) and [Danaë](#), grandson of Acrisius, King of Argos. He was conceived as a result of Jupiter's rape of Danaë, in the form of a shower of gold. He is represented by the constellation Perseus near Cassiopeia. He is depicted holding the head of the [Medusa](#), whose evil eye is the winking star Algol. It contains the radiant of the Perseid meteor shower. His epithets are Abantiades (scion of Abas), Acrisioniades, Agenorides, Danaëius, Inachides, Lyncides. (See Burne-Jones's oil paintings and gouaches in the Perseus series particularly The Arming of Perseus, The Escape of Perseus, The Rock of Doom, Perseus slaying the Sea-Serpent, and The Baleful Head.)( See Benvenuto Cellini's bronze Perseus - the Loggia,

Florence). He slew the gorgon, Medusa, killed Acrisius accidentally in fulfilment of prophecy, and married [Andromeda](#).

[Book TIII.VIII:1-42](#) His winged sandals.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Mentioned as a subject for verse in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

[Ibis:413-464](#) Called Abantiades. The infant Perseus and his mother [Danae](#) were cast into the sea in a wooden box by her father Acrisius, son of Abas, King of Argolis.

### Phaedra

The daughter of King Minos of Crete and Pasiphaë, sister of [Ariadne](#). She loved [Hippolytus](#) her stepson, and brought him to his death. (See Racine's play – *Phaedra*, and Euripides' *Hippolytos*.).

[Book TII:361-420](#) Her illicit love.

### Phaethon

Son of Clymene, daughter of Oceanus and Tethys whose husband was the Ethiopian king [Merops](#). His true father is [Sol](#), the sun-god (Phoebus). He asked his mother for proof of his divine origin and went to the courts of the Sun to see his father who granted him a favour. He asked to drive the Sun chariot, lost control of the chariot and was destroyed by Jupiter in order to save the earth from being consumed by fire. See *Metamorphoses* Books I and II.

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) He would fear the sky if he still lived.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) [Merops](#) was his putative father.

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) [Book EI.II:1-52](#) His sisters remained loyal to him, and grieved for him. They were turned into poplar trees weeping amber by the River Po, happy in losing their sense of feeling.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Struck down by [Jupiter](#)'s thunderbolt to avoid the earth being consumed.

### Phalaris

The Tyrant of Agrigentum in [Sicily](#), 571-555BC. He was noted for his cruelty. He had [Perillus](#) the sculptor and inventor design a brazen bull for him where victims could be roasted alive and made Perillus himself its first victim. Polybius (*Histories* XII.25) claims to have seen the bull, which had been taken to Carthage at the time of the Carthaginian conquest in 406/5BC. Diodorus Siculus (*History* XIII.90.4) reports the same and that subsequently Scipio returned it to Agrigentum after the sack of Carthage in 146BC.

[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) [Book EII.IX:39-80](#) [Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) An example of cruelty.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) Allowed Perillus to groan and bellow.

[Ibis:413-464](#) Ovid implies he was also tormented in the bull.

### Pharos

An island near [Alexandria](#) in Egypt, site of the lighthouse. Protected by [Isis](#) as goddess of the sea. Subsequently silted up and linked to the mainland.

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) Associated with the worship of Isis.

## Phasis

A river in [Colchis](#), famous for its gold. [Medea](#) is called the Phasian.

[Book TII:421-470](#) Reached by the Argonauts.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) Medea, the Phasian girl.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

[Ibis:597-644](#) Of the region of the river, hence Colchian.

## Pheraean

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) Descended from Alexander Tyrant of Pherae in [Thessaly](#).

[Ibis:311-364](#) Alexander d. 358 BC was tyrant of the city of Pherae in Thessaly after 369. He was opposed by other Thessalian cities and by the Thebans. Pelopidas failed (368) in one expedition against him and was briefly imprisoned. Returning in 364, Pelopidas destroyed Alexander's power in the battle of Cynoscephalae, though he himself was killed. Alexander was subsequently murdered by members of his own family, led by his wife Thebe (see Plutarch's: Life of Pelopidas)

## Phidias, Phideas

The [Athenian](#) sculptor and painter (490?-432?BC) creator of several famous works including the Zeus of Olympia, the [Athena](#) Parthenos and Athena Promachos, and general director of the Acropolis building project under Pericles.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) His statues of Athene.

## Philetas

Philetas of Cos (5th century BC) the Greek grammarian and poet, famed for elegy. His verses to [Bittis](#) his wife or sweetheart were especially prized.

[Book TI.VI:1-36](#) Mirrors [Ovid](#)'s love for his wife.

## Philippus, Philip

Philip I of Macedonia, the father of Alexander.

[Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) His lands, Macedonia.

## Philoctetes

The son of Poeas. He lit [Hercules](#)' funeral pyre and received from him the bow, quiver and arrows that would enable the Greeks to finally win at [Troy](#), and that had been with Hercules when he rescued Hesione there.

Bitten by a snake on [Lemnos](#), he was abandoned there on [Ulysses](#) advice. Ulysses accepted later that Philoctetes and his weapons were essential for the defeat of the Trojans and brought Philoctetes and the weapons to Troy.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) [Book TV.IV:1-50](#) His laments on Lemnos.

[Book TV.II:1-44](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) His long sickness from the noxious wound.

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) Treated by [Machaon](#). Called Poeantian as the son of Poeas.

[Book EIII.1:1-66](#) Made more famous by his fate.

## Philomela

The daughter of [Pandion](#), sister of [Procne](#), raped by her sister's husband [Tereus](#). She convinced her father to allow her to visit her sister Procne, unaware of Tereus's lust for her. Tereus violated her, and she vowed to tell the world of his crime. He severed her tongue and told Procne she was dead. Philomela communicated with Procne by means of a woven message, and was rescued by her during the [Bacchic](#) revels. She then helped Procne to murder [Itys](#), the son of Tereus and Procne.

Pursued by Tereus she turned into a swallow or a nightingale. See *Metamorphoses* Book VI.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Changed to a bird.

[Ibis:465-540](#) Her tongue cut out.

Philopoimen

[Ibis:251-310](#) The Arcadian Greek general of Megalopolis (c253-182BC: see the life by Plutarch: a life by Polybius, who carried home the general's bones after his death, is lost: see also Pausanias VIII.49.3). He fought in various battles for the Achaian League against Laconia. In old age he fought the Messenians, his proud aggressive character leading him to wage war when unfit to do so. He fell from his horse through weakness, and was captured, and ultimately executed by Deinocrates and the Messenians, drinking poison. Ovid perhaps plays here on the fact of his face being 'no picture', and the *hubris* that led to his downfall. Ovid places his final battle near Tegea in the Alean fields, since [Aleus](#) was the founder of Tegea, or perhaps uses Alean loosely for Arcadian.



### Phineus

King of Salmydessus in [Thrace](#), and son of [Agenor](#), he was a blind prophet, who had received the gift of prophecy from [Apollo](#). He was blinded by the gods for prophesying the future too accurately, and was plagued by a pair of [Harpies](#). Calais and Zetes, the sons of [Boreas](#), and his brothers-in-law, rid him of their loathsome attentions, in return for advice on how to obtain the Golden Fleece. The two winged sons chased the Harpies to the Strophades islands, where some say their lives were spared. Phineus and his second wife Idaea persecuted his two children by his first wife, Cleopatra, the sister of Calais and Zetes.  
[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) He guided the [Argonauts](#).

### Phoebe

A name for [Diana](#), as moon-goddess.

### Phoenix

The son of [Amyntor](#), hence Amyntorides, blinded by his father and cursed with childlessness, who was cured by [Cheiron](#) the [Centaur](#) and became guardian to [Achilles](#).  
[Ibis:251-310](#) Blinded.

### Phrygia

A region in Asia Minor, containing [Dardania](#) and [Troy](#), and [Mysia](#) and Pergamum. Ovid uses the term for the whole of Asia Minor bordering the Aegean. Phrygius often means Trojan.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Pelops](#) had Phrygian horses.

[Book EI.I:37-80](#) [Ibis:413-464](#) Phrygian boxwood flutes used in the rites of [Cybele](#). The worship of the goddess originated in Asia Minor.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) [Marsyas](#) was Phrygian.

Phyllis (1)

A character in [Virgil](#)'s Bucolic poems.

[Book TII:497-546](#) A character in the Eclogues.

Phyllis (2)

The title of a poem by [Tusculus](#).

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Mentioned in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Piacches

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) The cruel chieftain of a tribe near [Tomis](#).

Pierides

An epithet for the [Muses](#) from the Pierian district of Mount Olympus.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) [Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) [Book TV.I:1-48](#)

Poetry generally.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) Poetry has in a sense harmed him, through the banning of the *Ars Amatoria* and his exile.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) [Book EI.V:43- 86](#) The choir of poets, belonging to the Muses.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) [Book EII.V:41-76](#) [Book EIV.II:1-50](#)

[Book EIV.XII:1-50](#) The Muses.

Pindar

The lyric poet of Boeotian [Thebes](#) (after 442BC) famous for his odes, many celebrating winning athletes at the Games.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Imitated by [Rufus](#) a poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Pirene

The Pirenian Spring. A famous fountain on the citadel of [Corinth](#) sacred to the [Muses](#), where [Bellerephon](#) took [Pegasus](#) to drink. Pausanias says (II:iii, Corinth) that Peirene was a human being who became a spring, through weeping for her son Cenchrias, killed by accident by [Artemis](#), and that the water is sweet to taste. (It has Byzantine columns, and was once the private garden of the Turkish Bey.). The spring was said never to fail. It was also the name of a fountain outside the city gates, towards Lechaem, into whose waters the Corinthian bronzes were dipped red-hot on completion.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Corinth, where Jason was eventually king.

Pirithous

Son of Ixion. King of the Lapithae in [Thessaly](#) and friend of [Theseus](#). He married [Hippodamia](#), and invited the centaurs to the wedding. Eurytus attempted to carry her off, and started a fight in which Theseus was also

involved. He assisted Theseus on his journey to Hades to rescue Persephone and was imprisoned there with him. Theseus was rescued by [Hercules](#).

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book EII.III:1-48](#) [Book EII.VI:1-38](#)

Famous for his friendship with Theseus.

### Pisa

The district of [Elis](#) in which [Olympia](#) lay, and often synonymous with Elis. Pisa presided over the Olympic games until c 580BC.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) [Hippodamia](#) was from Pisa.

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) Ovid had lived for ten Olympiads, the space between Olympic Games, of five years each.

### Pleiades

The Seven Sisters, the daughters, with the [Hyades](#) and the Hesperides, of Atlas the Titan. Their mother was Pleione the naiad. They were chased by Orion rousing the anger of [Artemis](#) to whom they were dedicated and changed to stars by the gods. The Pleiades are the star cluster M45 in the constellation Taurus. Their names were Maia, the mother of Mercury by [Jupiter](#), Taygeta, Electra, Merope, [Asterope](#), Alcyone (the brightest star of the cluster), and Celaeno. Their rising and setting in May and late October signalled the beginning and end of the navigation season and provided farmers with sowing and harvest guidance. (See Hesiod *Works and Days*:383)

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) [Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Book EII.VII:47-84](#)

Autumn and Winter stars. Rising in mid-October.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) Remote stars.

Pluto, Dis, Hades, Plutus

The God of the Underworld, elder brother of [Jupiter](#) and [Neptune](#), and like them the son of [Saturn](#) and Rhea. Identified with Plutus the son of [Ceres](#), god of riches.

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) God of [Tartarus](#), the Underworld.

[Ibis:413-464](#) Identified with Plutus, wealth.

Podalirius

The son of Asclepius and brother of [Machaon](#). A physician who led a contingent to [Troy](#). He and Machaon were the chief physicians to the Greek camp. He is said to have healed [Philoctetes](#), and settled in Caria after the war.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) A reliable physician.

Polydorus

[Ibis:541-596](#) The son of [Priam](#) of Troy sent to his uncle [Polymestor](#) who murdered him.

Polyduces, Pollux

The son of King [Tyndareus](#) of Sparta (or Zeus), and Leda, and one of the twin Dioscuri, brother of [Castor](#). The brothers of Helen. Castor was an expert horseman, Pollux a noted boxer. They came to be regarded as the protectors of sailors, and gave their names to the two major stars of the constellation Gemini, The Twins.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) Worshipped on [Samothrace](#).

[Book TIV.V:1-34](#) His affection for his brother. Note that Ovid's naming of these gods is consistent with the shipwreck imagery earlier in the poem.

Polymestor

[Ibis:251-310](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) King of [Thrace](#), husband of Ilione daughter of [Priam](#). He murdered his own child Deiphilus rather than Polydorus, Iliona's nephew, sent to him by Priam for safety, whom [Agamemnon](#) had bribed him with gold to kill. Polydorus blinded him. Alternatively Polymestor killed Polydorus for the gold sent by Priam for safekeeping, with the boy, and the boy's mother Hecuba in turn murdered him, and tore out his eyes.

Polynices

The brother of [Eteocles](#) and [Antigone](#), the son of [Oedipus](#) and Jocasta. The leader of the Seven against [Thebes](#).

[Book TII:313-360](#) The brothers' mutual death.

[Ibis:1-40](#) The smoke of their funeral pyre divided by enmity.

Polyphemus

One of the Cyclopes, sons of [Neptune](#), one-eyed giants living in [Sicily](#) (Trinacria). He was blinded by [Ulysses](#), causing Poseidon/Neptune's enmity against him, and adding to his long wanderings. The Cyclops were linked

to metal-working and the volcano of Mount [Etna](#) on Sicily.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) A hostile monster.

[Ibis:251-310](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) Blinded by Ulysses whose men he had attacked and some of whom he had consumed.

Pompeius (1)

Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, the triumvir.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) Defeated at Pharsalus (48BC) he sought refuge in Egypt but was killed on arrival, and his severed head was sent to Caesar. The headless corpse was left on the sand.

Pompeius (2)

Sextus Pompeius a patron of Ovid. He was a descendant of Pompey the Great, was related to [Augustus](#), and was consul in 14AD. He was a friend of [Germanicus](#), and became proconsul of Asia.

[Book EIV.I:1-36](#) This letter addressed to him explicitly. Ovid apologises for his neglect, and is no doubt trying to make contact with friends of Germanicus. The death of Augustus has occurred or is imminent.

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) Addressed to him explicitly. His consulship approved.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Addressed to him explicitly, after he had become Consul.

[Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) Addressed to him explicitly.

Ponticus

An epic poet and member of Ovid's circle, probably the Ponticus of Propertius I:7, and 9. He appears to have written a *Thebaid*.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Mentioned.

## Pontus

The Black Sea, originally called *ἄξεινος:axenus*, inhospitable, because of its storms, and the barbarous tribes on its coast, later hospitable, *εὐξεινος:euxinus*, as a euphemism. Hence Euxene as an epithet. [Ovid](#) also calls the region in which [Tomis](#) lay, Pontus. The name is extended to the land adjacent to the Sea, along its southern shore as far as [Colchis](#), sometimes the whole [Thracian](#) shore.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) [Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) Ovid speaks of Pontus-on-the-left, the ill-omened (to him) western shore of the Black Sea, on the left as one exits the Bosphorus.

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) The 'sinister' Black Sea, both Pontus 'on the left' Tomis being on the western coast, and, for Ovid, unlucky, unfavourable Pontus: a play on the word.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) The 'gates' of the Black Sea, that is the Bosphorus (Dardanelles). Guarded by the city of [Byzantium](#).

[Book TIII.II:1-30](#) Ovid complains of its perpetual frost. If so the climate has changed, since the modern summers in [Tomis](#) are hot, and the autumns mild. (Constanta is now a holiday resort.)

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) Described as [Scythian](#).



[Book THII.VIII:1-42](#) [Book EIV.XII:1-50](#) His dislike of the location, plagued by insomnia, and weak in body.

[Book THII. X:41-78](#) [Book TV.X:1-53](#) [Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) The Black Sea frozen in winter. Its dolphin population.

[Book THII. XI:1-38](#) The inhospitable Black Sea.

[Book THII. XII:1-54](#) A destination for trading vessels.

[Book THII.XIII:1-28](#) The ‘hospitable’ [Euxine](#).

[Book THII.XIV:1-52](#) The languages of the region.

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) [Book TV.II:45-79](#) [Book TV.V:27-64](#)  
[Book EI.IX:1-56](#)

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) [Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) His place of exile, decreed by Augustus.

[Book TV.II:1-44](#) His letters home to his wife from there.

[Book TV.XIII:1-34](#) Icy Pontus. The wormwood plant, especially *artemisia absinthium*, the aromatic herb found in grasslands in the Northern hemisphere and the source of absinthe, grew there abundantly. Up to 80cm high it has deeply divided leaves and small yellow flowers grouped into long loose spikes. The undersides of the leaves are pale.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Book EII.VII:47-84](#) [Book EIII.1:1-66](#) A hostile region for exile.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) [Jason](#)’s destination, seeking the Golden Fleece.

[Book EII.IV:1-34](#) [Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) It’s frozen climate.

[Book EII.V:1-40](#) His verses sent from there.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Far from Rome.

[Book EIII.V:1-58](#) Metaphorically close to the [Styx](#).

[Ibis:1-40](#) A witness to his 'gratitude' to Augustus for being merciful.

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) News of [Pompey](#)'s consulship reaches him there.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) The land-locked sea.

Porus

An Indian leader whom [Alexander](#) conquered but treated generously.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) Displays Alexander's mercy.

Poseidon

The Greek god of the sea, equated to [Neptune](#).

Priam

The King of [Troy](#) at the time of the Trojan War, the son of Laomedon, husband of Hecuba, by whom he had many children. In the Metamorphoses Ovid mentions [Hector](#), Helenus, Paris, Polydorus, Deiphobus, [Cassandra](#) and Polyxena. Aesacus was his son by Alexiroë. He ransomed the dead body of his son Hector from [Achilles](#), and was killed at the Fall of Troy by [Pyrrhus](#) (Neoptolemus, son of Achilles) in front of the altar of [Zeus](#).

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) Achilles gave up the body of Hector.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) His weeping did not offend Achilles.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) His grief at Hector's death.

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) The death of his sons.

Priapus

The Pan of [Mysia](#) in Asia Minor, venerated as [Lampsacus](#), from the town of that name which was his original cult centre, where he was born of the goddess Aphrodite-[Venus](#). God of gardens and vineyards. His phallic image was placed in orchards and gardens. He presided over the fecundity of fields, flocks, beehives, fishing and vineyards. He became part of the retinue of [Dionysus](#).  
[Book TLX:1-50](#) The local god of Lampsacus.

#### Prisci

Two Augustan poets, one of whom was probably Clutorius Priscus, who wrote a lament on the death of [Germanicus](#), and was later put to death in 21AD for having read a poem to ladies lamenting the death of [Drusus](#) while Drusus was alive. The other Priscus is unknown.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Poets in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

#### Procne

The daughter of [Pandion](#), king of Athens, married to [Tereus](#), king of Thrace. See Metamorphoses Book VI:438. She persuaded Tereus to bring her sister [Philomela](#) to stay with her. Tereus raped and mutilated her sister, and told Procne that Philomela was dead. Philomela communicated with her by means of a woven message, and she rescued her during the [Bacchic](#) rites. She murdered her son [Itys](#) and served the flesh to Tereus. Pursued by Tereus she turned into a nightingale. The bird's call, mourning Itys, is

said to be ‘Itu! Itu!’ which is something like the occasional ‘chooc, chooc’ among its wide range of notes. Alternative versions of the legend make her the swallow, while Philomela becomes the nightingale.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Book EI.III:1-48](#) Changed to a bird.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) Changed to a swallow.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) Her lament for Itys.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Impious in murdering Itys.

### Procrustes

[Ibis:365-412](#) Or Polypemon, the father of [Sinis](#), who used to cut travellers down to the size of his bed or stretch them accordingly. [Theseus](#) served him in the same way.

### Proculus

An Augustan erotic poet who imitated [Callimachus](#).

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid’s list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Prometheus

[Ibis:251-310](#) [Ibis:465-540](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) The creator of mankind, son of the Titan Eurymedon, or of Iapetus by the nymph Clymene. He stole fire from the gods. He was tormented by [Jupiter](#), by being chained naked to a pillar in the Caucasus, where a vulture tore at his liver day and night.

### Propertius

Sextus Aurelius Propertius (c.50-c.15BC) the Roman elegiac poet, from Asisium (Assisi) in Umbria. An older poet and a major influence on [Ovid](#), his first volume the *Monobiblos* gained him entry to Maecenas's circle. Like [Tibullus](#) he died relatively young.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His risqué verse.

[Book TIII.III:47-88](#) Note the echoes of Propertius's BkIV:7

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) Note the echoes of Propertius, for example BkIII:25

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) A friend of Ovid's. He came between [Tibullus](#) and Ovid in order of seniority.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) A writer of love poetry.

### Propontis

The landlocked Sea of Marmara lying between the [Hellespont](#) (Dardanelles) and the [Thracian Bosphorus](#), linking the Aegean to [Pontus](#), the Black Sea (Euxine).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s route.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) [Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) The entrance to the Black Sea.

### Protesilaus

A [Thessalian](#) chief, the grandson of Phylacus, killed by [Hector](#), the first of the Greeks to be slain in the [Trojan War](#). See [Laodemia](#), his wife. She was granted three hours with him after his death when Hermes escorted him back from Hades. She then had a lifelike statue of him made

which she loved in his place. Ordered by her father to burn the figure she threw herself into the flames.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) Loved by his wife. Grandson of Phylacus.

Psamathe

[Ibis:541-596](#) The daughter of [Crotopus](#) who bore [Linus](#) to [Apollo](#). Her father's hounds killed the boy.

Pterelaus

[Ibis:311-364](#) Son of Taphius (son of [Poseidon](#)) and king of Taphos (an island off the coast of Acarnania) at the time when Amphitryon ravaged the islands of the Taphians or Teleboans. Poseidon made him immortal by implanting a golden hair in his head, but his daughter Comaetho, having fallen in love with the besieger Amphitryon, betrayed her father and caused his death by pulling out the golden hair from his head.

Pylades

Of Phocis, the son of Strophius and close friend of [Orestes](#), whom he accompanied on his return to Mycenae, and whose sister [Electra](#) he later married.

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#) [Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Book TV.IV:1-50](#) [Book TV.VI:1-46](#) [Book EII.III:1-48](#) A paragon of friendship.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) His fame lived after him.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) With Orestes in [Tauris](#).

## Pylos

The city in [Elis](#) in the western Peloponnese, the home of [Nestor](#) the wise, in the Iliad and Odyssey.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) [Book EI.IV:1-58](#) [Book EII.VIII:37-76](#)

Nestor's city.

## Pyrrha

[Ibis:541-596](#) Wife and cousin to Deucalion, and the only woman to survive the Great Flood. Daughter of the Titan Epimetheus, hence called Titania. Epimetheus was a brother to [Prometheus](#).

## Pyrrhus

The son of Achilles, later called Neoptolemus. He had children by [Andromache](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) Neoptolemus, son of [Achilles](#) and [Deidamia](#).

[Ibis:251-310](#) Pyrrhus killed [Priam](#) at Troy on the altar of [Apollo](#), and was in turn killed by Machaereus a Phocian and the priest of Apollo at [Delphi](#) on the Pythoness's orders, for interfering with the sacrifice there. Ovid says his bones were scattered in [Ambracia](#), where he had built a city near Lake Pambrotis and the oracle of [Dodona](#) in Epirus.

## Pythagoras

The famous Greek philosopher of [Samos](#), the Ionian island, who flourished in the second half of the 6th century BC as a religious leader, and mathematician also. He took

up residence at Crotona in Italy (c531BC), where [Numa](#) (anachronistically in legend, since he lived over a century before Pythagoras) came to be his pupil. His school was later revived at Tarentum and survived as a sect into the 4th century BC.

[Book TIII.III:47-88](#) He taught the immortality of the soul.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) He taught Numa.

### Quirinus

The name for the deified [Romulus](#). Originally the name of a Sabine god.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) [Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) [Book EI.V:43- 86](#)

[Rome](#) is Quirinus's city.

### Rabirius

An Augustan epic poet who wrote about Mark [Antony](#)'s fate.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Raetia

The district north of Verona from the Alps to Vindelicia on the north, Helvetia on the west and Noricum on the east, i.e. roughly eastern Switzerland, Bavaria and the Tyrol. Raetia became an Imperial province in 15AD.

[Book TII:207-252](#) The Alpine insurgents occupied the area and were defeated by [Drusus](#) and [Tiberius](#).

### Remus



The son of [Mars](#) and [Ilia](#), hence [Iliades](#), twin brother of [Romulus](#).

He leapt the fresh walls Romulus was building to found Rome, in derision, and Romulus killed him.

[Book TIV.III:1-48](#) See the entry for Romulus.

[Ibis:597-644](#) He leapt the unfinished walls.

Rhamnusia

A name for [Nemesis](#) from her temple at Rhamnus in Attica.

[Book TV.VIII:1-38](#) She punishes *hubris*.

Rhenus

The river Rhine in northern Europe.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Stained with the blood of German defeat.

[Book EIII.IV:57-115](#) Ovid anticipates a German Triumph, either of [Germanicus](#) or [Tiberius](#).

Rhesus

[Ibis:597-644](#) A [Thracian](#) king, famous for his horses, killed by [Ulysses](#) and [Diomedes](#) in a night raid at Troy.

Rhodope

[Ibis:311-364](#) A mountain in [Thrace](#). Supposed to be a mortal turned into a mountain for assuming the name of a great god. The scene of the triennial festival of [Bacchus](#), the *trietericus*. [Orpheus](#) fled there after losing [Eurydice](#) a second time, hence Rhodopeius an epithet of Orpheus.

Rhoemetalces  
The father of [Cotys](#).

Roma, Rome  
The city on the [Tiber](#), capital of the Empire. Founded by [Romulus](#) in 753BC on the feast of Pales, the Palilia, April 21st.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) [Ovid](#)'s departure from the city.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) Ovid stresses its importance to him, as the seat of Empire and the gods. He is civilised man going among the barbarians.

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) [Quirinus](#)'s 'tranquil' city.

[Book TII:155-206](#) The [Danube](#) delta the furthest Roman region on the west coast of the [Black Sea](#).

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) The [Palatine](#) was the site of the original foundation.

[Book TIII.II:1-30](#) Ovid's homesickness for the city.

[Book TIII.VI:1-38](#) 'Suburban' means 'near the city', i.e. close to Rome.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) [Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) Ovid refers to the string of spring festivals which included the Megalesia, the Floralia, and the Quinquatrus Maiores (19th March) when the law-courts closed. (Fasti I:297-8). The Campus Martis was an area for exercise. The [Aqua Virgo](#) was an aqueduct constructed by Agrippa and opened in 19BC to provide a water supply for the public baths he was building: it entered the city from the north and ran as far as the [Campus Martis](#). The source by the Via Collatina

was supposed to have been revealed by a young girl. The opening took place on the 9th June the feast-day of Vesta and the spring may have in fact been dedicated to her.

The three theatres were those of Pompey, Marcellus and Balbus. The three forums were the forum Romanum, Iulium, and Augusti.

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) The highest standard of poetry in the Empire achieved there.

[Book TV.II:1-44](#) [Augustus](#) as the source of Rome's power.

[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) Officials (the *curule* magistrates, consuls and praetors) wore the toga bordered with a broad purple stripe. The lectors carried the *fascēs*, axes encased in a bundle of rods, the symbols of authority, and demanded reverence for the magistrates as they passed, with cries of *animadvertite*: take note.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) The Roman language, Latin, the tongue of the glorious city.

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) The place he loves most.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) Rome, as the city of the heart.

[Book EII.I:68](#) The buildings of the Forum bright with reflected light from the gold ornaments of [Tiberius](#)'s triumph.

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) The Curia or Senate-house.

[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) The consulship as Rome's highest honour.

Romulus

The mythical founder of [Rome](#) with his twin brother [Remus](#). They were the children of [Ilia](#)/Rhea Silvia, daughter of [Aeneas](#), or in the more common tradition Numitor the deposed king of Alba Longa. Amulius, Numitor's brother usurped his throne and made Ilia a [Vestal](#) Virgin, but she was visited by [Mars](#) himself. Thrown into the [Tiber](#) the twins cradle caught in a fig tree (the *Ficus Ruminalis*) and they were rescued by a she-wolf and fed by a woodpecker, creatures sacred to Mars. Brought up by peasants the twins built the first walled settlement on the [Palatine](#). Romulus killed his brother for jumping over the wall. He reigned for forty years and then vanished, becoming the Roman god [Quirinus](#).

#### Rufinus

A friend of Ovid's, possibly Gaius Vivius Rufinus who fought in the Illyrian Wars, shared in [Tiberius](#)'s triumph of AD12 and later became proconsul in Asia and a legate of Germania Superior. The elder Pliny probably refers to this same Gaius Vivius as an authority on herbs and treatments.

[Book EI.III:1-48](#) This letter addressed to him.

[Book EIII.IV:1-56](#) This letter addressed to him.

#### Rufus (1)

An uncle of the poet's wife and a native of Fundi.

[Book EII.XI:1-28](#) Addressed explicitly to him.

#### Rufus (2)

Lucius Varius Rufus, a member of Maecenas's circle who travelled with him to Brundisium in 38BC, and friend of [Horace](#) and [Virgil](#). He wrote tragedies, such as *Thyestes* performed in 29BC after Actium, and an epic *On Death*. He edited the Aeneid after Virgil's death with Plotius Tucca.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Rutilius

Publius Rutilius Rufus, a friend of Scipio Aemilianus, consul 105BC.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) He opposed extortion by the *equites* in his province of Asia and was himself condemned to a fine he refused to accept. The alternative was exile, which he underwent in Smyrna.

### Rutuli, Rutulians

An Italic people living on the coast of [Latium](#) whose chief city was Ardea. Their king [Turnus](#) fought against the [Trojans](#) in [Virgil](#)'s Aeneid, and his people were later absorbed into [Rome](#).

[Book TI.V:1-44](#) The cause of [Nisus](#) and [Euryalus](#)'s deaths in the war.

### Sabinus

An Augustan epic and elegiac poet. He wrote replies to some of Ovid's Heroides, a poem on the calendar (perhaps) and a *Troien* (?Troy)

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Sacred Way, Via Sacra

The Via Sacra, the old street running south-east from the Forum Romanum and the Capitoline in Rome, with the Palatine on its right. It was a smart shopping street in Ovid's day and probably derived its name from buildings like the Basilica Julia nearby.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) Mentioned.

Sagaris

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Salanus

Cassius Salanus, a friend of Ovid, and [Germanicus](#), who apparently coached Germanicus in oratory.

[Book EII.V:1-40](#) Addressed to him. His approval of Ovid's works.

[Book EII.V:41-76](#) Tutored Germanicus in oratory.

Samos (1), Same

An island off the coast of Asia Minor opposite Ephesus, sacred to [Juno](#), and the birthplace of Pythagoras (at Pythagórion = Tigáni). Samos was famous for its Heraion, the great sanctuary of the goddess Hera-Juno, and for its wine. It was a major naval power in the 6th century BC, under the tyrant Polycrates, and attracted sculptors, scientists and poets, such as [Anacreon](#) and Ibycus.

Pythagoras migrated to Magna Graecia, perhaps in protest at Polycrates' rule.

[Book TIII.III:47-88](#) The birthplace of Pythagoras.

Samos (2), Samothrace

Thracia, i.e. Samothrace, the northern Aegean island, north-west of [Imbros](#) and north-east of [Lemnos](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Ovid](#) changed ships there.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) The Gemini, the twins [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#), the patron gods of travellers, were worshipped there, a cult based on a more ancient worship of the Kabeiroi, an archaic Greek equivalent.

Sappho

The lyric poetess, born c. 618BC on [Lesbos](#), where she spent her life apart from a short period in exile in [Sicily](#). Known as the 'Tenth Muse.' Her intense erotic relationships with women led to the term Sapphic, or Lesbian.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Her love poetry.

[Book TIII.VII:1-54](#) The Poetess of Lesbos, the highest standard for a woman's poetic efforts.

Sardanapalus

[Ibis:311-364](#) An unidentified, possibly mythical, King of Assyrian Nineveh, who lived in great luxury, and who when besieged by the Medes set fire to his palace killing himself and his court.

Sarmatia, Sarmatians, Sauromatae

A nomadic Indo-European people related to the [Scythians](#), and speaking a similar language. They were noted horse-breeders and horsemen. Their warrior princesses are known from Herodotus and from archaeological remains (burial mounds or *kurgans*). They may have formed the basis for the [Amazons](#). Sarmatia was used as a general name for Europe east of the Carpathians and north of the [Black Sea](#). Ovid often calls the region of [Tomis](#), Sarmatian. By his day a Sarmatian tribe, the Roxolani, had reached as far west as the [Danube](#) basin.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) Ovid's destination is a Sarmation territory.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Book TIII.III:1-46](#) [Book TIII.III:47-88](#)

[Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Book TIV.I:49-107](#) [Book TIV.VIII:1-52](#)

[Book TIV.X:93-132](#) [Book TV.I:1-48](#) [Book TV.III:1-58](#)

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) [Book EII.II:75-126](#) [Ovid](#) exiled among them.

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) Their wild mountainous locale.

[Book TII:155-206](#) They held the land on the border of the Roman area.

[Book TIII. X:1-40](#) [Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) Their carts pulled by oxen over the frozen [Danube](#).

[Book TV.I:49-80](#) His current poetry talented by comparison with anything the Sarmatian culture produces.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) Horse-riding bowmen, warlike and semi-nomadic.



[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Ovid learnt something of their language.

[Book EI.II:1-52](#) [Book EI.III:49-94](#) The poisoned arrows of the Sarmatians.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) His wish not to be buried in Sarmatian earth.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) [Ibis:597-644](#) Their skills in archery.

[Book EII.VII:47-84](#) The chilly lands of the Sarmatians.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) They appreciate the virtues of loyalty and friendship.

[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#) The Sarmatian Black Sea not a source of murex dyes.

## Saturn

Son of Earth and Heaven (Uranus) ruler of the universe in the Golden Age. Mother Earth persuaded her sons to attack Uranus, and depose him. Saturn the youngest was given a sickle and castrated Uranus. The [Furies](#) sprang from the shed blood. Saturn was deposed by his three sons [Jupiter](#), [Neptune](#) and [Pluto](#) who ruled Heaven, Ocean and the Underworld respectively. He was banished to [Tarturus](#). He was the father also of [Juno](#), [Ceres](#) and [Vesta](#) by [Ops](#).

[Ibis:209-250](#) In astrology a maleficent planet of old age, duty, grief and cold.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Castrated his father, Uranus.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Great grandfather of [Asclepius](#) (the son of [Apollo](#), son of [Jupiter](#)-Zeus, son of Saturn).

## Saturnia

A name for [Juno](#), daughter of [Saturn](#).

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) She hated [Aeneas](#) and supported [Turnus](#).

Satyrs, Satyri

Demi-gods. Woodland deities of male human form but with goats' ears, tails, legs and budding horns. Sexually lustful. They were followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) The male followers of Bacchus.

[Book EIII.III:1-108](#) [Marsyas](#), the Satyr.

[Ibis:41-104](#) Powers invoked by Ovid.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Mentioned as a subject of verse in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Sciron

[Ibis:365-412](#) A brigand of the Isthmus who used to kick travellers into the sea. [Theseus](#) served him in the same way.

Scylla (1)

The daughter of Phorcys and the nymph Crataeis, remarkable for her beauty. [Circe](#) or Amphitrite, jealous of [Neptune](#)'s love for her changed her into a dog-like sea monster, 'the Render', with six heads and twelve feet. Each head had three rows of close-set teeth. Her cry was a muted yelping. She seized sailors and cracked their bones before slowly swallowing them. She threatened [Ulysses](#) men and destroyed six of them, and threatened [Aeneas](#)'s ships. Finally she was turned into a rock. (The rock projects from the Calabrian coast near the village of Scilla,

opposite Cape Peloro on Sicily. See Ernle Bradford 'Ulysses Found' Ch.20)

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the 'unbelievable' myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) [Book EIV.X:1-34](#) She terrorised [Sicilian](#) waters.

[Ibis:365-412](#) She attacked Ulysses' men.

## Scylla (2)

The daughter of King Nisus of Megara, who loved Minos. She decided to betray the city to him. She cut off the purple lock of Nisus's hair that guaranteed the safety of his kingdom and his life. Minos rejected her and she was changed into the rock dove, *columba livia*, with its purple breast and red legs, while her father was changed into the sea eagle, *haliaeetus albicilla*. Her name Ciris, from *κείρω*, 'I cut', reflects her shearing of Nisus's hair, as does the purple breast of the bird. But she is also an embodiment of the Cretan Great Goddess, Car, Ker or Q're, to whom doves were sacred. Pausanias I xxxix says that Kar founded Megara, Nisus's city and was king there. The acropolis was named Karia, and Kar built a great hall to Demeter ([Ceres](#)) there, Pausanias I xxxx. His tumulus was decorated with shell-stone sacred to the goddess at the command of an oracle, Pausanias I xxxxiii. The rock dove no doubt nested on the rocks of the citadel and coastline. Pausanias II xxxiv says that Cape Skyllaion (Skyli) was named after Scylla. Hair cutting reflects ancient ritual and

the Curetes were the ‘young men with shaved hair’ the devotees of the moon-goddess Cer, whose weapon clashing drove off evil spirits at eclipses and during the rites. See *Metamorphoses* Book VIII:1

[Book TII:361-420](#) She did what she did through love of Minos.

### Scythi, Scythia

Originally a nomadic people occupying the region between the [Borysthenes](#) (Dneiper) and the [Tanais](#) (Don), later used for all the inhabitants from northern [Thrace](#), across southern Russia to the Caspian Sea, and including the [Getae](#) and [Sarmatians](#). They were basically nomadic peoples, skilled in horses and archery, using hit and run fighting tactics. Ovid uses Scythian as a general term for the region of his exile.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) [Book TIV.I:1-48](#) [Ovid](#)’s destination.

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) Their wild mountainous locale.

[Book TIII.II:1-30](#) He was destined to see Scythia.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) [Book TV.X:1-53](#) Ovid calls the [Black Sea](#) region, Scythian. He talks about the Scythian marshes, though much was also wooded inland.

[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) [Book TIV.VI:1-50](#) [Book TV.X:1-53](#)

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) [Book EIII.VII:1-40](#) Ovid is among the hostile Scythian tribes.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) He contemplates Tomis being his home now, rather than a temporary resting place.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) The languages of the region.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) The [Danube](#) is Scythian.

[Book TV.II:45-79](#) The Scythian waters he has sailed.  
[Book TV.VI:1-46](#) The Scythian air, unfavourable to him.  
[Book EI.I:37-80](#) [Book EI.VII:1-70](#) [Book EII.I:68](#) The Scythians armed with bows.  
[Book EI.II:101-150](#) His wish not to be buried in Scythian earth.  
[Book EI.III:1-48](#) The place he most detests.  
[Book EII.II:75-126](#) A place of savagery.  
[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) [Tauris](#) considered Scythian by Ovid.  
[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) He sends a gift of Scythian arrows to [Paullus](#).  
[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) His sixth year there.  
[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) The hostile climate.

### Secular Games, Ludi saeculares

The centennial games (17BC) celebrated by [Augustus](#) in honour of [Apollo](#) and other gods as a symbol of the regeneration of [Rome](#) under the new regime. It was promoted as a revival of ancient customs.

[Book TII.I:1](#) Mentioned.

### Semele

The daughter of [Cadmus](#), loved by [Jupiter](#). The mother of [Bacchus](#) (Dionysus). (See the painting by Gustave Moreau – Jupiter and Semele – in the Gustave Moreau Museum, Paris) She was consumed by Jupiter's fire having been deceived by [Juno](#). Her unborn child Bacchus was rescued.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Loved by Jupiter.

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) Her father rescued the child.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) The mother of Bacchus, consumed by Jupiter's fire.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Sister of [Ino](#).

[Ibis:465-540](#) Sister of Autonoe.

### Servius

An erotic poet, probably of the Republican period. Pliny the Younger refers to such a poet, as does [Horace](#) (Sat. 1.10.86). Speculatively the son or grandson of Servius Sulpicius Rufus, and so the father or brother of Sulpicia the poetess.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His verse.

### Sestos

The Greek town on the European shore of the [Hellespont](#) (Dardanelles) at its narrowest point opposite [Abydos](#). Famous as the crossing point for Xerxes' invading army in 480BC as it moved from Asia Minor to attack Greece. The city was later controlled by Athens and remained important in Roman times, but declined after the founding of Byzantium (now Istanbul). The home of Hero the priestess who loved Leander of Abydos. He swam across to her, until finally drowning.

[Book Tl.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva*'s route.

### Severus

Cornelius Severus an epic poet who wrote on the Sicilian wars between [Octavian](#) and [Pompey](#) (38-36BC). He was a

member of [Messalla](#)'s circle, mentioned by Seneca and Quintilian.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) If the Severus addressed here is the same Severus the poet as EIV.II:3-4 it is hard to reconcile with the later poem's statement that Ovid has not mentioned Severus's name before. Either the two poems are out of chronological order, or we have here a different Severus.

[Book EIV.II:1-50](#) This poem explicitly addressed to him.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Sibyl

The priestess of [Apollo](#) in the temple at Cumae built by [Daedalus](#). She prophesied perched on or over a tripod. She guided [Aeneas](#) through the underworld and showed him the golden bough that he must pluck from the tree. She was offered immortality by Phoebus Apollo, but forgot to ask also for lasting youth, dooming her to wither away until she was merely a voice.

[Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) Her long life.

### Sicily

Sicania, Trinacri. The Mediterranean island, west of Italy.

[Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) [Phalaris](#) was tyrant at Acragas.

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Visited by [Ovid](#) and [Macer](#).

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) The straits of Messina terrorised by [Scylla](#).

[Ibis:163-208](#) The flowery meadows of [Hybla](#).

[Ibis:413-464](#) [Achaemenides](#) abandoned there.

[Ibis:597-644](#) The [giants](#) were imprisoned beneath the island.

### Sicyon

A town of the Peloponnese west of [Corinth](#) on the Asopus River. (The home of the sculptor Lysippos. It is near modern Vasilikó.)

[Ibis:311-364](#) The incident referred to is obscure.

[Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) Famous for its olives (Pausanias X.32.110)

### Sidon

The city and port of the Phoenicians in the Lebanon, north of [Tyre](#). Home of [Europa](#). Famous like Tyre for its purple dyes, and for blown glass. Referred to by [Homer](#).

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Sidonian purple cloth.

[Book TIV.III:1-48](#) Used for the Phoenicians who navigated by the stars, including the constellation of the [Little Bear](#), Ursa Minor.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Ibis:413-464](#) Home city of [Cadmus](#).

### Sinis

[Ibis:365-412](#) A brigand living at the narrowest point of the Isthmus who tied travellers to bent trees and tore them apart. [Theseus](#) served him in the same way.

### Sinope

A coastal city of Paphlagonia on the [Black Sea](#).



[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Diogenes](#) the Cynic's native city.

Sinti

A [Thracian](#) tribe living near the River [Strymon](#).

[Book TIV.I:1-48](#) Only mentioned here by Ovid, perhaps a textual corruption.

Sirens

The daughters of Acheloüs, the Acheloïdes, companions of Proserpina, turned to woman-headed birds, or women with the legs of birds, and luring the sailors of passing ships with their sweet song. They searched for Proserpine on land, and were turned to birds so that they could search for her by sea. (There are various lists of their names, but Ernle Bradford suggests two triplets: Thelxinoë, the Enchantress; Aglaope, She of the Beautiful Face, and Peisinoë, the Seductress: and his preferred triplet Parthenope, the Virgin Face; Ligeia, the Bright Voice; and Leucosia, the White One – see 'Ulysses Found' Ch.17. Robert Graves in the index to the 'The Greek Myths' adds Aglaophonos, Molpe, Raidne, Teles, and Thelxepeia.) (See Draper's painting – Ulysses and the Sirens – Ferens Art Gallery, Hull, England, and Gustave Moreau's watercolour in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard) [Aeneas](#) passed their island, between the Aeolian Islands and Cumae. (This was traditionally Capri, or more likely one of the five Galli islets, the *Sirenusae*, at the entrance to the Gulf of Salerno). See Homer's *Odyssey*, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book V:533 and Book XIV:75

[Book EIV.X:1-34](#) They lured [Ulysses](#)' men with their singing.

### Sisenna

Lucius Cornelius Sisenna, praetor in 78BC, and author of a Roman history praised by [Varro](#) and Cicero, and also the translator of the [Milesian](#) tales of [Aristides](#) (2nd Century BC)

[Book TII:421-470](#) His translation contained coarse material.

### Sisyphus

[Ibis:163-208](#) Founder of [Corinth](#), the son of [Aeolus](#). He was condemned to continually roll a huge stone up a hill in Hades, from which it rolled to the bottom again,

### Sithonius

Of the central peninsula of Chalcidice, hence [Thracian](#). A Thracian people, the Sithonians.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) Ruled by [Rhoemetalces](#).

### Smyrna

A major Greek city on the coast of Lydia.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Rutilius](#) exiled there. A desirable Greek colony.

### Socrates

The Athenian Greek philosopher (c469-399BC), Plato's teacher. An ethical philosopher with an emphasis on logic,

and the ‘Socratic method’ of interrogation to reveal inconsistency. He was charged with atheism and corruption of the young and was condemned to die by drinking hemlock. See Plato’s *Phaedo*, *Symposium* etc.

[Book TV.XII:1-68](#) Accused by [Anytus](#), he showed resilience under stress.

[Ibis:465-540](#) He died by drinking hemlock.

[Ibis:541-596](#) The Delphic oracle acclaimed him as the wisest of men, which he took to mean that he knew his own ignorance. [Anytus](#) was one of his accusers.

## Sol

The sun-god, Helios, son of Hyperion. Identified with Phoebus [Apollo](#).

[Book TI.VIII:1-50](#) The sun, with his chariot and team of horses.

[Book TII:361-420](#) His horses swerved in horror at [Atreus](#)’s revenge on his brother [Thyestes](#) (killing and serving his children cooked at a banquet).

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) The Sun at dawn heralded by [Lucifer](#).

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) The father of [Phaethon](#).

## Sphinx

The mythical hybrid monster with human head (usually female), and lion’s body. Imported from Egypt, and initially a monster, including that which questioned [Oedipus](#), the Sphinx eventually became a winged, musical, harbinger of justice.

[Book TIV.VII:1-26](#) Ovid sceptically lists the ‘unbelievable’ myths that he would have to believe in first before he could believe in this friends disloyalty.

[Ibis:365-412](#) Killed those who failed to answer her riddles.

Sterope, Asterope

One of the seven stars of the [Pleiades](#) constellation.

[Book TI.XI:1-44](#) [Ovid](#) uses it for the constellation.

Stheneboea

The wife of Proetus of Argos. See [Bellerephon](#).

Strophius

The father of [Pylades](#).

[Book EII.VI:1-38](#) His son Pylades famous for his loyalty to [Orestes](#).

Strymon

A river in [Thrace](#) and Macedonia.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) Its snow-covered landscape.

Styx

A river of the underworld, with its lakes and pools, used to mean the underworld or the state of death itself. [Arethusa](#) passed its streams while journeying through the deep caverns from Elis to [Sicily](#). This is the Arcadian river Styx near Nonacris. It forms the falls of Mavroneri, plunging six hundred feet down the cliffs of the Chelmos ridge to join the River Crathis. Pausanias says (VIII xvii), that

Hesiod (*Theogony* 383) makes Styx the daughter of Ocean and the wife of the Titan Pallas. Their children were Victory and Strength. Epimenedes makes her the mother of Echidna. Pausanias says the waters of the river dissolve glass and stone etc.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) [Ibis:541-596](#) [Ibis:597-644](#) Being sent to the Stygian waters a synonym for being put to death.

[Book TIV.V:1-34](#) [Book TV.II:45-79](#) [Book EI.III:1-48](#)  
[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Book EII.III:1-48](#) [Ibis:135-162](#)  
[Ibis:209-250](#) The waters of oblivion, and (spiritual or physical) death.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) The forum or courthouse of the dead.

[Book EIII.V:1-58](#) [Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) [Pontus](#) is metaphorically close to the Styx.

[Ibis:41-104](#) The gods swore oaths on the waters of Styx.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) The [Giants](#) sent there.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) Preferable to the Danube.

## Suillius

Publius Suillius Rufus, the husband of Ovid's stepdaughter [Perilla](#). He was consul in 41 or 43 AD, and became proconsul in 52 or 53AD. He was accused of corruption and twice banished, by [Tiberius](#) in 24AD and again in 58AD. See Tacitus Annals IV:31, XI:4f: XIII:4f. He was quaestor to [Germanicus](#).

[Book EIV.VIII:1-48](#) [Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) This letter addressed to him, exploring the possibilities of appealing to Germanicus.

### Sulmo

The chief town of the Paeligni, and [Ovid](#)'s birthplace, about ninety miles from [Rome](#). Modern Sulmona.

[Book TIV.X:1-40](#) [Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) His birthplace.

### Syene

A town on the upper reaches of the Nile, modern Aswan, at the confines of the Empire.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) A remote part of the Empire.

### Symplegades

See [Cyaneae](#). The clashing rocks.

### Syracuse

The largest city of [Sicily](#). A seaport in the south-east of the island on the Ionian sea. Founded by Greeks from [Corinth](#) in 734BC, it became an important cultural centre in the 5th century BC. Theocritus the poet and Archimedes the scientist and mathematician were born here. It fell to the Romans in 212BC.

[Book EIV.III:1-58](#) [Dionysius](#) II its tyrant.

### Syrtes

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) A dangerous series of sandbanks on the north coast of Africa between Tunis and Cyrene, in the gulfs of Sidra and Gabes. Pirates infested the neighbouring coasts.

### Talaus

[Ibis:311-364](#) There was a Talaus, King of Argos, who married Lysianassa (or alternatively Lysimache). The reference is obscure.

Talus, Talos

[Ibis:465-540](#) Talus, the son of Perdix, was a pupil of [Daedalus](#) and invented the saw. He was killed by Daedalus in a fit of jealousy, and thrown from the Athenian citadel, but Pallas turned him into the partridge, which takes its name from his mother, *perdix perdix*.

Tanais

The river and river-god of [Scythia](#). The River Don.

[Book TIII.IV:1-46](#) The border for [Ovid](#) of the [Roman](#) region round [Tomis](#).

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea. The boundary of Asia and Europe.

Tantalus

The king of Phrygia, son of [Jupiter](#), father of [Pelops](#) and [Niobe](#). He served his son Pelops to the gods at a banquet and was punished by eternal thirst in Hades. He was the great-grandfather of Menelaus, called Tantalides.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Ibis:413-464](#) Father of Pelops.

[Ibis:163-208](#) His punishment.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Menelaus was his descendant.

Taprobanes

Ceylon.

[Book EI.V:43- 86](#) A remote part of the Empire.

Tarpeius, Tarpeian Rock

The cliff-edge in [Rome](#) from which certain criminals (murderers and traitors) were thrown. Ovid calls the whole [Capitoline](#) Hill, Tarpeian, but strictly it applied to the western cliff, the Tarpeian Rock, named from Spurius Tarpeius who commanded the citadel in the Sabine War or his daughter Tarpeia who betrayed the citadel to the Sabines or from Lucius Tarpeius whom [Romulus](#) caused to be hurled from the rock. Not located it was placed by ancient sources close to the Roman Forum, the Temple of Saturn, or the Temple of Jupiter, which places it south-west of the Capitol.

[Book EII.I:68](#) Climbed by the victor in a triumph.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) [Augustus](#) is also [Jupiter](#) Capitolinus, the Tarpeian Thunderer.

[Book EIV.IV:1-50](#) [Book EIV.VIII:1-48](#) The Tarpeian Altars were those of the Temple of [Jupiter](#) Optimus Maximus on the [Capitoline](#).

[Book EIV.IX:1-54](#) Scene of consular inaugurations.

Tartarus, Tartara

The underworld. The infernal regions ruled by [Pluto](#) (Dis) or specifically the region where the wicked were punished.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) The ocean abysses might touch there.

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) Ruled by Pluto.

[Ibis:541-596](#) The infernal deep.



## Tauri

A people of the Crimea, the Tauric Chersonese.

[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) The site of ritual human sacrifice to [Diana](#).

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) The Tauric region and people mentioned.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) Called [Scythian](#) by Ovid.

## Telegonus

The son of [Ulysses](#) and [Circe](#), who unwittingly killed his own father Ulysses in one variant of myth.

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) A parricide.

Telemus

[Ibis:251-310](#) A soothsayer, son of Eurymus, who prophesied [Polyphemus](#)'s blinding by [Odysseus](#). See Homer's *Odyssey* IX:506

Telephus

King of Teuthrantia in Mysia, son of [Hercules](#) and the nymph Auge. He was suckled by a deer on Mount Parthenius. He was wounded and healed by the touch of [Achilles](#)'s spear at [Troy](#).

[Book TI.I:70-128](#) [Augustus](#) like Achilles might heal where he wounded.

[Book TII.I:1](#) Poetry might heal where it too wounded.

[Book TV.II:1-44](#) Needed to be healed by the hand that harmed him.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) Healed by Achilles' spear that wounded him. King of the Mysians.

Tempyra

A southern [Thracian](#) town near the sea, on the Via Egnatia, the transcontinental road, from where Ovid continued his journey to [Tomis](#) overland. He would have disembarked at Salé or Zoné having sailed from [Samothece](#). Zoné is traditionally where [Orpheus](#) enchanted the trees and animals with his lyre.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Ovid](#) disembarked there.

Terence

Publius Terentius Afer (c195-159BC) an ex-slave from North Africa, born in Carthage, who adapted the plays of [Menander](#) and Apollodorus for the Roman stage, often blending material from different plays, in a sophisticated and realistic manner. Six plays are extant.

[Book TII:313-360](#) His character unlike his works.

Teretei

A Thracian tribe.

[Book TII:155-206](#) A tribe of the [Danube](#) region.

Tereus

The king of [Thrace](#), husband of [Procne](#). He brought her sister, [Philomela](#), to stay with her, while conceiving a frenzied desire for the sister. He violated the girl and cut out her tongue, and told Procne she is dead. Procne then served him the flesh of his murdered son Itys at a banquet. Pursuing the sisters in his desire for revenge, he was turned into a bird, the hoopoe, *upupa epops*, with its distinctive feathered crest and elongated beak. Its rapid, far-carrying, 'hoo-hoo-hoo' call is interpreted as 'pou-pou-pou' meaning 'where? where? where?'.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Changed to a bird, through his lust.

[Ibis:413-464](#) The fate of Itys.

Teucer

The son of Telamon, king of Salamis, and Hesione, half-brother of [Ajax](#) the Greater, cousin of [Achilles](#), and one of the greatest of the bowmen at the [Trojan](#) war. He was

driven into exile by his father for failing to avenge Ajax. Teucer then founded Salamis on Cyprus in memory of his native city.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Exiled, he fled to Cyprus, sacred to [Venus](#).

Teucri

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) The Trojans so called from their first king Teucer, a Cretan.

Thalia

The [Muse](#) of comedy and light verse, used symbolically for poetry in general.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) [Book TV.IX:1-38](#) The Muse of Ovid's early lighter verse.

Thamyris

[Ibis:251-310](#) The poet of [Thrace](#) who fell in love with Hyacinthus the Spartan prince. [Apollo](#) was a rival for the boy, and hearing Thamyris boast that he rivalled the [Muses](#) in song, he told them and Thamyris was blinded by them, and robbed of his voice and memory.

Thebes, Thebae

The oldest and most famous city of Boeotia, founded by [Cadmus](#). The seven-gated city suffered as a result of its support for Persia, but gained power over Boeotia in the Peloponnesian War. The Thebans were at their zenith 371-362BC, when they defeated Sparta under Epaminondes, and until he was killed at the battle of Mantinea dominated the mainland. Destroyed by [Alexander](#) the Great after a revolt (335) the city was rebuilt but never regained its former glory.

[Book TII:313-360](#) Attacked by the ‘Seven against Thebes’ see Aeschylus’s play. [Eteocles](#) fought against his brother [Polynices](#) for control of the city.

[Book TIII.III:47-88](#) [Antigone](#) buried her brother Polynices despite King Creon’s forbidding him to be buried.

[Book TV.III:1-58](#) [Capaneus](#) was one of the attackers in the War of the Seven Against Thebes.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Ibis:413-464](#) Founded by Cadmus.

[Book EIV.VIII:49-90](#) Famous through the poets.

[Ibis:465-540](#) City of [Pentheus](#).

Themistocles

Son of Neocle. He was the great [Athenian](#) leader who defeated the Persians at Salamis. He was exiled c474-472BC.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) He went to Argos after exile from Athens.

Thermodon

A river in [Pontus](#), frequented by [Amazons](#). The modern Terme Tchai east of the [Halys](#).

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Theromedon, Therodamas

A [Scythian](#) chieftain, or alternatively a king of [Libya](#), who fed lions on human flesh. [Ovid](#) refers to him in *Ibis*.

[Book EI.II:101-150](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) An example of cruelty.

Thersites

An ugly abusive Greek at the Trojan War, killed by [Achilles](#) for mocking the latter's grief over the dead warrior princess Penthesilea.

[Book EIII.IX:1-56](#) [Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) His ugliness.

Theseus

King of [Athens](#), son of Aegeus, hence [Aegides](#). His mother was Aethra, daughter of Pittheus king of Troezen. Aegeus had lain with her in the temple. His father had hidden a sword, and a pair of sandals, under a stone (The Rock of Theseus) as a trial, which he lifted, and he made his way to Athens, cleansing the Isthmus of robbers along the way (Periphetes, Sinis, Sciron and Procrustes). He killed the [Minotaur](#) with help from [Ariadne](#) who gave him the clue that he unwound to mark his trail, subsequently abandoning her. His friendship for [Pirithous](#) whom he accompanied to the underworld was proverbial.

[Book TI.III:47-102](#) [Book TI.V:1-44](#) [Book TI. IX:1-66](#)

[Book EII.III:1-48](#) [Book EIV.X:35-84](#) Proverbial friendship. The visit to the Underworld.

[Book TII:361-420](#) His many love-affairs.

[Book TV.IV:1-50](#) A paragon of friendship. Called [Aegides](#) from his father.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) His fame lived on.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) [Albinovanus](#) writing about him.

[Ibis:365-412](#) His cleansing of the brigands from the Isthmus of [Corinth](#).

[Ibis:413-464](#) Possibly Theseus is intended here.

[Ibis:465-540](#) He gave the wrong signal to his father on returning from Crete.

Thessalus

[Ibis:251-310](#) Perhaps Thessalus son of [Hercules](#) by Chalciope. Ovid has him leap from [Ossa](#) to his death. Alternatively, but less likely given the previous verses concerning Hercules, Thessalus who was a son of [Medea](#), who escaped death after Medea sacrificed her sons on the altar of [Jupiter](#), later reigned over Iolcus, and gave his name to all [Thessaly](#).

Thessaly

The region in northern Greece. Its old name was Haemonia, hence Haemonius, Thessalian.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) [Achilles](#)' homeland, where [Patroclus](#) sought refuge.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) [Pelias](#) was King of Thessaly.

Thoas, Thoans

The king of [Lemnos](#), son of Andraemon, and father of Hypsipyle. Thoas was king when the Lemnian women murdered their menfolk because of their adultery with [Thracian](#) girls. His life was spared because his daughter Hypsipyle set him adrift in an oarless boat. He later ruled over the Thracians, when [Orestes](#) rescued [Iphigenia](#).

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) Recognised the loyalty of [Pylades](#) to Orestes.



[Book TIV.IV:43-88](#) [Book EIII.II:1-110](#) [Ibis:365-412](#) His kingdom in the [Tauric](#) Chersonese.

### Thrace, Thracian

Roughly the area including north-east Greece, European Turkey as far as the [Bosphorus](#), and the southern part of Romania. In Ovid's day the western boundary was on the River Nestus, and the northern along the Haemus range, while its coastline ran from the Macedonian Aegean through [Propontis](#) to the [Black Sea](#).

[Book TII:207-252](#) A frontier area. A Thracian rebellion was put down by Lucius Piso in 11AD.

[Book TIII.XIV:1-52](#) The languages of the region.

[Book EII.IX:39-80](#) Though flattering its king, Ovid implies the country is too barbarous for good poetry to be expected from it.

[Ibis:135-162](#) Thracian arrows.

[Book EIV.V:1-46](#) Frozen Thrace.

[Ibis:365-412](#) [Diomedes](#) the cruel Thracian king.

[Ibis:597-644](#) The River [Strymon](#) in Thrace, hence Thracian.

### Thybris

A poetic name for the River Tiber on which [Rome](#) is situated, after King Tiberinus who drowned there.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) Noted for its yellow sands, carried by the waters.

[Ibis:135-162](#) Its waters.

[Ibis:465-540](#) King Tiberinus drowned there.

## Thyestes

The son of [Pelops](#) and [Hippodamia](#), brother of [Atreus](#), and father of [Aesgithus](#). The feud between the brothers over the kingship of Mycenae was long and complex, and gave rise to a network of myths. Thyestes committed adultery with [Aerope](#), Atreus' wife, and Atreus in revenge killed Thyestes' children, cooked the flesh, and served it to him at a banquet. Later Thyestes' son Aegisthus killed Atreus, and subsequently [Agamemnon](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) He raped his sister-in-law [Aerope](#).

[Book EIV.VI:1-50](#) At the time of the fatal banquet the horses of the sun are supposed to have turned his chariot backwards in its course, in horror.

[Ibis:311-364](#) Pelopia his daughter was a priestess at [Sicyon](#). He raped her, while disguised.

[Ibis:541-596](#) The banquet.

## Thynias

A promontory and small town on a bay of the [Black Sea](#) coast of [Thrace](#), about thirty miles north of Salmydessos, and somewhat less than two hundred miles south of [Tomis](#).

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) On the *Minerva's* course.

## Tiberius

The Emperor, Tiberius Claudius Nero (42BC-37AD), the elder son of [Livia](#) by her first husband. [Augustus](#) adopted the boy and appointed him as his successor after the early

deaths of other candidates. He was also Augustus's stepson through his marriage to the elder [Julia](#), Augustus's daughter by Scribonia. Tiberius adopted [Germanicus](#) as his son who thus became a brother to the younger [Drusus](#). [Book TII:155-206](#) [Ovid](#) offers a prayer for his safety. Tiberius is still warring in [Pannonia](#).

[Book TII:207-252](#) Tiberius and [Germanicus](#) defeated the Pannonian and Illyrian rebels in the second [Illyrian](#) war of the summer of 9AD.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) Ovid hopes for Tiberius's success on the Rhine. After the loss of Varus and his legions in the Teutoberger Forest defeat of AD9, Tiberius was transferred to Germany and remained there AD10-12 with limited success. His eventual triumph was for the Pannonian campaign and was celebrated 23rd October AD12.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) Ovid hopes for his success in Germany, and anticipates the triumph of Germanicus's war, and Augustus's strategy.

[Book EII.I:68](#) The delayed celebration of Tiberius's Pannonian triumph see above. Tiberius's offerings were to the goddess '*Justitia Augusta*: Augustus's Justice'.

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) [Book EII.VIII:37-76](#) Tiberius, Augustus's adopted son and heir apparent.

[Book EII.II:75-126](#) Tiberius's sons Germanicus (adopted) and Drusus were involved in the Pannonian Triumph, attended by the brothers [Messalinus](#) and [Cotta](#).

[Book EII.VIII:1-36](#) Cotta Maximus sent Ovid portraits of Augustus, Tiberius and Livia. Even in this eulogy of the

Imperial family there is a mischievous sub-text. Tiberius's character and paternity are touched on.

[Book EIII.IV:57-115](#) Ovid anticipates a second German triumph for Tiberius.

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) Tiberius as Augustus's adopted son worshipped by Ovid as divine.

### Tibullus

Albius Tibullus (c.54- 19BC) the elegiac poet and friend of [Ovid](#), whose patron was [Messalla](#) Corvinus. He accompanied Messalla on a campaign in Gaul in 31 for which Messalla celebrated a triumph in 27. His lovers were named Delia (her real name was possibly Plania) and Nemesis in his poems.

[Book TII:421-470](#) Ovid paraphrases parts of Tibullus I:2, I:5 and I:6 in which the poet becomes the victim of the very deceits he had taught his mistress Delia.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Briefly a member of the same poetic circles as Ovid. He followed [Gallus](#) in order of seniority.

[Book TV.I:1-48](#) A writer of love poetry.

### Tibur

The modern Tivoli, a fashionable resort eighteen miles east-north-east of [Rome](#) in a bend of the River Anio as it cascaded into the valley below. It was noted for the beauty of its countryside and its orchards.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) A pleasant place of exile for ancient Romans.

Ticidas, Tida

A Roman elegiac poet, contemporary with [Catullus](#), referred to by Messalla in a letter but not under his patronage. He wrote an epithalamium in Catullus's style as well as epigrams and love poems in which he celebrated his mistress [Metella](#) under the pseudonym [Perilla](#).

[Book TII:421-470](#) His love poetry.

Tiphys

The son of Phorbas, a Boeotian and the mythical helmsman of the [Argo](#) on the voyage to win the Golden Fleece.

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) His skill is displayed in rough seas.

[Book EI.IV:1-58](#) Steersman of the Argo.

Tiresias

The [Theban](#) sage who spent seven years as a woman and decided the dispute between [Juno](#) and [Jupiter](#) as to which partner gained more enjoyment in love-making. He was blinded by Juno but given the power of prophecy by Jupiter.

[Ibis:251-310](#) Blinded.

Tisiphone

One of the [Furies](#), a symbol of madness.

[Book TIV.IX:1-32](#) Madness.

Tityrus

A shepherd's name, a symbol of pastoral poetry.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Written of by [Passer](#)(?) a poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Tityus

A giant, son of Ge (Earth) whose home was traditionally located in [Euboea](#), and who attempted violence to Latona ([Leto](#)), and suffered in Hades. Vultures fed on his liver, which was continually renewed.

[Book EI.II:1-52](#) [Ibis:163-208](#) His torment.

Tomis

The [Moesian](#) town, on the west (or 'left') coast of the [Black Sea](#), to which [Ovid](#) was banished, an ancient colony of [Miletus](#) (6th century BC). The modern *Constantza*, Romania's major port, it is on an elevated and rocky part of the coast, about sixty-five miles southwest of the nearest mouth of the [Danube](#), in that part of Romania called the Dobrudja. The townspeople were a mix of half-breed Greeks and barbarians chiefly of [Getic](#), Indo-European stock. They dressed in skins, wore hair and beard long, and went about armed. They were expert horsemen and archers. The languages spoken were Greek, Getic and [Sarmatian](#). Ovid learnt the language and wrote a poem in Getic. The country round Tomis is flat and marshy. The winters are severe with below zero temperatures (-20 to -30 deg. Fahrenheit). Tomis was a border garrison and subject to constant attack, and Ovid had to play his minor part in its defence.

[Book TI.II:75-110](#) [Book TIV.X:93-132](#) Ovid's destination is Tomis and its people, in their 'unknown world'.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) The *Minerva*'s destination, and his place of exile.

[Book TIII. IX:1-34](#) The source of Tomis's name. Ovid uses the tale of how [Medea](#) dismembered [Absyrtus](#) her brother and scattered his limbs behind their ship. King [Aeetes](#) following gathered up the remains. The cutting up (τομή) was a false etymology for the name.

[Book TV.VII:1-68](#) A description of the [Getae](#) and the cheerless environment. All things are relative. The contrast in Ovid's mind is between barbarism and civilisation and that leads him to see the worst side of the region, through his antipathy to its people and culture.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) Ovid portrays the local people as barbaric savages who have lost the culture of the original Greek colony, and apply rough justice. They wear Persian trousers, dress in sheepskins, are unable to understand Latin, and are malicious in their speech about Ovid himself. Not a picture likely to arouse their enthusiasm for him if the contents got back to them, as we shall see later!

[Book EI.I:1-36](#) [Book EIII.IV:1-56](#) [Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) His established place of exile.

[Book EI.II:53-100](#) Limited knowledge of the region, in Rome.

[Book EI.VI:1-54](#) [Book EIII.1:1-66](#) He fears being entombed there.

[Book EIII.VIII:1-24](#) The women there have not learnt the art of spinning wool.

[Book EIV.IX:89-134](#) [Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) The inhabitants of Tomis, whom Ovid here treats with respect.

Tonans

[Book EII.II:39-74](#) The Thunderer, an epithet of [Jupiter](#).

Trinacria

[Book TV.XIII:1-34](#) [Book EIV.XV:1-42](#) [Sicily](#), the three cornered island.

Trinacrius

An Augustan poet who wrote a *Perseis*.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Triptolemus

The son of Celeus, king of Eleusis in Attica. [Ceres](#) sent him to take the gift of her crops to Lynceus king of the [Scythian](#) barbarians. He was attacked, but saved by Ceres.

See *Metamorphoses* Book V:642

[Book TIII.VIII:1-42](#) His chariot.

[Book EIV.II:1-50](#) Patron of the harvest.

Trivia

An epithet of [Diana](#), worshipped at the meeting of three ways, 'Diana of the crossroads'.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) The [Tauric](#) Diana.

Troesmis



A [Moesian](#) town (modern Iglita) near the [Danube](#) just above the delta, and possibly a poem by [Sabinus](#) on its capture by [Flaccus](#).

[Book EIV.IX:55-88](#) Re-taken by Flaccus.

Troy, Troad

The ancient city destroyed in the ten-war year with the Greeks, and identified by Schliemann with Hissarlik four miles inland from the Aegean end of the Hellespont. The archaeological evidence would indicate destruction by fire between 1300 and 1200BC. The story of the War is told in [Homer](#)'s Iliad, and the aftermath of it and the Greek return in the Odyssey. The Troad is the rocky north-west area of Asia Minor along the Hellespont, dominated by the [Ida](#) range, traditionally believed to have been ruled by Troy.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Supported and opposed by various gods in the war.

[Book TI.III:1-46](#) Her appearance in defeat.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) Called Ilium from the citadel of Troy.

[Book TII:313-360](#) [Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A suitable subject for epic poetry.

[Book TII:361-420](#) [Ganymede](#) of Troy.

[Book TIII.V:1-56](#) [Achilles](#) the greatest warrior there.

[Book TIV.III:49-84](#) [Hector](#)'s unhappy city.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) [Book TV.XIV:1-46](#) [Protesilaus](#) the first Greek to touch its shore in the Trojan War.

[Book TV.X:1-53](#) The siege and war lasted ten years.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) [Aeneas](#)'s Trojan fleet.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) [Ajax](#) at Troy.

[Ibis:251-310](#) A troubled people.

Turnus

King of the [Rutuli](#) in Italy, who opposed [Aeneas](#). His capital was at Ardea, south of [Rome](#), near modern Anzio. See [Virgil](#)'s Aeneid, where he loses Lavinia his betrothed to Aeneas and is ultimately killed by him.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Supported by [Juno](#).

[Book TI. IX:1-66](#) [Euryalus](#) and [Nisus](#) died after entering his camp, and he is said to have wept at this death of loyal friends.

Turranius

An Augustan tragic poet.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Tuscus

An Augustan poet who wrote a *Phyllis*. See Propertius II 22.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

Tuticanus

A friend of Ovid, and an epic poet. He apparently reworked part of the Odyssey in his *Phaeacid*.

[Book EIV.XII:1-50](#) This letter addressed to him, a childhood friend. Ovid plays with the difficulty of handling the name Tūtīcānus in elegiac verse. It can only

be done by splitting the name or scanning it in ridiculous ways.

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) A second letter addressed to him.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

### Tydeus

The King of [Calydon](#) and father of [Diomedes](#), and one of the Seven against [Thebes](#). Mortally wounded he gnawed on the skull and ate the brains of his opponent, incurring [Athene](#)'s anger. She allowed him to die for his barbarity, having been prepared to save him and render him immortal.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) Exiled, he fled to [Adrastus](#) at Argos.

[Book EII.II:1-38](#) Diomedes the Greek hero, who wounded [Venus](#) and [Mars](#) in the Trojan War, was his son.

[Ibis:311-364](#) Diomedes loved [Helen](#) whom Tydeus would have blushed to have as a daughter in law.

[Ibis:413-464](#) His fate.

### Tyndareus

The husband of Leda, hence her children are the Tyndaridae. (Castor and Pollux, Helen, [Clytemnestra](#))

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Book EI.VII:1-70](#) The Gemini, [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#), worshipped at [Samothrace](#).

[Book TII:361-420](#) Clytemnestra, a daughter of Tyndareus.

[Ibis:311-364](#) [Agamemnon](#), husband of Clytemnestra was his son-in-law.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) Subject of a poem by one of Ovid's lesser contemporaries.

Typhon

One of the [Giants](#) who attacked the gods, who was buried beneath [Sicily](#) by [Jupiter](#).

[Book EII.X:1-52](#) Buried beneath Sicily.

Tyras

A [Sarmatian](#) river, the Dniester.

[Book EIV.X:35-84](#) A river running into the Black Sea.

Tyre

The city of the Phoenicians in the Lebanon famed for its purple dyes used on clothing, obtained from the murex shell-fish. Once an island harbour, subsequently linked to the mainland.

[Book TII:497-546](#) Carthage was a Phoenician colony, and Dido its mythical queen was from Tyre.

Ulysses

Ulixes, the Greek Odysseus, the son of [Laertes](#), and King of [Ithaca](#). Present at the [Trojan](#) War, and most cunning and resilient of the Greek leaders, the tale of his return home is told in [Homer](#)'s *Odyssey*. His wife was the faithful [Penelope](#), and his son Telemachus.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Pursued by [Neptune](#)-Poseidon.

[Book TI.V:45-84](#) [Book TIII. XI:39-74](#) [Book EIV.X:1-34](#) [Ovid](#) compares his troubles to those of Ulysses.

[Book TV.V:1-26](#) Likewise separated from *his* wife, Penelope.

[Book TV.V:27-64](#) His wife's response to his fate brought about her fame.

[Book EIII.1:1-66](#) Made more famous by his fate.

[Book EIII.VI:1-60](#) [Ibis:251-310](#) Helped by [Leucothea](#).

[Book EIV.XIV:1-62](#) He delighted in his native Ithaca but had a difficult return home.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) His letters home written by poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries, presumably in imitation of Ovid's *Heroides*.

[Ibis:541-596](#) He was reputedly killed, by Telegonus, with a spear armed with the spine of a sting-ray.

## Umbria

The district of Italy north of [Rome](#), extending from Etruria to the Adriatic and north to the Po valley.

[Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) [Severus](#)'s homeland.

## Varius

Lucius Varius Rufus, an Augustan poet known for tragedy and epic.

[Book EIV.XVI:1-52](#) A poet in Ovid's list of his lesser contemporaries.

## Varro

Publius Terentius Varro Atacinus born 82BC in Gallia Narbonensis near the modern Carcassonne. He translated or adapted Apollonius Rhodius's *Argonautica*. He wrote an

epic dealing with Caesar's campaign against the Sequani in 58. He also wrote erotic elegies addressed to Leucadia.

[Book TII:421-470](#) His tale of the [Argo](#).

## Venus

The Goddess of Love. The daughter of [Jupiter](#) and Dione. She is Aphrodite, born from the waves, an incarnation of Astarte, Goddess of the Phoenicians. The mother of [Cupid](#) by [Mars](#). (See Botticelli's painting – Venus and Mars – National Gallery, London). Through her union with [Anchises](#) she was the mother of [Aeneas](#) and therefore putative ancestress to the Julian House.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) Friendly to the Trojans. Protected Aeneas, her son.

[Book TII:253-312](#) Mother of Aeneas by Anchises. Her statue in the temple of Mars.

[Book TII:361-420](#) Famously caught in the act with Mars, by Hephaestus (Vulcan) her husband.

[Book TII:497-546](#) [Book EIV.I:1-36](#) Shown rising from the waves, as in the famous painting by [Apelles](#). There is also a sexual double entendre here.

[Book EI.III:49-94](#) The island of Cyprus was sacred to her.

[Book EI.X:1-44](#) Synonymous with sexual activity.

[Book EIII.1:105-166](#) Ovid suggests the now aged [Livia](#) had the beauty of Venus.

[Ibis:209-250](#) In astrology a beneficent planet, ruling wealth, love etc.

[Ibis:541-596](#) Insulted, she made [Hippolytus](#) fall in love with [Phaedra](#).

## Vergilius, Virgil

Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19BC), bucolic and epic poet, author of the Eclogues, Georgics, and the Aeneid, the story of [Aeneas](#)'s flight from Troy and the origins of [Rome](#). Virgil was born near Mantua and educated at Cremona and Rome. He became [Augustus](#)'s 'official' poet, and supported Augustus's ideas of national regeneration and agricultural reform. He was a close friend of Maecenas and introduced [Horace](#) to the Imperial circle.

[Book TII:497-546](#) [Ovid](#) plays with the opening words of the *Aeneid*, '*Arma virumque cano*: I sing of arms and the man'. He refers to Aeneas's love affair with the Tyrian Queen of Carthage, Dido.

[Book TIV.X:41-92](#) Ovid saw him but did not meet him.

[Book EIII.IV:57-115](#) The type of the epic poet.

## Vesta

The daughter of Saturn, the Greek Hestia. The goddess of fire. The 'shining one'. Every hearth had its Vesta, and she presided over the preparation of meals and was offered first food and drink. Her priestesses were the six Vestal Virgins. Her chief festival was the Vestalia on 9th June. The Virgins took a strict vow of chastity and served for thirty years. They enjoyed enormous prestige, and were preceded by a *lictor* when in public. Breaking of their vow resulted in whipping and death. There were twenty recorded instances in eleven centuries. A name also for the Tauric Diana at Nemi who 'married' her high priest the

‘king of Rome’, e.g. Julius Caesar. See Fraser’s ‘The Golden Bough’ Ch1 et seq.

[Book TIII.I:1-46](#) Vesta’s Temple contained the Palladium, the image of [Pallas](#), sacred to the [Trojans](#). The Vestal Virgins tended the sacred flame within the temple, which was not supposed to be quenched.

[Book TIV.II:1-74](#) The Vestal Virgins, living in ‘perpetual’ chastity.

[Book EIV.XIII:1-50](#) [Livia](#) compared to Vesta.

### Vestalis

The grandson of Gaius Iulius [Donnus](#) a Celtic chieftain reigning over Ligurian tribes. The son of Marcus Julius Cottius a native prince. He took service with the Romans and probably served with Publius Vitellius, (*praetor* in AD14, close friend of [Germanicus](#), and his legate on the Rhine, present at Germanicus’s death in Antioch, and prosecutor of Gnaeus Piso), at the capture of [Aegisos](#) (Tulcea) in 12AD. He was later sent to [Thrace](#) on an Imperial mission, and was possibly prefect of the [Pontus](#) coast.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) A figure with authority and local knowledge.

### Victoria

The goddess of victory. After the battle of Actium, and the subsequent death of Cleopatra, Octavian ([Augustus](#)) erected a statue of Victory in the Curia Julia (built in honour of Julius Caesar), a statue that had belonged to the



people of Tarentum. He decorated it with spoils from Egypt.

[Book TII:155-206](#) [Ovid](#) prays for her attendance on [Tiberius](#)'s campaign in Pannonia.

### Virgo

The Aqua Virgo was an aqueduct constructed by Agrippa and opened in 19BC to provide a water supply for the public baths he was building: it entered the city from the north and ran as far as the [Campus Martis](#). The source by the Via Collatina was supposed to have been revealed by a young girl. The opening took place on the 9th June the feast-day of [Vesta](#) and the spring may have in fact been dedicated to her. Agrippa dubbed it *Augusta*, which pleased Augustus. (Cassius Dio, *The Roman History* 54.11)

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) [Book EI.VIII:1-70](#) Mentioned.

## Vitellius

Publius Vitellius, praetor in AD14, a friend of [Germanicus](#), proconsul of Bithynia in 18 or 19AD. He may be the Vitellius who regained Aegisos. Present at Germanicus's death in Antioch he helped to prosecute Gnaeus Piso over that suspicious event. He later attempted suicide after being implicated in Sejanus's conspiracy.

[Book EIV.VII:1-54](#) Victor at [Aegisos](#).

## Volesus

The companion of Titus Tatius and founder of the Valerian family to which [Messalla](#) Corvinus belonged. Volesus may be the Sabine form of Valerius.

[Book EIII.II:1-110](#) [Cotta](#)'s ancestry.

## Zephyrus

The West Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Auster is the South Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind.

[Book TI.II:1-74](#) The warring of the winds.

[Book TIII. XII:1-54](#) The spring wind.

## Zerynthia

The Zerynthian cave of Hecate was on the northern coast of [Samothrace](#), and gave its name to that shoreline.

[Book TI.X:1-50](#) [Ovid](#) changed ships there.