Priapea
songs for a phallic god

An Intermediate Latin Reader

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Priapea: Songs for a Phallic God

An Intermediate Latin Reader
Latin Text with Running Vocabulary and Commentary

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Acknowledgments

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The technical aspects of the project were made possible through the invaluable advice and support of Bill Hayes, Christopher Kuo, and Daniel Meyers. The equipment and staff of Miami University’s Interactive Language Resource Center were a great help along the way. We are also indebted to the Perseus Project, especially Gregory Crane and Bridget Almas, for their technical help and resources. We also profited greatly from advice and help on the POD process from Geoffrey Steadman. All responsibility for errors, however, rests with the authors themselves.
Cui dono lepidum novum libellum
arida modo pumice expolitum?
mi mater, tibi: namque tu solebas
meas esse aliquid putare nugas.
Introduction

The aim of this book is to make the *Priapea* (or *Corpus Priapeorum* or *Carmina Priapea*) accessible to intermediate students of Ancient Latin. The running vocabulary and grammatical commentary are meant to provide everything necessary to read each page so that readers can progress through the text, improving their knowledge of Latin while enjoying a fascinating group of poems.

The *Priapea* is a great text for intermediate readers. The sentence structure is fairly simple, and the range of syntax is rather narrow. However, there are many off-color jokes and double entendre that require some thoughtful attention to the connotations of many ordinary words. There is considerable wittiness deployed in creating variations on a small number of obscene themes and scenarios, so that there are examples of the whole range of technique in Roman poetic practice. The poems are centered around the rustic and ithyphallic god Priapus. This god, whose name gives us the English word “priapism,” the condition of having a lasting and painful erection, is a minor god with very little mythology. He is usually represented as a wooden statue with an oversized and erect penis, which he threatens to use on anyone who is caught stealing from his garden. Indeed, the largest group of poems in the collection are warnings to thieves whom Priapus threatens to penetrate in one of three orifices, depending on the status of the offender. Other poems make fun of Priapus or represent him begging for favors or receiving dedications. Another group of poems, often shocking in detail, rails against older and undesirable women, whose sexual appetites are portrayed as vile and disgusting. The humor is strongly weighted toward men and their “weapons,” in this way reflecting the pleasure Romans took in performing their masculinity in various contexts. The classic discussion of these topics is Amy Richilin’s *The Gardens of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor*.

Greek and Latin *Priapea*

Priapus is a rustic god whose origin seems to be in Asia minor—Lampsacus is identified as his birth place in several poems. A number of examples survive in the *Greek Anthology* which are similar to the Latin poems in this volume. Many of these are dedications from people in various walks of life, sometimes with requests from the god for fertility or potency, or for relief from the pangs of love. Several are from sailors seeking a safe voyage. The Latin *Priapea* are more
narrowly focused on the rustic god and his garden. Besides the 80 of this collection, Priapic poems appear in the works of other poets, like Catullus, Horace, and Martial, indicating the popularity of the kind of humor found here. Priapus is also the “angry god” in Petronius’ *Satyricon*, who causes the hero Encolpius so many troubles in his wanderings, a comic analogue to the role of Poseidon in the *Odyssey* and Juno in the *Aeneid*.

**Date and Authorship of the *Priapea***

The manuscript tradition ascribes the *Priapea* to Vergil, which shocked Renaissance scholars for whom these poems seemed unworthy of the great Augustan poet. The theory for several centuries was that poems by multiple authors had been collected by someone and attached to the genuine poems of Vergil. In the twentieth century the weight of scholarly opinion has shifted back to a single author, but not to Vergil. Instead, Ovid or Martial has been suggested as the author of the whole collection, based on examples of similar diction in those authors, but this could just be evidence that those authors were familiar with the collection. Even so, most scholars emphasize the continuities among the poems rather than their heterogeneity. Most recently, O’Connor has argued that a skillful editor collected the poems and perhaps wrote some of them himself.

The poems are thought to date either to the Augustan age (27 BCE – 14 CE) or to the time of Martial (died. c. 102 CE), but this too is uncertain. What is certain is that there was a continuous tradition of such Priapic poetry that included the *Priapea* and examples from several other poets. The collection is certainly a miscellany in some respects, but there is also evidence of an overall shaping of the material that suggests a single author or editor.

**The Content of the Poems**

Most of the poems fall into a small number of groups. The largest group contains threats by Priapus to use his formidable member against thieves. These include 6, 11, 13, 15, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 35, 44, 51, 52, 56, 58, 59, 67, 69, 71, 72, 77.

Other poems highlight the divine status of Priapus and compare him and his accouterments with other gods and goddesses (9, 20, 36, 39, 53, 75), while others emphasize his humble wooden origins or complain about his treatment at the hands of others (10, 26, 33, 55, 73, 76, 77).
Some are based on dedications to Priapus of various kinds, whether of verses or fruits (4, 16, 21, 27, 34, 37, 40, 41, 42, 47, 50, 60, 61, 63, 70). These frequently sound the *do ut des* (I give in order to get) theme.

Some deprecate older women (12, 32, 46, 57) or warn chaste women to stay away (8, 10, 66).

In the first two and last two poems of the collection, the poet himself addresses the reader or Priapus (1, 2, 79, 80).

### The Meters of the Poems

The poems are in three different meters: elegaic couplets, hendecasyllables and choliambns. Elegaic couplets are used in a wide variety of contexts by Catullus, Propertius, Ovid, Tibullus and others. Hendecasyllables are used frequently by Catullus, but they also are the main element of Sapphic meter. Choliambns (“limping iambs”) are used most frequently in invective. All of these meters have Greek precedents. They are distributed as follows:

- **Hendecasyllables**: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 17, 19, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 37, 41, 45, 46, 48, 50, 52, 56, 57, 59, 61, 64, 66, 69, 70, 75, 76, 77.

- **Elegaic Couplets**: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 27, 30, 33, 38, 40, 42, 43, 49, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 62, 65, 67, 68, 71, 72, 73, 74, 80.

- **Choliambns**: 31, 36, 47, 51, 58, 63, 78, 79.

Here is the scheme for each of these three meters, where “x” indicates an anceps syllable:

- **Hendecasyllables**: — — — — — — — — — — — —

- **Elegaic Couples**: — — — — — — || — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — x

- **Choliambns**: x — — — | x — — — | — — — — —

Comparison with canonical poets who use these meters indicates a high level of craftsmanship in the *Priapea* that is inconsistent with the idea of a miscellany of multiple authors. Indeed, as Parker notes, one of the striking things about these
poems is the stark contrast between their low subject matter and the perfection of their artistry (44). Our author shows stricter regularity in many cases, such as the spondee opening of the hendecasyllable line, where Catullus frequently substitutes a trochee or iamb.

Latin Sexual Vocabulary

Latin has a broad range of polite and impolite ways of speaking of sex. The Priapea specialize in the latter, but show a sophisticated humor as well. A full treatment of the subject is J. N. Adams, The Latin Sexual Vocabulary (Duckworth, London, 1982). The following general remarks, meant to help the reader navigate the Priapea, are based on his work.

1. Mentula and its synonyms

Mentula is the basic obscene word for the male member. Like various English parallels, such as “dick” and “prick,” it can be used generally as an insult as well. Verpa is a synonym that is also offensive and is also used frequently as an insult. Penis is much less obscene. Beyond these words, there is a vast number of metaphorical terms usually connected with shape or function, especially weapons or objects that are used to pierce something.

These include telum (“weapon”), columna (“column”), contus (“pole”), sceptrum (“sceptre”), ventris arma (“weapon of the belly”), hasta (“spear”), pyramis (“pyramid”), brachia macra (“narrow arm”), falx (“sickle”), temo (“beam”), capulus (“handle”), fascinum (“amulet”), nasus (“nose”).

Another common metaphor pertains to objects that are taut (tensus): nervum (“string of the bow”), cithara (“lyre string”), vena (“blood vessel”).

Sexual parts can be addressed or rebuked as though they were persons or animals. A mentula can be said to have a “head” or an “eye.” It can be likened to a snake (anguis).

Coles (“a leather sack”) is a coarse word for the scrotum and is used in the plural to mean “testicles.” Vas (“implement”) is similarly used in the plural for testicles.

2. Designations of the female genitalia

Cunnus is the common obscene word for the female pudenda, equivalent in force to the English word “cunt.” It originally meant a ditch, and fossa is also used to designate the same thing. The word hiatus (“gap”) is a vulgar word for a worn-out vagina or one that has been “loosened” (laxus) by sexual activity.
**Songs for a Phallic God**

**Landica** is the normal word for clitoris, but because of its shape and association with the penis, it can be referred to as a **nasus** (“nose”).

3. **Culus** and its synonyms

**Culus** is the normal obscene word for anus. Rarely it is designated by words for a meadow or garden (**pratum, hortus**). **Podex** (perhaps from **pedo**, “to fart”) is used once for the buttocks. So also **clunis** and **lumbus**. Given that sex (and sexual assault) was conceived of primarily in terms of penetration, **culus** and **cunnus** often have interchangeable metaphors.

4. The vocabulary relating to sexual acts

**Futuo** is the most important coarse verb for penetration of the vagina and has the same insulting connotations as the English word “fuck.” It can sometimes refer to anal penetration as well. It is used only of the male action: women (and boys) can only “be fucked.”

**Pedico** is a Greek loan word referring to anal sex, whether with a male or female. **Pedicator** and **pedicatio** are derivative nouns.

**Irrumo** is to “put into the mouth” and thus refers to the male action of penetrating the mouth. **Irrumator** and **irrumatio** are derivative nouns. **Fellatio** refers to the act of sucking, with **fellator** as a derivative noun.

**Pedicare** and **irrumare** can indicate an assertion of mastery or a threat of punishment to one’s enemies, as in Catullus 16: **pedicabo ego vos et irrumabo**.

Other violent verbs can be used as well, such as **scindo** (“to cut or tear”), **fodio** (“to dig”), **caedo** (“to cut”), **percido** (“to smash”), **perforo** (“to bore through”), **tero** (“to rub away”).

**Texts, Translations and Commentaries**


Priapea


**Literary Studies**


**How to use this book**

The page-by-page vocabularies gloss all but the most common words. We have endeavored to make these glossaries as useful as possible without becoming fulsome. Words occurring frequently in the text and not glossed, or not glossed in every case, can be found in an appendix in the back, but it is our hope that most readers will not need to use this appendix often. Only minimal information is given in the page by page glossaries, for which see “Glossing Conventions” below.
The commentary is almost exclusively grammatical, explaining subordinate clauses, case uses and idioms. A brief grammatical appendix details the meaning of the technical terms used in the commentary, although most of these will be familiar to intermediate readers of Latin. A good strategy is to read a passage in Latin, check the glossary for unusual words and consult the commentary as a last resort.

The literary commentaries cited in the bibliography above contain extensive information and discussion of all aspects of the text, with copious bibliography. Our contribution has a more limited focus aimed at intermediate readers, but we have made full use of these and other resources.

The Latin text is based on Baehrens, Poetae Latini Minores (Leipzig 1879, pp. 58-87). It was digitized by Harm-Jan van Dam of Leiden and is posted on the Latin Library. Here and there we have corrected some errors and made minor changes in the name of readability, sometimes accepting suggestions from later editions. This is not a scholarly edition; for that one should turn to the editions cited above.

An Important Disclaimer:

This volume is a self-published “Print on Demand” (POD) book, and it has not been vetted or edited in the usual way by publishing professionals. There are sure to be some factual and typographical errors in the text, for which we apologize in advance. The volume is also available only through online distributors, since each book is printed when ordered online. However, this publishing channel and format also account for the low price of the book; and it is a simple matter to make changes when they come to our attention. For this reason, any corrections or suggestions for improvement are welcome and will be addressed as quickly as possible in future versions of the text.

Please e-mail corrections or suggestions to editor@faenumpublishing.com.

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Glossing Conventions

Adjectives of two and three terminations will be formatted thus:

- **bonus, -a, -um**
- **facilis, -e**

Single termination adjectives will have the genitive indicated thus:

- **sallax, salacis (gen.)**

Participles will generally be glossed as a verb, but some participles (particularly where their verbal force has been weakened) are glossed as adjectives: e.g.

- **decens, decentis (gen.):** appropriate; **valens, valentis (gen.):** strong
- **barbatus, -a, -um:** bearded; **remotus, -a, -um:** remote

Adverbs will be identified as such (adv.) when there is some ambiguity.

Regular infinitives are indicated by conjugation number: e.g.,

- **laudo (1) to praise**
- **moneo (2) to warn**

Where principal parts are predictable, as in the case of most first conjugation verbs, only the conjugation number will be given in the glossary. This format is used even in the case of unpredictable perfect forms, if the word occurring in the text is based on the present stem (present, future, imperfect tenses). Elsewhere the principal parts will be provided in their standard form.

Simple syntactical information such as “+ gen.” or “+ inf.” will often be cited in the glossary with verbs and adjectives. However, the lexical information given for most words is minimal and sometimes specific to the context. To get a broader sense of the peculiarities of language in the *Priapea*, it will be necessary to consult the commentaries or critical literature cited above.
Abbreviations used in the commentary

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Grammatical Terms used in the Commentary

The grammatical terms used in the commentary are organized below according to syntactical category with brief explanations and examples. For more detailed information, see Allen and Greenough, *New Latin Grammar* (available on Perseus) or Charles Bennett *New Latin Grammar* (available on the Latin Library).

1. Uses of Cases

NOMINATIVE

The nominative case is the used for the subject of finite verbs and the predicate of verbs of being, seeming, etc.

GENITIVE

The genitive is commonly used to express a relationship between one noun and another, especially a limiting relationship. Some verbs also take the genitive as their object instead of the accusative.

Material: The genitive denotes what a thing consists of:

*nigri fornicis favilla*, “the ash of a black whorehouse”

Objective: the genitive can indicate the object of an action implied by a substantive:

*curam habere loci*, “to have the care of the place”

Partitive (genitive of the whole): The genitive indicates the whole to which a part belongs:

*quicunque vestrum*, “whoever of you”

Possession: The genitive denotes possession, including the belonging of an object, quality, feeling, or action to a person or thing:

*Herculis invicti dextera*, “the right hand of unconquered Hercules”

Predicative: A genitive can be used with verbs of being, seeming, etc.

*sciscitari … unde natalium*: “to question whence was his parentage”
Quality (characteristic, description): The genitive is used to describe a person or thing:

fatui puella cunni, “a girl with a foolish cunt”

Separation: The genitive can express separation:

libamine mentulae comeso, “the offering from my prick having been eaten”

Price or value: The genitive expresses price or value.

non assis faciunt: “they do it not for even a penny”

After verbs and adjectives: The genitive is used to complete the meaning of certain adjectives, such as plenus (full of) or egenus (in need of). It is also used after certain verbs, such as memini (to remember), misereror (to pity), paeniteo (to regret), metuo (to fear), etc. These will be indicated in the commentary simply as “gen. after memini”

DATIVE

The Dative case is chiefly used to indicate the person for whom an action happens or a quality exists.

Agent: the dative expresses the agent of an action with passive verbs, especially the gerundive.

mihi mentula est vocanda, “the prick must be named by me”

Indirect Object: The recipient of the action of the verb is put in the dative case.

istud caelitibus datur severis, “this is given to the severe gods”

Possession: The dative is used to express possession with the verb esse.

blaesa lingua mihi est, “my tongue is mispronouncing”

Predicate: the dative can be uses as the predicate of the verb esse:

sed potuit damno nobis esse, “it could be our ruin”

Reference (advantage, interest): the dative identifies the person interested, concerned, benefited by an action.

Cum sacrum fieret deo salaci, “when a sacrifice happens for the salacious god”
Verbs and Compound Verbs: Verbs such as noceo (to harm), suadere (persuade), etc., take the dative case, as do many verbs with a prefix, such as impono (to place on), accedo (to add to), etc.

ACCUSATIVE

The accusative case is used for the direct object of transitive verbs, for the subject of an infinitive in indirect statement and other complements of a verb, to indicate place to which, and duration of time.

Adverbial: the accusative of adjectives can be used adverbially:

clunem excitatius altiusque motat, “she moves her buttocks more excitedly and higher”

Direct Object: the direct object of verbs is in the accusative case:

qualia tulisse, “to have carried such fruits”

Exclamation: The accusative is used in short exclamatory phrases.

me miserum, “O miserable me!”

Place to Which: Used to convey the location travelled to, often with a preposition:

locum venitis, “you come to a place”

Predicative: Causative verbs like facere can take a second predicative accusative.

rivalem languidum reddat, “may he make his rival languid”

Respect: The accusative may be used with an adjective or verb to denote the part concerned.

frontem vides cornutos, “you see them horned with respect to the forehead”

Subject of Infinitives: In indirect discourse and other expressions that are complemented by an infinitive, the subject of the infinitive is in the accusative case.

num pudet Phoebum portare sagittas, “is it not fitting that Phoebus carry arrows?”

Supine: Accusative supines occur after verbs of motion in order to express purpose.

venire credo furatum, “I believe you come in order to steal”
ABLATIVE

Nouns in the ablative case are used often adverbially, generally expressing motion away from something, instrument, location, and many other relations.

Ablative Absolute: Combined with a participle, adjective, or noun, the ablative conveys the circumstance (time, cause, or condition) of a particular action.

   testa te: “with you as a witness”

Agent: The agent of a passive verb is expressed by the ablative usually with the preposition *ab*.

   raptus ab alite sacra, “snatched by the holy eagle”

Cause: Cause may be expressed by an ablative with or without a preposition.

   qua suspicer causa, “for what reason would I suspect?”

Circumstance: a circumstance or situation attendant to a verb can be expressed with the ablative:

   stamus coleis apertis, “we stand with open buttocks”

Comparison: Comparative adjectives followed by the ablative express comparison.

   serior Hectoris parente, “older than the mother of Hector”

Degree of Difference (measure of difference) is indicated by the ablative:

   simplicius multo est, “it is easier by much”

Manner: Often with *cum*, manner is also denoted by the simple ablative.

   crisabit fluctuante lumbo, “she will move with undulating loins”

Means (Instrument): The ablative expresses the means by which an action is accomplished:

   tectum nullis vestibus, “covered by no clothing”

Place Where: Often denoted by the preposition *in* along with the ablative; the preposition is commonly ommitted in poetry or poetic prose.

   templi parietibus tui notavi, “I noted on the walls of your temple”

Place From Which: The ablative denotes the place a noun has moved from usually with a preposition.

   gemmas germine exeuntes, “buds coming from the sprout”
Quality (description): Quality is regularly denoted by the ablative.

\textit{lumine est Venus paeto}, “Venus has a squinting eye”

Separation: Separation is expressed with or without a preposition especially with verbs and adjectives of deprivation, freedom, and want.

\textit{defectus pueroque feminaque}, “deprived of boy and girl”

Specification: The ablative of specification provides details with respect to which anything is or is done.

\textit{terribilem fuste}, “terrible with a club”

Time: Both time when and time within which are denoted by the ablative.

\textit{prima dat nocte}, “she gives on the first night”

\textit{nocte peregit una}, “she completed in the course of one night”

LOCATIVE

The locative case is used for the location of towns and small islands of first and second declension, \textit{humus, domus, rus}, and sometimes countries and large islands as an alternative to ablative of place where.

\textit{cucumeresque humi fusos}, “cucumbers poured out on the ground”
2. Uses of the Subjunctive

Independent Uses of the Subjunctive

Deliberative questions occur when the speaker wonders what he or she should do.

quid faciam?: “What should I do?”

Hortatory, Jussive, Prohibition Clauses:

Jussive and hortatory subjunctives “urges” some action in a more polite manner than an imperative. “Hortatory” applies to first person (“let us…”); “jussive” applies to second and third person (may you…, let her…”); “prohibition” refers to the negative (don’t…).

accedat: “let him come!”

neque possis: “may you not be able!”

The volitive subjunctive expresses a wish for the future:

periam: “may I die!”

Dependent Uses of the Subjunctive

Tenses of the subjunctive in subordinate clauses follow the sequence of tenses: present or perfect subjunctive for primary sequence, imperfect or pluperfect for secondary sequence.

tense of main clause       same time or time after main verb       time before main verb
present or future tense     present subjunctive                         perfect subjunctive
past tense                 imperfect subjunctive                        pluperfect subjunctive

Concessive clauses with cum, quamvis or licet take the subjunctive:

quamvis sim: “although I am”

cum capiant: “although they hold”

licet torqueas: “although you twist your hair”

Conditions: The subjunctive is used in future less vivid and contrafactual conditions (see below)

Cum Causal Clauses: When cum introduces a causal clause, the subjunctive is used:

cum…luat: “since you pay”
Cum Circumstantial Clauses: When *cum* introduces a general circumstance rather than a specific time, the subjunctive is used

*cum...ostendas*: “when you show”

*Cum* Temporal clauses referring to past actions in secondary sequence regularly take the subjunctive.

*cum...pererrasset*: “when she had wandered”

Indirect commands are an example of a jussive noun clause used as the object of a verb. For more on jussive noun clauses, see below.

*rogat temptes*: “she asks you to try”

Indirect questions are formed with the subjunctive following the sequence of tenses and introduced by an interrogative word.

*dic mihi qua iter sit*: “tell me where your route is”

Noun Clauses clauses following certain verbs are introduced with our without *ut* or *ne* with the subjunctive, as in indirect commands:

*quereris quod astem*: “why do you complain that I am standing”

Purpose Clauses explain the purpose behind the action of the main clause and is usually introduced by *ut* or *ne*.

*tu quae aver’eris ne videas*: “you who look away in order not to see”

Relative Clauses of Characteristic: Relative clauses in the subjunctive suggest that that the clause does not simply state a fact but rather indicates another type of subjunctive clause such as purpose, result, cause, concession, etc. They are called relative clauses of characteristic for introducing a defining quality or characteristic.

*tu quae aver’eris*: “you who are (the kind who) turn away”

Result clauses explain the outcome of the action in the main clause, often with an adverb in the main clause signalling the result clause. Result clauses are usually introduced by *ut* or *ut non*.

*adeo plena ut putem*: “so full that I suppose”
3. Conditional sentences

Future more vivid conditions express a future *probability*. The protasis (the clause expressing the condition, i.e. the “if” clause) can be the future or future perfect, the apodosis (the clause expressing consequence, i.e. the “then” clause) is the future tense or some equivalent. In English this is expressed with the present tense in the protasis, future tense in the apodosis: “If she comes…then I will go.”

si dederis, licebit: “if you give, it will be permitted”

Future less vivid conditions express a future *possibility* and thus use the potential subjunctive in the apodosis and present or perfect subjunctive in the protasis; In English, “If it should…then it would…” or “If it were to…then it would.”

si tractes, putes?: “if you were to handle it, would you suppose?”

Contrafactual conditions indicate an untrue premise and conclusion and use the subjunctive mood: imperfect subjunctive for the present (i.e. “if he were now doing this, he would be doing badly”); pluperfect subjunctive for the past (i.e. “if he had done this, he would have done badly”).

nisi placuisset, non habuisset: “unless he had been pleasing, it would not have been necessary”

Mixed conditions are common, where a less vivid protasis is combined with an apodosis in the future indicative:

si telum desit, inermis ero: “if the weapon were to be lacking, I will be unarmed”

C. Other terms used in the commentary

Anastrophe – the reversal of normal word order

mentulam ad for ad mentulam

Hendiadys - (“one through two) the use of two nouns linked by a conjunction instead of a noun and adjective:

graculusve raptor: “a jackdaw and plunderer” i.e. a plundering jackdaw

Litotes - (understatement) is the use of two negatives to produce a positive:

non nimium: “not too much” i.e. a little
Other Terminology

Apocopation – when a word is formed by the removal of the end of a longer word

subripuere: apoc. perf. (= subripuerunt)

Syncopation – the contraction of a word by omission of part of the middle

dicarunt: syncopated perf. (= dicaeverunt)

Periphrastic: the use of a participle and a form of the verb esse to create a tense:

conspicuendus est Apollo: (gerundive) “Apollo ought to be seen,” lit. Apollo is one who ought to be seen
Priapea: Songs for a Phallic God
An address to the reader, this poem is a preamble to the whole collection.

Carminis incompti lusus lecture procaces, 
conveniens Latio pone supercilium.
non soror hoc habitat Phoebi, non Vesta sacello, 
nec quae de patrio vertice nata dea est,
se d ruber hortorum custos, membrosior aequo, 
qui tectum nullis vestibus inguen habet.

aequus, -a, -um: equal, usual

carmen, -inis n: song, verse

convenio (4): to be appropriate to
custos, -odis m: guard
da, -ae f: goddess

habito (1): to inhabit, dwell live, stay

hortus, -i m: garden

incomptus, -a, -um: untidy, unpolished

inguen, -inis n: groin

Latium, -i: Latium, of Rome

lusus, -us m: jest

membrosus, -a, um: having a large member

nascor, nasci, natus sum: to be born

patrius, -a, -um: father's, paternal

pono (3): to lay aside

procax, -acis (gen.): impudent, undisciplined

ruber, -ra, -rum: red, ruddy

sacellum, -i n: shrine

soror, -is f: sister

supercilium, -i n: eyebrow, sternness

tego (3), texi, tectus: to cover

vertex, verticus m: crown of the head

Vesta, -ae f: Vesta, goddess of the hearth

vestis, -is f: clothing

lecture: fut. act. part. voc. of lego “you about to read”

conveniens: pres. part. neut. agreeing with supercilium, “appropriate to” + dat.

pone: imper., “lay aside!”

supercilium: raising the eyebrow showed disapproval, and thus can mean “sternness”

soror: the sister of Phoebus is the virgin goddess Diana

hoc ... sacello: abl. place where, “in this shrine”

de patrio vertice: Minerva was born parthenogenetically from the head of Jupiter

ruber custos: the “ruddy guard” is Priapus, who was painted red

aequo: abl. of comparison after membrosior, “larger-membered than is usual”

nullis vestibus: abl. of means, “covered by no clothing”
Dedication to Priapus. This poem is another preamble to the whole collection, a dedication by the poet to Priapus.

Ludens haec ego teste te, Priape, horto carmina digna, non libello, scripsi non nimium laboriose. nec Musas tamen, ut solent poetae, ad non virgineum locum vocavi. nam sensus mihi corque defuisset, castas, Pierium chorum, sorores

teste te: abl. abs., “with you as witness”
horto … libello: dat. after digna, “worthy of a garden … not a little book”
non nimium: litotes, “not too much”
non virgineum: “not suitable for virgins”
defuisset: plupf. subj. in past contrafactual apodosis, “sense and heart would have abandoned me”
Pierium chorum: i.e. the Muses
Songs for a Phallic God

auso ducere mentulam ad Priapi.

ergo quicquid id est, quod otiosus templi parietibus tui notavi,
in partem accipias bonam, rogamus.

### III

**ELEGaic COUPLETS**

Priapus asks for favors in plain language

Obscure poteram tibi dicere: da mihi, quod tu
des licet assidue, nil tamen inde perit.
da mihi, quod cupcakes frustra dare forsitan olim,
cum tenet obsessas invida barba genas,
quodque Jovi dederat qui raptus ab alite sacra

### Vocabularies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>auso</strong> (3): to dare (+ inf.)</td>
<td>agreeing with mihi, and representing a past contrafactual protasis, “me having dared to lead” i.e. if I had dared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mentulam ad</strong>: anastrophe for “ad mentulam”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>parietibus</strong>: abl. place, “on the walls”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>accipias</strong>: pres. subj. in jussive noun clause after rogamus, “we ask that you receive”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>in partem bonam</strong>: “in the good sense,” i.e. favorably</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Explanation:**

- *auso* is the perf. part. dat. of *audeo* agreeing with *mihi*, and representing a past contrafactual protasis, “me having dared to lead” i.e. if I had dared.
- *mentulam ad* is an anastrophe for “ad mentulam”.
- *parietibus* is the abl. place, “on the walls”.
- *accipias* is the pres. subj. in jussive noun clause after *rogamus*, “we ask that you receive”.
- *in partem bonam* is “in the good sense,” i.e. favorably.

---

**Vocabulary:**

- **ales, alitis f**: bird
- **assidue**: continually
- **barba, -ae f**: beard
- **cupio (3)**: to desire
- **forzitan**: perhaps
- **frustra**: in vain
- **gena, -ae f**: cheeks
- **inde**: therein
- **invidus, -a, -um**: hostile, hated
- **licet**: it is permitted, although (+ subj.)
- **obscure**: secretly
- **obsideo (2) obsedi, obsessus**: to beset, besiege
- **olim**: hereafter
- **perei (4), perii, peritus**: to perish, diminish
- **rapio (3), rapui, raptus**: to snatch, seize
- **sacer, sacra, -um**: holy, sacred

**Endnote:**

*quod... perit*: rel. clause, “(that) which diminishes not at all”

de: pres. subj. concessive after *licet*, “although you give”
cupies: fut., “what you will desire (to give) in vain” + inf., i.e. because no one will want it
invida barba: nom., the appearance of facial hair signaled the moment when a boy was no longer an appropriate object of desire
Jovi: dat. ind. obj., “he had given to Jupiter”
raptus: perf. part., “he who having been snatched” i.e. Ganymede
ab alite sacra: abl. of agent, “snatched by the holy eagle” i.e. of Jupiter
miscet amatori pocula grata suo, quod virgo prima cupidō dat nocte marito, dum timet alterius vulnus inepta loci. simplicius multō est “da pedicare” Latine dicere. quid faciam? crassa Minerva mea est.

amator, -oris m: lover

crassus, -a, -um: crass, gross
cupīdus, -a, -um: desiring
gratus, -a, -um: pleasing, welcome
ineptus, -a, -um: ignorant
maritus, -i m: husband
misceo (2): to mix, stir up

amatori … suo: dat. of advantage, “who mixes for his lover” Ganymede became the wine server of Jupiter

prima … nocte: abl. of time, “on the first night”
cupido marito: dat. ind. obj., “to her desiring husband”
alterius … loci: gen. objective, “the wound of the other place” i.e. in the front
multo: abl. of degree of difference, “easier by much”
pedicare: inf. after da, “allow me to penetrate from behind”
dicere: epex. inf. after simplicius, “easier to say”

An Invocation to Priapus. Marble bas-relief.
(National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
Songs for a Phallic God

IV

An erotic picture book provides suggested positions

Obscenas rigido deo tabellas
ducens ex Elaphantidos libellis
dat donum Lalage rogatque, temptes,
si pictas opus edat ad figuras.

donum, -i n: gift
edo (3): to perform
Elephantis, -idos f: Elephantis
figura, -ae f: shape, form
Lalage, -es f: “Laughter,” the name of a girl
libellus, -i m: little, small book
obscenus, -a, -um: obscene, lewd
opus, operis n: need, work
pictus, -a, -um: painted, colored
rigidus, -a, -um: stiff, hard
rogo (1): to ask
tabella, -ae f: document, letter
tempto (1): to try

rigido deo: dat. ind. obj., “gives to the rigid god” i.e. Priapus
Elaphantidos: a Roman poetess who produced a sex manual, referred to in Suetonius (Tibullus 43) and Martial (Epigram. 12, 43)
Lalage: for the Greek name cf. Horace, Carm. 1.22
temptes: pres. subj. in ind. com. after rogat, “asks you to try”
si edat: pres. subj. in indirect question after temptes, “test whether she can perform”
opus edat: the expression means to perform a sexual act or to publish a book.
pictas … ad figuras: “according to the painted pictures”

V

ELEGAIC COUPLETS

Priapus makes a deal with a boy

Quam puero legem fertur dixisse Priapus,
versibus his infra scripta duobus erit:
“quod meus hortus habet, sumas inpune licebit,
si dederis nobis, quod tuus hortus habet.”

infra: below
inpune: without punishment
lex, legis f: law m
licet: it is permitted (+ subj.)
sumo (3): to take up obtain
versus, -us m: line, verse

puero: dat. of reference, “the law for the boy”
dixisse: perf. inf. after fertur, “Priapus is reported to have pronounced”
scripta … erit: future perf., “it will be written” i.e. the law
sumas: pres. subj. after licebit, “it will be permitted for you to take”
dederis: fut. perf. in future more vivid protasis, “if first you will have given”
tuus hortus: “your garden,” i.e. your buttocks
Let the thief beware! One of a series of poems where Priapus threatens those who violate his garden.

Quod sum ligneus, ut vides, Priapus et falcis lignea ligneusque penis, prendam te tamen et tenebo prensum totamque hanc sine fraude, quantacunque est, tormento citharaque tensiorem ad costam tibi septimam recondam.

VII

A word play on “pedico”

Cum loquor, una mihi peccatur littera: nam “Te Pe dico” semper blaesaque lingua mihi est.
Married woman like to read these poems too

Matronae procul hinc abite castae,
turpe est vos legere impudica verba.
non assis faciunt euntque recta:
imirum sapiunt videntque magnam
matronae quoque mentulam libenter.

Cur obscena mihi pars sit sine veste, requiris?
quaere, tegat nullus cur sua tela deus.
fulmen habens mundi dominus tenet illud aperte,
 nec datur aequoreo fuscina tecta deo.
nec Mavors illum, per quem valet, occulit ensem,
      nec latet intrepidae Palladis hasta sinus.
num pudet auratas Phoebum portare sagittas?
   clamne solet pharetram ferre Diana suam?
num tegit Alcides nodosae robora clavae?
  sub tunica virgam num deus ales habet?
quis Bacchum gracili vestem praetendere thyrso,
quis te celata cum face vidit, Amor?
nec mihi sit crimen, quod mentula semper aperta est:  
hoc mihi si telum desit, inermis ero.

Palladis: i.e. of Minerva
sinu: abl. place, “in the cloak of Pallas”
pudet: impersonal, “it is not a shame, is it?” + acc. + inf.
Alcides: nom., “descendant of Alceus” i.e. Hercules
nodosae … clavae: gen. of description, “of his knotty club”
deus ales: “the winged god” i.e. Mercury
virgam: Mercury carries the caduceus, with which he closes the eyes of the dead
gracili … thyrsus: dat. after praetendere, “stretch clothing over the slender thyrsus”
praetendere: pres. inf. after vidit, who sees Bacchus to stretch”
celata cum face: abl. of circumstance, “with a hidden torch” a common attribute of Amor
nec sit: jussive subj., “nor let it be”
si desit: pres. subj. in future less vivid protasis, “if it were to be lacking”
A rustic admires Priapus

Insulsissima quid puella rides?
non me Praxiteles Scopasve fecit,
non sum Phidiaca manu politus,
sed lignum rude vilicus dolavit
et dixit mihi: “tu Priapus esto.”
spectas me tamen et subinde rides?
nimirum tibi salsa res videtur
adstans inguinibus columna nostris.

Jockey riding and crowning a winged phallus. Bronze tintinnabulum (wind chime), c. 1st century CE. From Pompeii. (National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
Let the thief beware!

Ne prendare cave. prenso nec fuste nocebo,  
saeva nec incurva vulnera falce dabo:  
trajectus conto sic extendere pedali,  
ut culum rugam non habuisse putes.

---

**caveo** (2): to beware  
**contus** -i m: a pole (=mentula)  
**culus** -i m: anus, “ass(hole)”  
**falx** falcis f: a sickle  
**fustis** -i s: a club  
**incurvus** -a -um: curved  
**noceo** (2): to harm  
**pedalis** -e: foot-long  
**prendo** (3), **prendi**, **prensus**: to catch  
**puto** (1): to suppose  
**saevus** -a -um: savage  
**trajicio** (3) -jeci, -jectus: to pass through, penetrate  
**ruga** -ae f: wrinkle  
**vulnus** -eris m: wound

---

**ne prendare**: pres. subj. 2nd s. pass. in noun clause after *cave*, “take care lest you be caught”  
**preno**: perf. part. dat. after *nocebo*, “harm you having been caught”  
**fuste**: abl. means, “harm with my club”  
**incurva falce**: abl. of means, “wound with my curved sickle”  
**trajectus**: “you having been penetrated”  
**extendere**: fut. 2 s. pass., “you will be stretched”  
**ut non putes**: pres. subj. in result clause, “so that you will not suppose”  
**habuisse**: perf. inf. after *putes*, “that your ass had” i.e. because it will be so stretched

---

A diatribe against an old woman

Quaedam serior Hectoris parente,  
Cumaeae soror, ut puto, Sibyllae,  
eaequalis tibi, quam domum revertens

---

**aequalis** -e: equal, similar to (+ dat.)  
**domus** -i f: house, building  
**Hector** -oris m: Hector, the Trojan hero  
**parens** -entis f: parent  
**revertor** (3): to return  
**serior**, -ius: older  
**Sibylla** -ae f: prophetess, sibyl  
**soror** -is f: sister

---

**quaedam**: nom., “a certain woman”  
**parente**: abl. of comparison after *serior*, “older than the mother of Hector” i.e. Hecuba, who is often cited as a typical old woman  
**Cumaeae Sibyllae**: the Sybil of Cumae was a legendary old hag  
**ut puto**: parenthetical, “so I believe”

**quam**: antecedent is *tibi*, “same age as you *whom*” addressing Hecale, another legendary old woman. She helped Theseus, but was found dead by him upon his return.
Theseus repperit in rogo jacentem, infirmo solet huc gradu venire rugosasque manus ad astra tollens, ne desit sibi mentula, rogare.

hesterna quoque luce dum precatur, dentem de tribus excreavit unum. “tolle” inquam “procul et jube latere scissa sub tunica stolaeque russa, ut semper solet, et timere lucem, qui tanto patet indecens hiatusu,
Priapea

barbato macer eminente naso,
ut credas Epicuron oscitari.“

macer: in apposition to qui, “all scraggy”
eminente naso: abl. of circumstance, “with a prominent nose” an obscene term for a penis or, as here, for a clitoris
ut credas: pres. subj. in result clause, “so that you would believe”
Epicuron oscitari: ind. st. after credas, “that Epicurus is yawning” It is not clear why the old woman's genitals resemble Epicurus' yawning mouth, but there are other references to the “yawn” of Epicurus

XIII

ELEGAIC COUPLETS

Let the thief beware!

Percidere, puer, moneo: futuere, puella:
   barbatum furem tertia poena manet.

XIV

HENDECASYLLABLE

All are welcome in the garden of Priapus, even if tainted by sin

Huc huc, quisquis es, in dei salacis
deverti grave ne puta sacellum.

deveto (3): to turn away
deverti: pres. pass. inf. after puta, “don't suppose that you are turned away”
in… sacellum: acc. showing motion towards, “hither into the shrine”
et si nocte fuit puella tecum, 

hac re quod metuas adire, non est.

istud caelitibus datur severis:

nos vappae sumus et pusilla culti 
ruris numina, nos pudore pulso 
stamus sub Jove coleis apertis. 

ergo quilibet huc licebit intret 
nigri fornicis oblitus favilla.

---

Priapus bearing fruit. Engraving after Roman bronze. 
Pietro Santi Bartoli (Museum Odescalchum, sive, 
Theasaurus antiquarum gemmarum, 1751.)
Priapea

XV

HENDECASYLLABLE

Let the thief beware

Commisso mihi non satis modestas quicunque attulerit manus agello, is me sentiet esse non spadonem. dicat forsitan haec sibi ipse: “nemo hic inter frutices loco remoto percisum sciet esse me”, sed errat: magnis testibus ista res agetur.

affero (3): to lay X (acc.) upon Y (dat.)
agellus, -i m: a little field
committo (3), -misi, -missus: to entrust
erro (1): to make a mistake, err
forsitan: perhaps
frutex, fruticis m: shrub, bush
modestus, -a, -um: modest
percido (3), percidi, percisus: to assault, sodomize
quicunque, quaecunque, quodcunque: whoever
remotus, -a, -um: remote
satis: enough
scio (4): to know, understand
sentio (3): to perceive, feel, sense
spado, -nis m: eunuch
testis, -is m (1): witness
testis, -is m (2): testicle

commissio: perf. part. dat. modifying agello, “the garden having been charged to me”
non satis modestas: litotes, “immodest hands”
attulerit: fut. perf. in relative conditional clause, “whoever (if anyone) touches”
me esse: ind. st. after sentiet, “he will sense that I am”
spadonem: acc. pred., “that I am not a eunuch”
dicat: pres. subj. potential, “he might say”
loco remoto: abl. place where, “in this remote place” i.e., agello
percisum esse: perf. pass. inf. in ind. st. after sciet, “know that I have been assaulted”
magnis testibus: abl. of circumstance or means, “done with great witnesses or done with great testicles”
agetur: fut., “this will be done” or “this case will be tried”

Bacchanalia scene. White marble sarcophagus, 140-160 CE.
(National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
Qualibus Hippomenes rapuit Schoeneida pomis, qualibus Hesperidum nobilis hortus erat, qualia credibile est spatiantem rure paterno Nausicaam pleno saepe tulisse sinu, quale fuit malum, quod littera pinxit Aconti, qua lecta est cupidus pacta puella viro: taliacunque pius dominus florentis agelli imposuit mensae, nude Priape, tuae.
**Priapea**

**XVII**

**HENDECASYLLABLE**

Allow the thief to come!

Quid mecum tibi, circitor molestē?
ad me quid prohibes venire furem?
accedat, sine: laxior redibit.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accedo (3): to come near, approach</th>
<th>prohibeo (2): to hinder, restrain forbid, prevent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>circitor, -oris m: overseer</td>
<td>redo (4): to return, go back, give back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laxus, -a, -um: breached, wide open</td>
<td>sino (3): to allow, permit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>molestus, -a, -um: nasty, annoying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**tibi**: dat. of interest, “what (concern is there) to you?”

**venire**: inf. in noun clause after **prohibes**, “prevent the thief from coming”

**accedat**: jussive subj., “let him come”

**laxior**: “more opened” i.e. from being penetrated

---

![Figurine pitcher in the form of a Priapic dwarf.]

Terra cotta, 1st century CE. From Herculaneum. (National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)

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**XVIII**

**ELEGaic COUPLETS**

Size matters

Commoditas haec est in nostro maxima pene,
laxa quod esse mihi femina nulla potest.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>commoditas, -atis f: timeliness fitness, aptness</th>
<th>laxus, -a, -um: loose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>femina, -ae f: woman female</td>
<td>maximus, -a, -um: greatest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>penis, penis m: a penis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**laxa**: nom. pred., “no woman can be loose for me”

**quod potest**: noun clause in apposition to **commoditas**, “this advantage, namely that no woman can”
Telethusa’s dancing is a turn-on

Hic quando Telethusa circulatrix,
quae clunem tunica tegente nulla
excitatus altiusque motat,
crisabit tibi fluctuante lumbo.
haec sic non modo te, Priape, possit,
privignum quoque sed movere Phaedrae.

altus, -a, -um: high deep

circulatrix, -atrix f: female itinerant performer

clunis, clunis f: buttock
criso (1): to move the haunches as in copulation
excitatus, -a, -um: excited

crissato (1): to move the haunches as in copulation

fluctuo (1): to rise in waves, undulate
lumbus, -i m: loins
moto (1): to shake, stir

privignum, -i m: stepson
quando: when
tego (2): to cover, protect
tunica, -ae f: undergarment

Telethusa: a wanton dancer with the same name is mentioned in Martial 6.71.
tunica tegente: abl. abs., “with no tunic covering”
extitius altiusque: acc. adverbial, “more excitedly and higher”
fluctuante lumbo: abl. of manner, “with undulating loins”
haec: i.e. Telethusa
possit: pres. subj. pot., “this girl could” + inf.
non modo … quoque sed: “not only … but even”

privignum … Phaedra: “the stepson of Phaedra” i.e. Hippolytus, famously despising love.

Like the other gods, Priapus has his weapon

Fulmina sub Jove sunt, Neptuni fuscina telum,
ense potens Mars est, hasta, Minerva, tua est,

ense, ensis m: sword
fulmen, fulminis n: lightning
fuscinus, -ae f: trident

hasta, -ae f: spear, lance, javelin
potens: powerful, strong
telum, -i m: dart, weapon

sub Jove: “under the command of Jupiter”
telum: nom. pred., “the trident is the weapon of Neptune”
Mars … Minerva: vocatives, “is yours, Mars … Minerva”
Priapea

sutilibus Liber committit proelia thyrsis,

fertur Apollinea missa sagitta manu,

Herculis armata est invicti dextera clava:

at me terribilem mentula tenta facit.

---

sutilibus thyrsis: abl. of circumstance, “with stitched together wands”

fertur: “the arrow is said”

missa (sc. esse): impers. ind. st. after fertur, “the arrow is said to be sent”

Apollinea manu: abl. of means, “by Apollo’s hand”

Herculis: gen., “the right hand of Hercules”

clava: abl. of means, “armed with the club”

terribilem: acc. pred., “makes me terrible”

---

Phallus in the form of a winged lion.
Bronze tintinnabulum (wind chime), c. 1st century CE.
From Pompeii. (National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
Songs for a Phallic God

Don’t betray me, Priapus!

Copia me perdit: tu suffragare rogatus,  
indicio nec nos prode, Priape, tuo,  
quaeque tibi posui tamquam vernacula poma,  
de Sacra nulli dixeris esse via.

Everyone has something for Priapus

Femina si furtum faciet mihi virve puerve,  
haec cunnum, caput hic praebat, ille nates.

---

copia, -ae f: plenty, abundance

indicium, -i n: evidence (before a court) information, proof indication

perdo (3): to ruin, destroy lose waste

pono (3), posui: to put, place

Copia me perdit: “plenty has destroyed me” if the speaker is a prostitute, this suggest that her success is becoming a problem. Other commentators suggest that the speaker is the landowner, a thief, or a priest.

rogatus: perf. part. with conditional force, “if you should be asked to lend support”

indicio tuo: abl. of means, “with your evidence”

nec prode: imper. in prohibition, “don’t betray us”

quaeque…poma: acc. obj. of posui, “whatever apples I have placed”

tamquam vernacula: “as if from my farm”

nulli: dat. ind. obj., “say to no one”

dixeris: perf. subj. in apodosis of a future less vivid condition, “you should say”

esse: pres. inf. in ind. st. after dixeris, “say them to be”

de Sacra via: i.e. that s/he bought them from the Sacra via rather than brought them from his farm, perhaps because this street was a red-light district

---

caput, -itis n: head i.e. the mouth

cunnus, -i m: female genitalia (obsc.), “cunt”

defeminfa, -ae f: woman female

furtum, -i n: theft

natis, natis f: buttocks (pl.), rump

praebeo (2): to present, expose

si faciet: fut. in future more vivid protasis, “if a woman does”

mihi: dat. of advantage, “do a theft to me” i.e. steal “from me”

virve puerve: “or if man or boy”

praebat: jussive subj. taking the place of fut. more vivid apodosis, “let this one expose”
Priapea

XXIII

HENDECASYLLABLE

A curse on thieves

Quicunque hic violam rosamve carpet
furtivumve holus aut inempta poma,
defectus pueroque feminaque
hac tentigine, quam videtis in me,
rumpatur, precor, usque mentulaque
nequiquam sibi pulset umbilicum.

---

carpo (3): to pluck
deficio (3), defeci, defectus: to deprive, be lacking (+ abl.)
furtivus, -a, -um: furtive, secret
holus, holeris m: vegetables
inemptus, -a, -um: not bought, stolen
nequiquam: in vain
pomum, -i m: a fruit

precor (3): to beg, pray
pulso (1): to beat, pulsate
rosa, -ae f: a rose
rumpo, (3), rupi, ruptus: to break burst
tentigo, tentiginis f: tension, lust
umbilicus, -i m: navel
viola, -ae f: a violet

---

carpet: pres. subj. in future less vivid protasis, “whoever (i.e. if someone) were to pluck”
pueroque feminaque: abl. of sep. after defectus, “deprived of boy and girl”
defectus: perf. part. agreeing with subject of rumpatur, “having been deprived”
hac tentigine: abl. of means, “burst by this lust”
rumpatur: pres. subj. jussive, “let him be burst”
precor: parenthetical, “I pray”
pulset: pres. subj. jussive, “let his mentula pulsate”

---

XXIV

ELEGaic COUPLETS

Let the thief beware

Hic me custodem fecundi vilicus horti
mandati curam jussit habere loci.

---

cura, -ae f: concern, worry
custos, custodis m: guard
fecundus, -a, -um: fertile
hortus, -i m: garden

jubeo, (3), jussi, jussus: to order
locus, -i m: position, place
mando (1): to command, assign
vilicus, -i m: farm overseer

custodem: acc. pred., “me to be a guard”
me habere: ind. st. after jussit, “ordered me to have a care”
mandati: perf. part. gen. agreeing with loci, “of this place having been assigned to me”
Songs for a Phallic God

fur habeas poenam, licet indignere “feram”que “propter holus” dicas “hoc ego?” propter holus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>holus, holeris n: vegetables</th>
<th>poena, -ae f: punishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>indignor (1): to deem unworthy</td>
<td>propter: because of, on account of (+ acc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

habeas: pres. subj. jussive, “may you have this punishment”
indignere: pres. subj. 2 s. after licet, “although you deem it unworthy”
feram: fut., “will I endure this (punishment)?
propter holus: i.e. will I endure this just for stealing vegetables?
dicas: pres. subj. also after licet, “and although you say”

XXV

Priapus’ “scepter” is also an instrument of punishment

Hoc sceptrum, quod ab arbore est recisum nulla jam poterit virere fronde,
sceptrum, quod pathicae petunt puellae,
quod quidam cupiunt tenere reges,
cui dant oscula nobiles cinaedi,
intra viscera furis ibit usque
ad pubem capulumque coleorum.

nulla fronde: abl. of circumstance, “be green with no leaves” i.e. will never sprout again, parodying an epic phrase (e.g. Aen. 12.206, Iliad 1.234-6)
reges: punning on the literal meaning of sceptrum, a royal scepter
capulum coleorum: “up to the handle of my testicles,” i.e. to his mentula
Priapus pleads with Romans not to wear him out with sex

Porro - nam quis erit modus? - Quirites, aut praecidite seminalem membrum, quod totis mihi noctibus fatigant vicinae sine fine prurientes vernis passeribus salaciores, aut rumpar, nec habebitis Priapum. ipsi cernitis, effutatus ut sim confectusque macerque pallidusque, qui quondam ruber et valens solembam fures caedere quamlibet valentes. defecit latus et periculosam cum tussi miser exspuo salivam.


totis noctibus: abl. of time, “importune me so many nights” passeribus: abl. of comparison, “more lustful than sparrows” rumpar: fut. pass., “I will be burst” effututus ut sim confectusque: perf. subj. in noun clause following cernitis, “you perceive that I am worn out and made thin and pale” qui (sc. esse) solembam: rel. clause, “I who was accustomed (to be) red and healthy” caedere: pres. inf. complementing solembam, “who was accustomed to cut down thieves” periculosam: “dangerous saliva” because a sign of illness cum tussi: abl. of circumstance, “I spit with a cough”
Songs for a Phallic God

XXVII

ELEGaic COUPLETS

A dedication from Quintia

Deliae populi, magno notissima circo
Quintia, vibratas docta movere nates,
cymbala cum crotalis, pruriginis arma, Priapo
ponit et adducta tympana pulsa manu:
pro quibus, ut semper placeat spectantibus, orat,
tentaque ad exemplum sit sua turba dei.
Let the thief beware

Tu, qui non bene cogitas et aegre
carpendo tibi temperas ab horto,
pedicabere fascino pedali.
quod si tam gravis et molesta poena
non profecerit, altiora tangam.

Obscenity is appropriate to Priapus

Obscenis, peream, Priape, si non
uti me pudet improbisque verbis.
Priapus tells a wayfarer where he can slake his thirst

“Falce minax et parte tua majore, Priape, 
ad fontem, quae, mihi qua sit iter.”
vade per has vites, quarum si carpseris uvam, 
cur aliter sumas, hospes, habebis aquam.

---

**XXX**

Elegaic couplets

---

aliter: otherwise

pars, partis f: part

carpo (3), carpsi: to seize, pluck

quaeso (3): to beg, ask, ask for, seek

falx, falcis f: sickle, curved blade

sumo (3): to take up, select

fons, fontis m: spring, fountain

uva, -ae f: grape

hospes, hospitis m: guest, visitor

vado (3): to go, advance

iter, itineris n: journey road passage, path

vitis, -is f: grape vine

minax, minacis (gen.): threatening

falce ... parte: abl. of means, “threatening with a sickle ... with your part”

mihi: ind. obj., “say to me”

qua sit: pres. subj. in ind. quest., “tell me where is the route”

s i carpseris: fut. perf. in future more vivid protasis, “if you will have plucked”

sumas: pres. subj. in parenthetical deliberative question, “why would you choose otherwise?”

habebis aquam: a veiled threat of irrumation


Priapea

XXXI

CHOLIAMBS

Let the thief beware

Donec proterva nil mei manu carpes,
licebit ipsa sis pudicior Vesta.
sin, haec mei te ventris arma laxabunt,
exire ut ipse de tuo queas culo.

| armum, -i n: arms (pl.), weapons | protervus, -a, -um: violent |
| carpo (3): to seize, pluck | pudicus, -a, -um: chaste, modest |
| culus, -i m: anus, “asshole” | queo (2): to be able |
| donec: while, as long as, until | sin: (= si + ne) but if not |
| exeo, exire: to exit, pass through | venter, ventris m: stomach, womb belly |
| laxo (1): to loosen, open up | Vesta, -ae f: Vesta, virgin goddess of hearth |

donec carpes: fut. with conditional force, “as long as you not pluck nothing” i.e. if you pluck nothing
proterva manu: abl. of means, “pluck with a violent hand”
ipsa Vesta: abl. of comparison, “more chaste than Vesta herself”
sis: pres. subj. after licebit, “permitted that you be”
ut queas: pres. subj. in result clause, “so that you will be able” + inf.
de tuo culo: “through your own ass” because the opening will be so large

XXXII

HENDECASYLLABLE

A diatribe against a desiccated hag

Uvis aridior puella passis,
buxo pallidior novaque cera,
collatas sibi quae suisque membris

| aridus, -a, -um: dry, wrinkled | membrum, -i n: member, limb |
| buxus, -i f: boxwood | novus, -a, -um: new, fresh |
| cera, -ae f: beeswax | pallidus, -a, -um: pale, yellow-green |
| confero, conferre, contuli, collatus: to compare | patior (3), passus sum: suffer |
| uva, -ae f: grape | |

donis: abl. of comparison, “drier than grapes”
usis ... passis: “grapes that have suff ered” i.e. raisins
buxo novaque cera: abl. of comparison, “paler than boxwood and than new beeswax”
sibi suisque membris: dat. of comparison after collatas, “compared to her and her members”
formicas facit altilis videri,  
cuius viscera non aperta Tuscan  
per pellem poterit videre haruspex,  
qua suco caret ut putrisque pumex,  
nemo viderit hanc ut exspuentem,  
quam pro sanguine pulverem scobemque  
in venis medici putant habere,  
ad me nocte solet venire et affert  
pallore m aciemque larualen.  
ductor ferreus insulariaeqe  
lanternae videor fricare cornu.

---

**aferro, afferre**: bring to  
**altilis**, -e: fattened, fat  
**aperitus**, -a, -um: open, exposed  
**careo** (2): to be without, lack (+ abl.)  
**cornu**, cornus **m**: horn, hard covering  
**ducto** (1): to lead  
**expuo** (3): to spit out  
**ferreus**, -a, -um: made of iron  
**formica**, -ae **f**: ant  
**frico** (1): to rub, chafe  
**haruspex**, -icus **m**: soothsayer  
**insularius**, -a, -um: having to do with a neighborhood  
**lanterna**, -ae **f**: lantern  
**larualis**, -e: deathly, ghostly  
**macies**, maciei **f**: leanness

---

**medicus**, -i **m**: doctor  
**nemo**, neminis **m**: no one, nobody  
**pallor**, -oris **m**: paleness of complexion  
**pellis**, -is **f**: skin, hide pelt  
**pulvis**, pulveris **m**: powder  
**pumex**, pumicis **m**: pumice stone  
**putris**, -e: rotten, withered  
**sanguis**, sanguinis **m**: blood  
**scobis**, -is **f**: sawdust  
**soleo** (2): to be accustomed to (+ inf.)  
**succus**, -i **m**: juice, moisture  
**Tuscan**, -a, -um: Tuscan, i.e. Etruscan  
**vena**, -ae **f**: blood-vessel  
**video** (2): to see, seem (passive)  
**viscer**, visceris **n**: entrails

---

**videri**: pres. pass. inf. after factit, “causes ants to seem to be”  
**altilis**: acc. pred., “seems to be fat”  
**non aperta**: concessive, “although not open” i.e. not having been cut open  
**suco**: abl. of separation after caret, “lacks moisture”  
**viderit ut**: perf. subj. in result clause, “so that no one has seen”  
**quam habere**: ind. st. after putant, “whom the doctors think to have”  
**nocte**: abl. of time when, “at night”  
**ductor ... cornu**: the reading and interpretation of these last two lines are doubtful. What follows is based on the plausible suggestion of O’Connor.  
**ductor**: pres. pass. ind., “I am introduced (into her)”  
**ferreus**: “(I) made of iron” i.e. unfeeling  
**cornu**: acc. obj. of fricare, “I seem to scrape the horn of a neighborhood lantern”
A handy girlfriend

Naidas antiqui Dryasque habuere Priapi,
et quo tenta dei vena subiret, erat.
nunc adeo nihil est, adeo mea plena libido est,
ut Nymphas omnis interiisse putem.
turpe quidem factu, sed ne tentigine rumpar,
falce mihi posita fiet amica manus.

adeo: to such a degree (that) + result clause
amica, -ae f: a girlfriend
antiquus, -a, -um: old
Dryas, Dryados f: a Dryad, a tree nymph
falx, falcis f: a scythe
intereo, interire, interii, interitus: to perish, die
libido, libidinis f: desire
manus, -i, f: hand
Nais, Naidos f: a Naiad, nymph
nympha, -ae f: nymph
plenus, -a, -um: full
pono (3) posui, positus: to place, set aside
quidem: indeed (postpositive)
rumpo (3): to break destroy
subeo, subire: to go into
tentigo, tentiginis f: desire
tentus, -a, -um: tight
turpis, -e: ugly, nasty
vena, -ae f: blood-vessel (= mentula)

habuere: (= habuerunt) apocopated perf., “the old Priapuses possessed”
quo ... subiret: impf. subj. in rel. clause of characteristic, “to which the member could go”
erat (sc. locum): locum is the understood antecedent of quo, “there was a place to which”

ut putem: pres. subj. in result clause after adeo, “such that I suppose”
interiisse: perf. inf. in ind. st. after putem, “that all the nymphs have died”

factu: supine abl. of specification after turpe, “terrible thing to do”
ne rumpar: pres. subj. in negative purpose clause, “lest I be burst”
tentigine: abl. of means, “lest I be burst by my desire”
falce posita: abl. abs., “my scythe having been set aside”
fiet: fut., “my hand will become”

Phallus in the form of a winged animal.
Bronze tintinnabulum (wind chime), c. 1st century CE.
(National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
A thank offering to Priapus

Cum sacrum fieret deo salaci,
conducta est pretio puella parvo
communis satis omnibus futura,
quae quot nocte viros peregit una,
tot verpas tibi dedicat salignas.

Let the Thief beware

Pedicabere, fur, semel, sed idem
si deprensus eris bis, irrumabo.
quod si tertia furta molieris,
Priapea

ut poenam patiare et hanc et illam,
pedicaberis irrumaberisque.

patior (3): to suffer, endure
pedico (1): to sodomize, “assfuck”

ut patiare: pres. subj. in purpose clause, “so that you suffer”
pedicaberis irrumaberisque: fut. perf. pass. in a future more vivid apodosis, “you will be assfucked and facefucked”

XXXVI

Priapus has his claim to fame too

Notas habemus quisque corporis formas:
Phoebus comosus, Hercules lacertosus,
trahit figuram virginis tener Bacchus,
Minerva flava, lumine est Venus paeto,
frontem vides cornutos Arcades Faunos,
habet decentes nuntius deum plantas,
tutela Lemni dispares movet gressus,
intonsa semper Aesculapio barba est,

Arcadis, -e: Arcadian
Bacchus, -i m: Bacchus, god of wine
barba, -ae f: beard
comosus, -a, -um: having abundant hair
cornutus, -a, um: horned
corpus, corporis m: body
decens, decentis (gen.): appropriate
dispar, -ris (gen.): unequal, disparate, unlike
Faunus, -i m: rustic deity of forest
flavus, -a, -um: yellow-haired
forma, -ae f: form, figure
frons, frontis m: forehead
gressus, -us m: steps (pl.)
Hercules, Herculis m: Hercules (Greek hero of great strength)

intonsus, -a, -um: uncut unshaven
lacertosus, -a, -um: muscular, brawny
lumen, luminis m: light, eye (of a person)
Minerva, -ae f: Minerva, Roman goddess of wisdom
notus, -a, -um: notable, famous
nuntius, -i m: messenger
paetus, -a, -um: squinting slightly
Phoebus, -i m: Phoebus Apollo
planta, -ae f: heel, foot
tener, -era, -erum: tender
traho (3): to draw, drag, haul derive, get
tutela, -ae f: a guardian
virgo, virginis f: maiden

quisque: nom. subject, “we each one”
lumine paeto: abl. of description, “with squinting eye”
frontem: acc. of respect, “with respect to his forehead”
nuntius deum (=deorum): “messenger of the gods” i.e. Mercury
decentes plantas: “appropriate feet” i.e., “winged”
tutela Lemni: i.e. Vulcan, the lame god of the forge located on Lemnos
gressus: acc. cognate, “takes unequal steps”
Aesculapio: dat. of possession, “Aesculapius’ beard is uncut”
nemo est feroci pectorosior Marte:
quod si quis inter haec locus mihi restat,
deus Priapo mentulatior non est.
Priapea

huic dixi: “fer opem, Priape, parti,
cuius tu, pater, ipse pars videris,
qua salva sine sectione facta
ponetur tibi picta, quam levaris,
partem consimilisque concolorque.”

promisit fore mentulamque movit
pro nutu deus et rogata fecit.

XXXVIII

ELEGaic COUPLETS

Apples for ass

Simpliciter tibi me, quodcunque est, dicere oportet,
natura est quoniam semper aperta mihi:

me dicere: pres. inf. after oportet, “it is right that I say”
aperta: pred. adj., “my nature is open”
Songs for a Phallic God

pedicare volo, tu vis decerpere poma,
quod peto, si dederis, quod petis, accipies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accipio (3): to receive</th>
<th>peto (3): to desire, ask</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decerpo (3): to pluck, harvest</td>
<td>pomum, -i m: fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedico (1): to sodomize, “assfuck”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

si dederis: fut. perf. in future more vivid protasis, “If you give”

XXXIX

Beauty vs. the Beast

Forma Mercurius potest placere,
forma conspiciendus est Apollo,
formosus quoque pingitur Lyaeus,
formosissimus omnium est Cupido.

me pulchra fateor carere forma,
verum mentula luculenta nostra est:
hanc mavult sibi quam deos priores,
si qua est non fatui puella cunni.

Apollo, Apollinis m: Apollo
careo (2): to be without, lack (+ abl.)
conspicio (3): to see face to face
cunnus, -i m: female genitalia (obsc.), “cunt”
Cupido, Cupidinis m: Cupid
fateor (3): to confess
fatuus, -a, -um: foolish, silly
forma, -ae f: form, figure
formosus, -a, -um: beautiful

Luculentus, -a, -um: brilliant, splendid
Lyaeus, -i m: Lyaeus, Bacchus
malo, malle (3): to prefer
Mercurius, -i m: Mercury
pingo (3): to paint, portray
placeo (2): to be pleasing
prior, prioris m: prior
pulcher, -a, -um: pretty beautiful

forma: abl. of manner, “Mercury is pleasing in form”
conspiciendus est: pass. periphrastic, “Apollo ought to be seen”
formosus: pred. adj., “Lyaeus is depicted as beautiful”
pulchra forma: abl. of separation after carere, “that I lack beautiful form”
hanc: i.e. mentulam
mavult: 3rd s. pres. of malo, “a girl prefers”
quam: “more than the earlier gods”
si qua (=alia) puella: “any girl”
non fatui cunni: gen. of description, “with a not foolish cunt”
A prostitute's dedication to Priapus

Nota Suburanas inter Telethusa puellas,
quae, puto, de quaestu libera facta suo est,
cingit inaurata penem tibi, sancte, corona:
hoc pathicae summi numinis instar habent.

Suburanas: this quarter in Rome was the red light district
libera: nom. pred., “has made herself free”
inaurata… corona: abl. of means, “surrounded with a gilded crown”
sancte: voc. i.e. Priapus
hoc… instar: “this likeness”
pathicae: nom. pl., “perverted women”

A curse on erudite poets

Quisquis venerit huc, poeta fiat
et versus mihi dedicet jocosos.
qui non fecerit, inter eruditos
ficosissimus ambulet poetas.

venerit: perf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “whoever has come”
fiat … dedicet: pres. subj. jussive, “let him become and let him dedicate”
non fecerit: perf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “he who has not made”
ambulet: pres. subj. jussive, “let him walk”
**XLII**

**ELEGaic COUPLETS**

*A dedication to Priapus*

Laetus Aristagoras natis bene vilicus uvis
de cera facta dat tibi poma, deus.
at tu sacrati contentus imagine pomi
fac veros fructus ille, Priape, ferat.

cera, -ae f: wax, beeswax
contentus, -a, -um: content with (+ abl.)
fructus, -us m: fruit
imago, imaginis f: likeness, image
laetus, -a, -um: happy
natus, -a, -um: born, produced

natis uvis: abl. abs., “with grapes produced by nature”
de cera: wax apples were the offerings to Priapus
deus: voc., “to you, O god” i.e. Priapus
imagine: abl. of specification after contentus, “satisfied with the image”
ferat: pres. subj. in noun clause after fac, “make it so that he (Aristagoras) bears” i.e. in exchange for the wax offerings

**XLIII**

**ELEGaic COUPLETS**

*Priapus’ member is attractive to women*

Velle quid hanc dicas, quamvis sim ligneus, hastam,
oscula dat medio si qua puella mihi?
augure non opus est: “in me” mihi credite, dixit
“utetur veris viribus hasta rudis.”

augur, auguris m: diviner, prophet
credo (3): to trust, believe
hasta, -ae f: spear
ligneus, -a, -um: wooden
opus, operis n: need
osculum, -i n: a kiss

quamvis: although (+ subj.)
rudis, -e: rough, coarse
utor (3): to make use of (+ abl.)
verus, -a, -um: true
vis, vis f: strength
volo, velle: to wish, want

velle: pres. inf. in ind. question after dicas, “say that (a girl) wishes”
quid dicas: pres. subj. potential, “why would you say?”
 quamvis sim: pres. subj. in concessive clause, “although I am wooden”
medio: abl. of place where, “in the middle”
si qua puella: “if perchance a girl”
augure: abl. after opus, “there is no need for a diviner”
dixit: perf., “she said”
veris viribus: abl. of means after utetur, “will use its true strength”
Let the thief beware

Nolite omnia, quae loquor, putare per lusum mihi per jocumque dici. deprensos ego ter quaterque fures omnes, non dubitetis, irrumabo.

depredo (3), depredi, deprensus: to seize, catch

dubito (1): to doubt

fur, -is m: a thief

irrumo (1): to orally assault, “facefuck”
jocus, -i m: joke

loquor (3): to speak

lusus, -us m: play

nolo, nolle: to be unwilling (+ inf.)

puto (1): to suppose, think

quater: four times
ter: three times

nolite: pres. imper. in prohibition, “Don’t!” + inf.
dici: pres. inf. pass. in ind. st. after putare, “don’t think that it is said”
dubitetis: pres. subj. in prohibition where we would expect ne, “don’t doubt!”

Don’t bother curling your hair

Cum quendam rigidus deus videret ferventi caput ustulare ferro, ut Maurae similis foret puellae, “heus” inquit “tibi dicimus, cinaede, uras te licet usque torqueasque,

cinaedus, -i m: catamite, effeminate man

rigidus, -a, -um: stiff

ferrum, -i n: an iron tool

similis, -e: like, similar, resembling

fervens, -entis (gen.): red hot

torqueo (2): to twist, torture

licet: although (+ subj.)

uro (3): to burn

Maurus, -a, -um: Moorish, North African

ustulo (1): to scorch, char

videret: impf. subj. in cum circumstantial clause, “when he sees”

ustulare: inf. in ind. st. after videret, “sees some youth to scorch”

ferro: abl. means, “scorch with a curling iron”

ut foret: impf. subj. in purpose clause, “in order to be similar to”

Maurae puellae: dat. after similis, “similar to a Moorish girl” i.e. to make her hair curly

eras … torqueasque: pres. subj. concessive after licet, “even though you burn and twist (your hair)”
num tandem prior es puella, quaeso, quam sint, mentula quos habet, capilli?"

---

capillus, -i m: hair
prior … quam: more … than
quaeso (3): to beg, ask, ask for, seek
tandem: finally

prior … quam: “more a girl than the hairs”
quaeso: parenthetical, “please”
sint: pres. subj. anticipatory after prior … quam, “more than the hairs would be”
mentula quos habet: i.e. his pubic hair

---

A diatribe against an old hag

O non candidior puella Mauro, sed morbosior omnibus cinaedis, Pygmaeo brevior gruem timenti, ursis asperior pilosiorque, Medis laxior Indicus bracis: mallem scilicet ut libenter ires, nam quamvis videar satis paratus,

---

asper, -a, -um: rough braca, -ae f: trousers (pl.) brevis, -e: short, little candidus, -a, -um: bright, white cinaedus, -i m: catamite, effeminate man gruis, gruis m: crane Indicus, -a, -um: Indian laxus, -a, -um: loose, lax malo, malle: to prefer Maurus, -i m: Moor (inhabitant of North Africa)

---

Mauro: abl. of comparison, “no whiter than a Moor” omnibus cinaedis: abl. of comparison, “sicker than all perverts” Pygmaeo timenti: abl. of comparison, “shorter than the Pygmy who fears” a legendary battle between Pygmies and cranes was a famous subject of art ursis: abl. of comparison, “rougner than bears” mallem: impf. subj. potential, “I should much prefer” ut ires: impf. subj. in noun clause after mallem, “prefer that you would go” videar: pres. subj. concessive, “although I seem”
Priapea

erucarum opus est decem maniplis, fossas inguinis ut teram dolemque cunni vermiculos scaturrientes.

dolo (1): to batter, cudgel
eruca, -ae f: rocket, an aphrodisiac
fossa, -ae f: ditch
inguen, inguinis m: groin
maniplus, -i m: handful, bundle

opus est: “there is need for” + abl.

ut teram: pres. subj. in purp. clause, “in order to rub the ditches”

ut dolem: pres. subj. in purp. clause, “in order to batter the maggots”

XLVII

A curse on anyone not bringing poetry to dinner

Quicunque vestrum, qui venitis ad cenam,
libare nullos sustinet mihi versus,
illius uxor aut amica rivalem
lasciviendo languidum, precor, reddat,
et ipse longa nocte dormiat solus
libidinosis incitatus erucis.

amica, -ae f: girl friend
cena, -ae f: dinner
dormio (4): to sleep
eruca, -ae f: rocket, an aphrodisiac
incito (1): to urge, on arouse
languidus, -a, -um: weak, languid
lascivio (4): to act lasciviously
libidinosus, -a, -um: lustful, wanton

libo (1): to pour (a libation) in offering
precor (1): to pray
reddo (3): to return
rivalis, -is m: rival (esp. in love)
sustineo (2): to sustain, continue (+ inf.)
uxor, -oris f: wife
versus, -us m: line, verse (of poetry)

vestrum: gen. partitive, “whoever of you”
libare: pres. inf. complementing sustinet, “who continue to pour out”
lascivendo: gerund abl. of means, “by acting lasciviously,” i.e. by lengthy love-making
languidum: acc. pred., “render his rival languid”
reddat: pres. subj. jussive, “let his wife render his rival”
longa nocte: abl. of time within which, “in a long night”
dormiat: pres. subj. jussive, “let him sleep”
libidinosis erucis: abl. of means, “aroused by lusty aphrodisiacs”
Priapus’ source of moisture

Quod partem madidam mei videtis,
per quam significor Priapus esse,
non ros est, mihi crede, nec pruina,
sed quod sponte sua solet remitti,
cum mens est pathicae memor puellae.

---

madidus, -a, -um: wet, moist remitto (3): to send back
memor, -oris (gen.): mindful of (+ gen.)
mens, mentis f: mind
paris, partis f: a part, member
pathicus, -a, -um: lascivious, perverse
pruina, -ae f: hoar-frost

madidam: acc. pred., “the part that is wet”
sponte sua: abl. of manner, “spontaneously”
significor . . . esse: the personal form of ind. st., “I am shown to be”
remitti: pres. inf. pass. complementing solet, “accustomed to be returned” i.e. by an ejaculation

---

XLIX

ELEGAIC COUPLETS

Don’t be offended by these poems

Tu, quicunque vides circa tectoria nostra
non nimium casti carmina plena joci,
versibus obscenis offendi desine: non est
mentula subducti nostra supercilii.

---

castus, -a, -um: pure, moral chaste

desino (3): to stop, cease to (+ inf.)
jocus, -i m: joke, jest sport
nimium: too much, very
obscenus, -a, -um: obscene
offendo (3): to offend

plenus, -a, -um: full of (+ gen.)
subduco (3), -duxi, -ductus: to raise up
supercilium, -i n: eyebrow, frown, arrogance
tectorium, -i n: plastering (of walls)
versus, -us m: line, verse (of poetry)

non nimium: litotes, “not too much chaste” i.e. too little
casti... joci: gen. after plena, “full of not too chaste jest”
versibus obscenis: abl. of means, “offended by obscene verses”
offendi: pres. pass. inf. in ind. com., “stop being offended”
subducti supercilii: gen. of desc., “a prick with a raised eyebrow,” i.e. a supercilious mentula
Priapea

Priapus' help is sought

Quaedam, si placet hoc tibi, Priape, ficosissima me puella ludit
et nec dat mihi nec negat daturam,
causas invenit usque differendi.
quae si contigerit fruenda nobis,
totam cum paribus, Priape, nostris
cingemus tibi mentulam coronis.

causa, -ae f: cause, reason
fruor (3): to enjoy (+ abl.)
ียงenio (4): to discover, invent
ludo (3): to mock, tease
nego (1): to deny (+ inf.)
par, paris m: an equal, partner
placeo (2): to please (+ dat.)
totus, -a, -um: whole, all

si placet hoc tibi: “if this is pleasing to you,” a polite formula

daturam (sc. esse): fut. inf. in ind. st. after negat, “does not deny that she will give”
differendi: gerund gen. after causas, “reasons for delaying”
si contigerit: fut. perf. in more vivid protasis, “if she will have attained” + part.
fruenda: fut. pass. part. nom. f. supplementing contigerit, “attained enjoying us,” i.e. if she finally enjoys me
cum paribus: “your whole member with its partners,” i.e. his testicles
nostris … coronis: abl. means, “encircle with our wreaths”

LI

Choliambns

Thieves seek not the fruits of Priapus’ garden, but the punishment he metes out

Quid hoc negoti est quae suspicer causa
venire in hortum plurimos meum fures,

causa, -ae f: cause, reason
plurimus, -a, -um: very many
negotium, -i n: work, business
suspicor (1): to mistrust, suspect suppose

negoti: gen. of value, “what is this of business,” i.e. what is the value of this activity?
quave…causa: abl. of cause, “for what reason” i.e. why?
suspicer: pres. subj. in deliberative quest., “why would I suspect?”
venire: pres. inf. in ind. st. after suspicer, “that many thieves enter”
cum, quisquis in nos incidit, luat poenas et usque curvos excavetur ad lumbos? non ficus hic est praeferenda vicinae uvaeque, quales flava legit Arete, non mala truncis adserenda Picenis pirumve, tanto quod periculo captes, magisque cera luteum nova prunum sorbumve ventres lubricos moraturum. praesigne rami nec mei ferunt morum

---

**Songs for a Phallic God**

cum, quisquis in nos incidit, luat poenas et usque curvos excavetur ad lumbos? non ficus hic est praeferenda vicinae uvaeque, quales flava legit Arete, non mala truncis adserenda Picenis pirumve, tanto quod periculo captes, magisque cera luteum nova prunum sorbumve ventres lubricos moraturum.

---

**cum, quiaquis in nos incidit, luat poenas et usque curvos excavetur ad lumbos?**

“since he pays ... and is hollowed out”

**usque ad lumbos:** “all the way up to the loins,” i.e. as deeply as possible

**praefere, praefere:** to prefer

**quaesque, quaeque, quodquod:** whoever

**viceinae:** dat. after *praeferenda*, “to my neighbor’s (fig)”

**uvaeque:** “and there are no grapes here”

**quales legit:** “of the sort Arete gathers”

**cum, quisquis in nos incidit, luat poenas et usque curvos excavetur ad lumbos?**

“Areté: the wife of Alcinous, renowned for his gardens (Odyssey 6-8)”

**non adserenda,** pass. periphrastic, “our apples must not be set near” + dat., i.e. ought not be compared to

**pirumve ... prunum ... sorbumve:** also subjects of *adserenda*

**tanto periculo:** abl. of circumstance, “with such great danger”

**quod captes:** pres. subj. in rel. clause of characteristic, “which you would pluck”

**cera nova:** abl. of specification, “yellow with newer beeswax”

**moraturum:** fut. part., “serviceberry destined to delay” i.e. causing constipation
nucemve longam, quam vocant Abellanam, amygdalumve flore purpureae fulgens. non brassicarum ferre glorior caules betasve, quantas hortus educet nullus, crescentse semper in suum caput porrum. nec seminosas ad cucurbitas quemquam ad ocimumve cucumeresque humi fusos venire credo sessilesve lactucas acresque cepas aliumque furatum, nec ut salaces nocte tollat eruca mentamque olentem cum salubribus rutis.

<table>
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<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priapea</td>
<td>Abellanam: a region in the south of Italy known for fruit and nut trees</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
quantas … educet: pres. subj. in ind. question after glorior, “how much no garden produces”|ad: with acc. expressing purpose, “for my gourds, etc.”|
quemquam: acc. subject of venire below, “nor believe that anyone comes”|humis: loc., “poured out on the ground”|
fusos: perf. part. circumstantial, “cucumbers that have been poured out”|furatum: acc. supine expressing purpose after venire, “come to steal”|
|ut … tollat: pres. subj. in purp. clause, “nor in order to remove”|---|---|---|
Songs for a Phallic God

quae cuncta quamvis nostro habemus in saepto,
non pauciora proximi ferunt horti.
quibus relictis in mihi laboratum
locum venitis, improbissimi fures:
nimirum apertam convolatis ad poenam,
hoc vos et ipsum, quod minamur, invitat.

non pauciora: litotes, “not smaller”
quibus relictis: abl. abs., “which things (i.e. the neighbors’ better produce) having been left behind”
laboratum: perf. part. agreeing with locum, “a place that is cared for by me”

Let the thief beware

Heus tu, non bene qui manum rapacem
mandato mihi contines ab horto,
jam primum stator hic libidinosus
alternis et eundo et exeundo
porta te faciet patentiorem.

LII

non bene: understood with contiens, “you who not well restrain your hand” i.e. who can’t stop stealing
mihi: dat. after mandato, “garden commissioned to me”
stator: a cult title of Jupiter, here Priapus
eundo et exeundo: abl. gerunds, “by entering and exiting”
porta: abl. of comp., “more open than a gate”
patentiorem: acc. pred., “will make you more open”
accedunt duo, qui latus tuentur,
pulchre pensilibus peculiati,
qui cum te male foderint jacentem,
ad pratum veniet salax asellus
nilo deterius mutuniatus.
quare qui sapiet, malum cavebit,
cum tantum sciat esse mentularum.

contentus, -a, -um: satisfied, content with
(+ abl.)

capiant: pres. subj. cum concessive clause, “although they scarcely (vix) hold” i.e. because there is so much new wine
Songs for a Phallic God

magnaque fecundis cum messibus area desit,
in Cereris crines una corona datur.
tu quoque, dive minor, majorum exempla secutus,
quamvis paucis damus, consule poma boni.

---
desit: pres. subj. in cum concessive clause, “although large enough space is lacking” i.e. because the harvests are so abundant
messibus: dat. of reference, “lacking for harvests”
dive minor: voc., “Oh minor god” i.e. Priapus
majorum (sc. deorum): “the examples of the greater gods”
boni: gen. of value with consule, “consider them good”

---

LIV

ELEGaic COUPLETS

An alphabetic threat

“ED” si describas temonemque insuper addas,
qui medium vult te scindere, pictus erit.

---
desciption of the relative clause qui…scindere, “that which wishes to split you down the middle will have been portrayed” The picture will look something like this: E---D which looks something like an erect penis

---
addo (3): add, insert
describo (3): to write down
insuper: in addition
medius, -a, -um: middle

---
describas … addas: pres. subj. in fut. less vivid protasis, “if you were to write down… were to add”
pictus erit: fut. perf. in future more vivid apodosis, whose subject is the antecedent of the relative clause qui…scindere, “that which wishes to split you down the middle will have been portrayed” The picture will look something like this: E---D which looks something like an erect penis

---
addo (3): add, insert
describo (3): to write down
insuper: in addition
medius, -a, -um: middle

---
pinto (3), pinxi, pictus: to paint, portray
temo, temonis m: pole, beam
scindo (3): to cut
velo, velle: to be willing (+ inf.)
Priapus fears losing something worse than his sickle

Credere quis possit? falcem quoque - turpe fateri - de digitis fures subripuere meis.

nec movet amissi tam me jactura pudorque quam praebeant justos altera tela metus:
quae si perdidero, patria mutabor, et olim

ille tuus civis, Lampsace, Gallus ero.

**amitto** (3), **amisi**, **amissus**: to lose
**civis**, **civis** *m*: fellow citizen
**credo** (3): to trust, believe
**digitus**, -i *m*: finger
**falcis** *f*: sickle
**fator** (2): to admit, confess
**fur**, -is *m*: thief
**Gallus**, -i *m*: Gaul, a priest of Cybele
**jactura**, -ae *f*: cost
**justus**, -a, -um: just, proper
**Lampsacus**, -i *m*: Lampascus, the hometown of Priapus
**metus**, **metus** *m*: fear

**moveo** (2): to affect, provoke
**muto** (1): to move, change
**olim**: formerly
**patria**, **patriae** *f*: native land
**perdo** (3), **perdidi**, **perditus**: to lose
**praebeo** (2): to expose, show
**pudor**, **pudoris** *m*: sense of honor
**subripio** (3), **subripui**, **subreptus**: to snatch away, steal
**tam ... quam**: so much ... as
**telum**, -i *n*: weapon
**turpis**, -e: disgraceful, shameful

possit: pres. subj. pot., “who could believe?”
fateri: epexegetic inf. after *turpe*, “disgraceful to confess”
subripuere: apocopated perf. (=subripuerunt), “thieves have stolen”
amissi: perf. part. gen. after *jactura*, “nor does the cost of this thing having been lost move me”
perdidero: fut. perf. in more vivid protasis, “if I will have lost them”
Gallus ero: “I will be a Gaul” but Gallus also refers to the castrated priests of Cybele.

**Priapus is derided by a thief**

Derides quoque, fur, et impudicum ostendis digitum mihi minanti?

**derideo** (2): to mock, deride
**digitus**, -i *m*: finger
**fur**, **furis** *m*: thief

**impudicus**, -a, -um: shameless, unchaste
**mino** (1): to threaten
**ostendo** (2): to show, reveal

**mihi minanti**: dat. ind. obj., “show to me, who is threatening”
Songs for a Phallic God

eheu me miserum, quod ista lignum est, quae me terribilem facit videri.
mandabo domino tamen salaci, ut pro me velit irrumare fures.

---

dominus, -i m: owner, master
facio (3): to make, cause to be (+ inf.)
furs, furis m: thief
irrumo (1): to orally assault, “facefuck”
lignum, -i n: wood
mando (1): to order

miser, -a -um: miserable
salax, salacis (gen.): lecherous, lustful
terribilis, -e: frightful, terrible
video (2): to see, seem (passive)
volo, velle: to wish

me miserum: acc. exclamatory, “woe is me!”
ista (sc. mentula): nom. subject, “because this is wood”
videri: inf. pass. after facit, “makes me seem terrible”
domino salaci: dat. ind. obj., “command my lustful master”
pro me: “on my behald”
ut…velit: pres. subj. in ind. com., “I will order him to wish” + inf.

---

A diatribe against an old woman

Cornix et caries vetusque bustum, turba putida facta saeculorum, quae forsan potuisset esse nutrix Tithoni Priamique Nestorisque, illis ni pueris anus fuisset,

---

anus, anus f: old woman, hag
bustum, busti n: tomb, corpse
caries, cariei f: rottenness
cornix, -icis f: a crow
forsan: perhaps
nutrix, nutricis f: nurse

possum, posse, potui: to be able
puer, pueri m: boy, lad
putidus, -a -um: rotten, decaying
saeculum, -i n: age, generation
turba, turbae f: commotion, disturbance
vetus, veteris (gen.): old, aged

turba: abl. of means, “made foul by the disturbance” i.e by the effects of aging
putida facta: nom. f. agreeing with the idea of an old woman, not any of the words from the previous sentence describing her, “she, having been made foul”
potuisset: plupf. subj. in rel. clause of characteristic, “who might have been able to be a nurse”

Tithoni Priamique Nestorisque: gen., all men who reached a legendary old age
illis … pueris: abl. abs., “when they were boys”

---

ni…fuisset: plupf. subj. in past contrafactual protasis, “if she had not been an old woman” i.e. if she had not been much older even than those men
ne desit sibi, me rogat, fututor.
quid si nunc roget, ut puella fiat?
“Si nummos tamen haec habet, puella est.”

LVIII

A curse for thieves

Quicunque nostram fur fefellerit curam, effeminato verminet procul culo, quaeque hic proterva carpserit manu poma puella, nullum reperiat fututorem.

desum, deesse: to be wanting
fututor, -oris m: a sex partner, “fucker”
ummus, -i m: cash, money
puella, -ae f: girl
rogo (1): to ask

ne desit: pres. subj. in ind. command, “asks that a sex partner not be lacking from” + dat.
quid (sc. dicam): deliberative question, “what (should I say)?
si roget: pres. subj. in less vivid protasis, “if she should ask”
fiat: pres. subj. in ind. command, “ask to be come a girl”
puella est: “she is a girl” i.e. because men will treat her like a girl for money

fefellerit: perf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “whatever thief has cheated”
curam: i.e. the garden of Priapus
effeminato… cULO: dat. after verminet, “itch for an effeminate behind”
verminet: pres. subj. jussive, “may he itch for” + dat.
proterva… manu: abl. means, “has plucked with a violent hand”
carpserit: perf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “whatever girl has plucked”
reperiat: pres. subj. jussive, “may she never find!”

procul: away, at distance, far off
manus, -us f: hand
pomum, -i n: fruit
proterus, -a, -um: violent, impudent
reperio (4): to find, obtain
vermino (1): to have an itch for (+ dat.)
Songs for a Phallic God

LIX

Let the thief beware

Praedictum tibi ne negare possis:
si fur veneris, in pudicus exis.

exeo, exire: to exit, leave
fur, furis m: thief
nego (1): to deny

praedictum, -i n: prediction, forewarning
in pudicus, -a, -um: shameless
venio (4), veni, venus: to come

ne ... possis: pres. subj. in prohibition, “may you not be able to” + inf.
veneris: fut. perf. in more vivid protasis, “if you come”

LX

ELEGIAIC COUPLETS

Si quot habes versus, tot haberes poma, Priape,
esses antiquo ditior Alcinoo.

antiquus, -a, -um: old, ancient
ditior -us: richer
pomum, -i n: fruit
versus, -us m: line, verse (of poetry)

quot ... tot: correlatives, “as many ... as”
haberes: impf. subj. in present contrafactual protasis, “if you (now) had”
esses: impf. subj. in present contrafactual apodosis, “you would be”
antiquo Alcinoo: abl. of comparison, “wealthier than old Alcinous” whose legendary
garden is described in Odyssey 6-8.

LXI

HENDECASYLLABLE

The burdens of trees in the garden of Priapus

Quid frustra quereris, colone, mecum,
quod quondam bene fructuosa malus
autumnis sterilis duobus adstem?

adsto (1): to stand to
autumnus, -i m: autumn, harvest
colonus, -i m: farmer
fructuosus, -a, -um: fruitful, productive
frustra: in vain

malus, mali f: apple tree
queror (3): to complain
quondam: formerly
sterilis, -e: barren, fruitless

quod ... adstem: pres. subj in noun clause after quereris, complain that I am still standing”
fructuosa malus: nom. appositive, “I, once a productive apple tree”
autumnis duobus: abl. of time, “sterile for two autumns”
non me praegravat, ut putas, senectus, 5
nec sum grandine verberata dura,
nec gemmas modo germine exuentes
seri frigoris ustulavit aura,
nec venti pluviae siccitasve,
quod de se quererer, malum dederunt,
non sturnus mihi graculusve raptor
aut cornix anus aut aquosus anser
aut corvus nocuit siticulosus:
sed quod carmina pessimi poetae
ramis sustineo laboriosis.

---

grandine dura: abl. of means, “I was not beaten by hard hail”
germine: abl. of place from which, “buds coming from the sprout”
aura: nom. subject of ustulavit, “nor did a wind scorch”
de se: referring to the subject of the main clause (the birds of the next lines), not the relative clause, “complain about them”
quererer: impf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “about which I would complain”
malum dederunt: “nor did they (birds) make mischief”
graculusve raptor: hendiadys, “a jackdaw and plunderer” i.e. a plundering jackdaw
cornix anus: hendiadys, “an old woman crow,” i.e. an old crow
sed quod: “but rather (I am no longer fruitful) because”
carmina: these “poems” of the worst poet could be these very poems of Priapus or the dedications to him hung on the tree. The singular pessimi poetae favors the first possibility, which would be a humorous comment on Priapus by one of the trees he protects.
ramis... laboriosis: abl. of place, “I sustain on my burdened limbs”
**Songs for a Phallic God**

**LXII**  
**ELEGACIOUS COUPLETS**

**Priapus reassures the watch dogs**

Securi dormite, canes: custodiet hortum  
cum sibi dilecta Sirius Erigone.

---

**canis** - *is* *m:* dog

**custodio** (4): to guard, protect

**dilectus** - *a* - *um:* beloved, dear

**dormio** (4): to sleep, rest

**Erigone** - *es* *f:* Erigone, daughter of Icarius

**securi:** a nominative adjective used adverbially, “sleep untroubled!”

**cum dilecta… Erigone:** abl. of accomp., “with his beloved Erigone”  
Sirius (or Maera) was a legendary dog who led his mistress Erigone to her father’s grave where she committed suicide. Erigone’s example of filial piety is a stark contrast to Priapus, but her name may suggest an erection (from erigo (3), erigi, erectus)

---

**LXIII**  
**CHOLIAMBS**

**Priapus complains**

Parum est, quod hic cum fixerunt mihi sedem,  
agente terra per caniculum rimas  
siticulosam sustinemus aestatem?  
parum, quod hiemis perfluo sinus imbres  
et in capillos grandines cadunt nostros  
rigetque dura barba vincita crystallo?

---

**aestas** - *atis* *f:* summer, summer heat

**ago** (3), *egi, actus:* to do, drive

**barba** - *ae* *f:* beard

**cado** (3): to fall, sink

**canicula** - *ae* *f:* little dog, Sirius, the dogstar

**capillus** - *i* *m:* hair, hair of head

**crystallum** - *i* *m:* ice

**durus** - *a* - *um:* hard, rough

**figo** (3), *fixi, fictus:* to fasten, fix

**grando** - *inis* *f:* hail, hail-storm

**hiems** - *is* *f:* winter

**imber** - *bris* *m:* rain, shower

**parum:** too, very little

**perfluo** (3): to flow, run through

**rigeo** (2): to be stiff or numb

**rima** - *riam* *f:* crack

**sedes** - *edis* *f:* seat, home

**sinus** - *us* *m:* fold (of clothing)

**siticulusus** - *a* - *um:* very dry, parched

**sustineo** (2): to endure

**terra** - *ae* *f:* earth, land

**vincio** (4), *vinxi, vinctus:* to bind, fetter

---

**parum est:** “is it too little?” i.e. isn’t it enough?

**quod … sustinemus:** noun clause explaining the main clause, “is it not enough that we endure”

**cum fixerunt:** indicative identifying a precise time, “when they fixed this seat for me”

**agente terra:** abl. abs. “the earth making cracks” i.e. from lack of water

**per caniculum:** temporal, “during the dogstar” i.e. in August when Sirius rises

**crystallo:** ab. of means, “bound with ice”
Priapea

parum, quod acta sub laboribus luce parem diebus pervigil traho noctem? huc addo, quod me terribilem fuste manus sine arte rusticae dolaverunt, interque cunctos ultimum deos nomen cucurbitarum ligneus vocor custos. accedit istis impudentiae signum, libidinoso tenta pyramis nervo. ad hanc puella — paene nomen adjeci — solet venire cum suo fututore, quae tot figuris, quas Philaenis enarrat, non inventis, pruriosa discedit.

---

**acció (3) - jeci, -jectus:** to add, increase
**ars, artis f:** skill, craft
**cucurbita, -ae f:** gourd
**cunctus, -a, -um:** altogether
**custos, custodis m:** guard, sentry
**dies, diei m:** day
**discedo (3):** to depart, withdraw
**dolo (1):** to hew
**enarro (1):** to describe, relate in detail
**figura, -ae f:** shape, figure; sexual position
**fustis, -is m:** staff club, stick
**fututor, -oris m:** a sex partner
**impudentia, -ae f:** shamelessness, effrontery
**invenio (4), inveni, inventus:** to discover
**labor, -is m:** labor, toil, exertion
**lucidus, -a, -um:** lustful, wanton
**lignus, -a, -um:** wooden
**lux, lucis f:** light, daylight
**manus, -us f:** hand
**nervus, -i m:** sinew, muscle, nerve
**nox, noctis f:** night
**numen, -inis m:** divine will, divinity, god
**paene:** nearly, almost, mostly
**par, paris (gen.):** equal (to) (+ dat.)
**pervigil, pervigilis (gen.):** always watchful
**pruriosus, -a, -um:** sexually aroused
**pyramis, -idis f:** pyramid (= mentula)
**rusticus, -a, -um:** country, rustic
**signum, -i m:** sign, proof, signal
**tendo (3), tetendi, tentus:** to stretch, distend
**terribilis, -e:** frightful, terrible
**traho (3):** to draw, drag
**ultimus, -a, um:** furthest
**voco (1):** to call, name

**quod … traho:** “enough that I drag?”
**acta … luce:** abl. abs., “the day having been spent in labors”
**quod … dolaverunt:** “add (the fact) that they hewed”
**fuste:** abl. of specification after terribilem, “me, terrible with a club”
**ultimum … numen:** nom. appositive, “I, the most remote power”
**lignus … custos:** nom. pred., “I am called the wooden guard”
**ists:** dat. after accedit, “is added to these” i.e. what has been listed above
**tenta:** perf. part. nom., “my pyramid having been distended”
**ad hanc (sc. pyramida):** “to this pyramid she comes”
**paene nomen adjeci:** parenthetical, “I almost mentioned her name”

Philaeenis: 3rd century BCE author of an illustrated sex manual
figuris … non inventis: abl. abs., “the positions not having been discovered”
Don’t give him what he wants

Quidam mollior anseris medulla
furatum venit huc amore poenae:
furetur licet usque, non videbo.

Don’t give him what he wants

Quidam mollior anseris medulla
furatum venit huc amore poenae:
furetur licet usque, non videbo.

A prayer to Priapus

Hic tibi, qui rostro crescentia lilia mersit,
caeditur e tepida victima porcus hara:
ne tamen extraneum facias pecus omne, Priape,
horti sit, facias, janua clausa tui.

Hic tibi, qui rostro crescentia lilia mersit,
caeditur e tepida victima porcus hara:
ne tamen extraneum facias pecus omne, Priape,
horti sit, facias, janua clausa tui.

extraneum: acc. pred. after facias, “make the herd external” i.e. lost
sit: pres. subj. jussive, “let the door be closed”
facias: subj. jussive parenthetical, “may you do it” i.e. please
She wants what she fears

Tu, quae ne videas notam virilem
hinc averteris, ut decet pudicam:
nimirum, nisi quod times videre,
intra viscera habere concupiscis.

---

A word puzzle

Penelopes primam Didonis prima sequatur
et primam Cadmi syllaba prima Remi,
quodque fit ex illis, tu mi deprensus in horto,
fur, dabis: hac poena culpa luenda tua est.
A Priapus does some Homeric literary criticism

Rusticus indocte si quid dixisse videbor,
da veniam: libros non lego, poma lego.
sed rudis hic dominum totiens audire legentem
cogor Homereas edidicique notas.
ille vocat, quod nos “psolen,” ψολόεντα κεραυνόν,
et quod nos culum, κουλεόν ille vocat.
μερδαλέον certe si res non munda vocatur,
et pediconum mentula merdalea est.
quod nisi Taenario placuisset Troica cunno
mentula, quod caneret, non habuisset opus.

---

**audio** (4): to hear, listen
**certe**: surely, certainly
**cogo** (3): to compel
**culus**, -i m: anus, “ass”
**cunnus**, -i m: female genitalia
**dominus**, -i m: lord, master
**edisco** (3), **edidici**: to learn by heart
**Homereus**, -a, -um: Homeric
**indoctus**, -a, -um: untaught, ignorant
**lego** (3): to read, gather
**liber, libri** m: book
**merdaleus**, -a, -um: defiled by excrement
**mundus**, -a, -um: clean, pure
**nota**. -ae f: mark, word
**opus, operis** n: need, work
**pedico**, -onis m: one who sodomizes,
“assfucker”
**placeo** (2), **placui, placitus**: to be pleasing
to (+ dat.)
**pomum**, -i n: apple
**psoleos**, -i m: penis
**rudis**, -e: rough, wild, coarse
**rusticus**, -i m: peasant, farmer
**Taenarius**, -a, -um: Taenarian, Spartan
**venia**, -ae f: favor, pardon
**voco** (1): to call, name

---

dixisse: perf. inf. after videbor, “seem to have said anything”
rudis: concessive, “despite being rude”
audire: pres. inf. after cogor, “I am compelled to hear”
legentem: pres. part. circumstantial, “hear him reading”
ψολόεντα κεραυνόν: “smoky thunderbolt,” in Homer, with no relationship to ψωλή,
a coarse word for a penis
κουλεόν: “sheath (of a sword)” a common metaphor for a vagina
μερδαλέον: merdaleus (“filthy”) is falsely derived from Homeric ομερδάλεον
(“terrible,” “awful”)
placuisset: plpf. subj. in past contrafactual protasis, “unless it had been pleasing to”
Taenario… cunno: dat. after placuisset, pleasing to the Spartan cunt, i.e. to Helen
Troica… mentula: nom., “the Trojan cock” i.e. Paris
quod caneret: impf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “what he (i.e. Homer) would sing”
habuisset: plpf. subj. in past contrafactual apodosis, “he would have had no need”
mentula Tantalidae bene si non nota fuisset, nil, senior Chryses quod quereretur, erat. haec eadem socium tenera spoliavit amica, quaeque erat Aeacidae, maluit esse suam. ille Pelethroniam cecinit miserabile carmen ad citharam, cithara tensione ipse suam.
nobilis hinc nata nempe incipit Ilias ira principiumque sacri carminis illa fuit.

---

**Priapea**

---

**Tantalidae** gen., “of the descendant of Tantalus” i.e. Agamemnon

**nempe**: truly, certainly, of course

**nobilis**, -e: noble, famous

**notus**, -a, -um: notorious

**Pelethronius**, -a, -um: Pelethronian, of the centaur Chiron, the tutor of Achilles

**principium**, -i n: beginning

**queror** (3): to complain, protest

**sacer**, sacra, sacrum: sacred, holy

**senior**, -oris m: older man

**socius**, -ii m: ally

**spolio** (1): to despoil, deprive (+ abl.)

**tener**, -a -um: delicate, dear

**tensus**, -a, -um: stretched, tense

---

**Aeacides**, -ae m: descendant of Aeacus, Achilles

**amica**, -ae f: girl friend

**cano** (3), **cecini**, cantus: to sing, celebrate

**carmen**, -inis n: song, poem

**Chryses**, -ae m: Chryses, father of Chryseis, Agamemnon’s prize in *Iliad* 1

**cithara**, -ae f: cithara, lyre

**Ilias**, -adis f: the *Iliad* of Homer

**incipio** (3): to begin

**ira**, irae f: anger, wrath

**malo**, malle, malui: to prefer

**miserabilis**, -e: wretched, miserable

**nascor** (3), **natus sum**: to be born

---

**fuisset**: plpf. subj. in past contrafactual protasis, “if it had not been so infamous”

**quereretur**: impf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “nothing which he would have protested” i.e. the father of Chryseis would not have complained

**erat**: the indicative is used in this contrafactual apodosis instead of the subjunctive because the main idea is expressed in the relative clause, “there was nothing (=there would have been nothing) which he would have protested”

**haec eadem** (sc. mentula): nom. subj., “this same (prick)” i.e. Agamemnon

**tenera ... amica**: abl. of separation, “deprived his ally (Achilles) of his dear girl”

**esse**: pres. inf. after maluit, “he preferred (her) to be”

**suam**: acc. pred., “to be his own”

**ille**: i.e. Homer

**cithara**: abl. of comparison, “tenser than his cithara”

**ira**: abl. of origin, “begins from anger” the first word of the *Iliad*
Songs for a Phallic God

altera materia est error fallentis Ulixei,  
si verum quaeras, hunc quoque movit amor. 20

hic legitur radix, de qua flos aureus exit,  
quam cum μῶλυ vocat, mentula μῶλυ fuit.

hic legimus Circen Atlantiademque Calypson  
grandia Dulichii vasa petisse viri.

huius et Alcinoi mirata est filia membrum 25
frondenti ramo vix potuisse tegi.

ad vetulam tamen ille suam properabat, et omnis  
mens erat in cunno, Penelopea, tuo:

Alcinous, -i m: Alcinous, the father of  
Nausicaa in Odyssey 6-8
alter, -a, -um: one (of two), second
amor, amoris m: love, sex\
Atlantiadis, -e: of the titan Atlas
aureus, -a, -um: golden
Calypso, -us f: Calypso the daughter of  
Atlas, who detained Odysseus for seven  
years in Odyssey 5
Circe, -es f: Circe, the witch of Odyssey 9
Dulichius, -a, -um: of Dulichium, an island  
associated with Odysseus
error, -is m: wandering
exeo, -ire, -ii, -itus: to exit, sprout
fallo (3): to deceive
filia, -ae f: daughter
flos, floris m: flower
frondeo (2): to be leafy
grandis, -e: large, great
lego (3): to read

materia, -ae f: material, subject matter
mens, mentis f: mind
miror (1), miratus sum: to be amazed, look  
in wonder at
moveo (2), movi, motus: to move, provoke
peto (3), petivi, petitus: to desire
possum, posse, potui: to be able
propero (1): to hurry
quaero (3): to search for, seek
radix, radicis f: root
ramus, -i m: branch, bough
tamen: yet, nevertheless, still
tego (3): to cover, hide
Ulixes, Uliceos m: Ulysses, Odysseus, crafty  
hero of the Odyssey
vasum, -i n: vessel, equipment (pl.)
verum, veri n: truth, reality, fact
vetula, -ae f: an aging woman
vix: hardly, scarcely

illa: ira i.e. the wrath of Achilles
legitur: pres. passive, “here a root is read about”
μῶλυ: “moly” the magical plant given by Hermes to Odysseus to protect him from  
the magic of Circe
Circen ... Calypson: acc. subj. of petisse, “read that Circe and Calpso desired”
Dulichii ... viri: gen. “the equipment of the Dulichian man” i.e. Odysseus
petisse (=petivisse): perf. inf. in ind. st. after legimus, “we read that they desired”
filia: nom., Nausicaa, whom Odysseus approached for help naked except for a branch
ramo: abl. means, “covered with a branch”
potuisse: perf. inf. in ind. st. after mirata est, “wondered that his member was scarcely  
able to” + inf.
tegi: pres. pass. inf. after potuisse, “able to be covered”
ad vetulam: i.e. to his wife Penelope
quae sic casta manes, ut jam convivia visas
utque fututorum sit tua plena domus.
e quibus ut scires quicunque valentior esset,
haec es ad arrectos verba locuta procos:
“nemo meo melius nervum tendebat Ulixe,
sive illi laterum sive erat artis opus.
qui quoniam periiit, vos nunc intendite, qualem
esse virum sciero, vir sit ut ille meus.”
hac ego, Penelope, potui tibi lege placere,
illo sed nondum tempore factus eram.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arrectus, -a-um</td>
<td>aroused, eager</td>
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<tr>
<td>ars, artis</td>
<td>skill, craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>castus, -a-um</td>
<td>pure, chaste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convivium, -i m</td>
<td>banquet, feast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domus, domi</td>
<td>house, home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fututor, -oris m</td>
<td>a sexual partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>intendo</td>
<td>(3): to exert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latus, lateris</td>
<td>side, flank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lex, legis</td>
<td>principle, condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loquor (3), locutus sum</td>
<td>to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maneo</td>
<td>(2): to remain, stay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nemo, neminis m</td>
<td>no one, nobody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nervus, -i m</td>
<td>sinew, string (of a bow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nondum</td>
<td>not yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opus, operis</td>
<td>m: need, necessity of (+ gen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pereo (4), perii, peritus</td>
<td>to die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plenus, -a-um</td>
<td>full of (+ gen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>procos, proci</td>
<td>m: wooer, suitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualis, -e</td>
<td>what kind, sort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quoniam</td>
<td>because, since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scio (4): to know, understand</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tempus, -oris m</td>
<td>time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tendo (3): to stretch, distend</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>valens, valentis (gen.): strong</td>
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<tr>
<td>viso (3): to go to see, look at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

visas: pres. subj. in result clause, “so chaste that you go to see” ironic
sit: pres. subj. in result clause, “so chaste that your house is full”
scieres: impf. subj. in purpose clause, “in order to know”
esset: impf. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “know which is stronger”
es ... locuta: perf. dep., “you spoke”
nervum: In the Odyssey, Penelope tests the suitors with a bow contest, which is here transferred humorously to another kind of nervum
Ulixe: abl. of comp. after melius, “better than my Odysseus”
laterum: gen. pl after opus, “need of flanks” i.e. of his body
intendite: pres. imper., “exert yourselves!” but also “make yourselves taut”
qualem esse: pres. inf. in ind. question after sciero, “know what sort of man him to be”
scrio: fut. perf., “I shall come to know”
sit: pres. subj. in result clause, “so that he may be”
hac lege: abl. manner, “by this principle”
potui: perf. past potential, “I would have been able to please”
factus eram: plpf., “I had not yet been made”
Let the thief beware

Cum fici tibi suavitas subibit
et jam porrigere huc manum libebit,
ad me respice, fur, et aestimato,
quot pondo est tibi mentulam cacandum.

Priapus anointing his erect member with oil.
Bronze, c. 1st century CE. From Herculaneum.
(National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
Unwanted attention from the neighbor dogs

Illusit mihi pauper inquilinus: cum libum dederat molaque fusa, quarum partibus abditis in ignem, sacro protinus hinc abit peracto. vicini canis huc subinde venit nidorem, puto, persecuta fumi, quae libamine mentulae comeso tota nocte mihi litat rigendo.
at vos Amplius hoc loco cavete quicquam ponere, ne famelicorum

---

**abdo (3), abdidi, abditus**: to remove
**aboe, abire**: to depart, go away
**amplus, -a-um**: great, large
**canis, -is f**: dog
**caveo (2)**: to beware
**comedo (3), comedi, comesus**: to eat up
**famelicus, -a-um**: hungry
**fumus, -i m**: smoke
**fundo (3), fudi, fusus**: to pour
**ignis, ignis m**: fire
**illudo (3), illusi, illusus**: to mock, ridicule
**inquilinus, -i m**: tenant, lodger
**libamen, -inis n**: drink-offering, first fruits
**libum, -i n**: cake offering
**lito (1)**: to make offering to (+ dat.)
**locus, -i m**: place
**mola, -ae f**: ground meal
**nidor, nidoris m**: strong smell
**nox, noctis f**: night
**pars, partis f**: part, share
**pauper, pauperis (gen.): poor
**perago (3), peregi, peractus**: to complete
**persequor (3), persecutus sum**: to follow, pursue
**pono (3)**: to put, place
**protinus**: immediately
**puto (1)**: to suppose
**rigeo (2)**: to be stiff or numb
**sacrum, sacri m**: sacrifice
**subinde**: immediately after
**venio (4), veni, venus**: to come
**vicinus, -i m**: neighbor

**mihi**: dat. after illusit, “he mocked me”
**mola fusa**: abl. abs., “some meal having been poured out”
**partibus abditis**: abl. abs., “parts of which went into the fire” i.e. some accidentally became burnt
**sacro … peracto**: abl. abs. “the sacrifice having been completed”
**persecuta**: perf. part. dep., “she having followed”
**libamine … comeso**: abl. abs., “the offering having been eaten”
**mentulae**: gen. of separation, “eaten off my member”
**tota nocte**: abl. time, “throughout the night”
**rigendo**: gerundive agreeing with mihi, “to me who must be made stiff”
**amplus**: acc. adverbial, “anything more”
**ponere**: pres. inf. after cavete, “beware to place anything”
ad me turba velit canum venire, 
ne, dum me colitis meumque numen, 
custodes habeatis irrumatos.

LXXI
ELEGaic couplets

Let the thief beware

Si commissa meae carpes pomaria curae, 
dulcia qui doleam perdere, doctus eris.
A request and an answer

“Tutelam pomari, diligens Priape, facito:
rubricato furibus minare mutinio.”

Quod moneas non est, quia si furaberis ipse
grandia mala, tibi, bracchia macra dabo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>brachium, -i n: arm, branch</th>
<th>mutinium, -i n: penis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>diligens, diligentis (gen.): careful, diligent</td>
<td>mālum, -i n: apple, fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fur, furis m: thief</td>
<td>mālum, -i n: evil, harm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fūror (1): to steal, plunder</td>
<td>pomarium, -i n: orchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandis, -e: full-grown, large, great</td>
<td>quia: because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>macer, -a -um: thin, meager</td>
<td>rubricatus, -a, -um: painted red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minor (1): to threaten (+ dat.)</td>
<td>tutela, -ae f: tutelage, guardianship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moneo (2): to warn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

facito: fut. imperative, “may you accomplish!”
rubricato... mutinio: abl. of means, “threaten with your reddened penis”
minare: pres. imper. dep., “threaten!”
quod moneas: pres. subj. in relative clause of characteristic, “that which you warn is
not anything” i.e. is easy to accomplish
si furaberis: fut. in more vivid protasis, “if you yourself steal”
grandia mala: neut. pl. acc., dir. obj. of furaberis, “if you steal large fruits”
bracchia macra: neut. pl., “I will give you empty branches”;
but punning on the Greek words macra and brachys
meaning “long” and “short” in the metrical sense.
The Latin word malum with a short “a” means evil, with
a long “a” means apple. Hence the last three words can mean
“I will make your longs short” i.e. turn your apples (māla)
into evils (māla).

Phallus in the form of a chimera.
Bronze tintinnabulum (wind chime), c. 1st century CE.
(National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)
### LXXIII

#### ELEGaic COuPLETS

**An invitation to girls**

Obliquis quid me, pathicae, spectatis ocellis?
non stat in inguinibus mentula tenta meis.
quae tamen exanimis nunc est et inutile lignum,
utilis haec, aram si dederitis, erit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ara, -ae f</td>
<td>altar, sanctuary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do (1), dedi, datus</td>
<td>to give, dedicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exanimis, -e</td>
<td>lifeless, breathless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inguen, -inis m</td>
<td>groin (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inutilis, -e</td>
<td>useless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lignum, -i n</td>
<td>wood, beam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obliquus, -a, -um</td>
<td>slanting, oblique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ocellus, ocelli m</td>
<td>(little) eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pathicus, -a -um</td>
<td>lascivious, perverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specto (1)</td>
<td>to look at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sto (1)</td>
<td>to stand, stand firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamen</td>
<td>yet, nevertheless, still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tenuis, -a, -um</td>
<td>stretched, distended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utilis, -e</td>
<td>useful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**obliquus…ocellis**: abl. of manner, “with oblique eyes” i.e. askance

**aram**: “sanctuary,” but also = cunnum or culum

**si dederitis**: fut. perf. in more vivid protasis, “if you dedicate”

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**Brothel scene.**
Fresco, c. 50-79 AD. From Pompeii.
(National Archaeological Museum, Naples.)

### LXXIV

#### ELEGaic COuPLETS

**The triple threat of Priapus**

Per medios ibit pueros mediasque puellas
mentula, barbatis non nisi summa petet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>barbatus, -a, -um</td>
<td>bearded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medius, -a, -um</td>
<td>middle of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nisi</td>
<td>if not, except, unless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peto, (3): to seek, aim at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puella, -ae f</td>
<td>girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puer, -i m</td>
<td>boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summus, -a, -um</td>
<td>highest, the top of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**barbatus**: dat. of reference, “as for bearded ones”

**non nisi**: “will not go unless”

**petet**: fut. in in more vivid protasis, “unless it seeks a higher point” i.e. the mouth
Priapea

Priapus has his divine tutelage too

Dodone tibi, Juppiter, sacrata est,
Junoni Samos et Mycena dites,
undae Taenaros aequorumque regi,
Pallas Cecropias tuetur arces,
Delphos Pythius, orbis umbilicum,
Creten Delia Cynthiosque colles,
tutela Rhodos est beata Solis,

aequor, -oris m: surface of the sea
Arcadia, ae f: Arcadia
arx, arcis f: citadel, height
beatus, -a, -um: blessed
Cecropius, -a, um: Cecropian, of Athens
collis, collis m: hill
Crete, Cretes f: the island of Crete
Cythnus, -a, -um: of Mt. Cynthos
Delia, -ae f: the Delian goddess, Diana
Delphi, -orum m: Delphi, site of Apollo’s most famous oracle
dis, ditis (gen.): rich, wealthy
Dodone, -es f: Dodona, the oldest Greek oracle
Faunus, -i m: deity of forest, herdsman
Juno, Junonis f: Juno, wife of Jupiter
Juppiter, Jovis m: Jupiter

Maenalos, -i m: the Maenalon mountains
Mycena, -ae f: Mycene, famous for its wealth
orbis, orbis m: circle, world
Pallas, Palladis f: Minerva
Pythius, -a, -um: Pythian
rex, regis m: king
Rhodos, -i f: Rhodes
sacro (1): to make sacred, dedicate
Samos f: Samos, Juno’s most sacred site
silva, silvae f: wood, forest
Sol, Solis m: Helius, the sun god
Taeneros, -i m: Taenarus, a Greek prominitory
tueor (2): to see, look at, protect
utela, -ae f: guardianship
umbilicus, -i m: navel, center
unda, -ae f: wave

Dodone: Dodona in NW Greece was sacred to Jupiter
Samos et Mycena: Samos and Mycena were both sacred to Juno
Taeneros: the site of a famous temple to Neptune
regi: dat., “dedicated to the king of wave and the seas” i.e. Neptune
Cecropia: Athens is called Cecropian after its legendary king, Cercrops
Pythius: “the Pythian” i.e. Apollo, from the beast (Pytho) he slayed at Delphi
orbis umbilicum: the omphalos indicating the center of the world was located at Delphi
Creten: Diana was associated with Crete through the Minoan goddess Britomartis
Delia: Apollo and Diana were born on Delos
Cynthios: Mt. Cynthos was on the island of Delos
Maenalon: a mountain range in Arcadia sacred to Pan, with whom Faunus is identified
Rhodos: an island sacred to Helius (Sol) and site of the colossal statue dedicated to him
Gades Herculis umidumque Tibur,
Cyllene celeri deo nivosa,
tardo gratior aestuosa Lemnos,
Hennaeae Cererem nurus frequentant,
raptam Cyzicos ostreosa divam,
formosam Venerem Gnidos Paphosque
mortales tibi Lampascum dicarunt.

*aestuosus, -a -um:* burning hot  
celer, -e: swift  
*Ceres, Cereris f:* Ceres, goddess of grain  
*Cyllene, -es f:* Cyllene, a mountain in central Greece  
*Cyzicos, -i f:* Cyzicus, a city in Asia Minor  
dico (1): to dedicate, consecrate  
diva, -ae f: goddess  
*formosus, -a -um:* beautiful  
frequento (1): to celebrate  
*Gades, ium f:* a famous Phoenician site in Spain  
*Gnidos, -i f:* Gnidos, a Carian city  
gratus, -a -um: pleasing to + dat  
*Hennaeus, -a, -um:* of Henna, the Sicilian city  
*Hercules, Herculis m:* Hercules  
*Lampsacus, -i f:* Lampsacus, a Greek city on the Troad  
*Lemnos, -i f:* the island of Lemnos  
nivosus, -a, -um: full of snow  
nurus, nurus f: daughter-in-law  
ostreosus, -a, -um: rich in oysters  
*Paphos, -i f:* a city on Cyprus  
ratio (3), rapui, raptus: to drag off, snatch  
tardus, -a -um: slow, limping  
*Tibur, -uris n:* Tibur, a Latin city  
*umidus, -a, -um:* damp, moist  
*Venus, Veneris f:* Venus, Roman goddess of love and beauty

**Gades:** site of a temple to Phoenician Melqart, who was conflated with Hercules  
**Tibur:** site of a temple to *Hercules victor*  
**celeri deo:** dat. after gratior, “more pleasing to the swift god” i.e. to Mercury, who was born on Mt. Cyllene  
**tardo (sc. deo):** “to the slow god” i.e. Vulcan, whose forge was on Lemnos  
**Hennaeae nurus:** “the daughters-in-law of Henna” i.e. the women of Henna, the site of a famous old temple to Ceres there.  
**raptam ... divam:** i.e. Persephone, the daughter of Ceres  
**Cyzicos:** Cyzicus was claimed as the site of the rape of Persephone by Pluto, but Henna is the more common one  
**Gnidos:** Gnidos was the site of a famous statue of Venus by Praxiteles  
**Paphos:** Paphos was the birthplace of Venus  
**tibi:** i.e. to Priapus  
**Lampascum:** the hometown of Priapus. cf. 55 above  
**dicarunt (=dicaverunt):** syncopated perf., “they have dedicated”
Priapea

LXXVI

Priapus’ power

Quod sim jam senior meumque canis
cum barba caput albicet capillis:
deprensos ego perforare possum
Tithonum Priamumque Nestoremque.

albico (1): to be white
barba, -ae f: beard
canus, -a, -um: white
capillus, -i m: hair of head
caput, -itis m: head
dependo (3), depredi, deprensus: to seize, catch

quod sim ... albicet: pres. subj. in relative clause of characteristic with concessive force, “although I am older and my head is white”
canis ... capillis: abl. of description, “with white hairs”
deprensos: perf. part. acc. “those caught”
Tithonum: lover of Eos, the dawn, and granted eternal life
Priamum: king of Troy, famously old
Nestorem: the oldest Greek warrior at Troy

LXXVII

Don’t fence in Priapus!

Immanem stomachum mihi movetis,
qui densam facitis subinde saepem
et fures prohibetis huc adire.
hoc est laedere, dum juvatis, hoc est
non admittere ad aucupem volucres.

deo, adire: to approach
admitto (3): to permit, admit
auceps, -ipsis m: bird-catcher
densus, -a -um: thick, dense
fur, furis m: thief
immanis, -e: huge, vast
juvo (1): to help, assist

laedo (3): to hurt, injure
moveo (2): to move, stir, agitate
prohibeo (2): to forbid, prevent
saeps, saepis f: a hedge, fence
stomachus, -i m: stomach, site of anger
volucris, -is f: bird

stomachum mihi movetis: “you move my stomach” i.e. you move my anger
adire: pres. inf. after prohibetis, “prohibit thieves from coming”
laedere: pres. inf. nom. predicate, “this is to harm”
non admittere: pres. inf. nom. predicate, “this is not to admit”
obstructa est via, nec licet jacenti jactura natis expiare culpam. ergo qui prius usque et usque et usque furum scindere podices solembam per noctes aliquot diesque, cesso. poenas do quoque, quot satis superque est, in semenque abeo salaxque quondam nunc vitam perago — quis hoc putaret? — ut clusus citharoedus abstinentem.

---

| abeo, abire: to depart | perago (3): to carry through to the end |
| abstinens, -entis (gen.): temperate, chaste | podex, -icis m: buttocks, anus |
| aliquot: some, several | poena, -ae f: penalty |
| cesso (1): to be inactive, cease from | prior, prius: earlier, before |
| citharoedus, -i m: singer-musician | puto (1): to believe, suppose |
| clusus, -a, -um: closed, locked in | quondam: formerly |
| culpa, -ae f: fault, blame | salax, salacis (gen.): lecherous, lustful |
| dies, diei m: day | satis: enough, adequate |
| expio (1): to expiate | scindo (3): to tear, rend |
| jaceo (2): to lie in wait | semen, -inis n: seed |
| jactura, -ae f: loss, sacrifice | soleo (2): to be in the habit to (+ inf.) |
| licet (2): it is permitted to (+ inf.) | super: in addition, besides |
| natis, natis f: buttocks, rump | usque: all the way |
| nox, noctis f: night | via, viae f: way, road |
| nunc: now, today, at present | vita, vitae f: life |
| obstructus, -a, -um: obstructed | |
Priapea

at vos, ne peream situ senili,
quaeo, desinite esse diligentes
neve imponite fibulam Priapo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>desino (3): to cease (+ inf.)</th>
<th>pereo (4): to die, perish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>diligens, -entis (gen.): careful, diligent</td>
<td>quaeso (3): to beg, ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fibula, fibulae f: a pin</td>
<td>senilis, -e: senile, aged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impono (3): to put X (acc.) on Y (dat.)</td>
<td>situs, -us m: situation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ne peream: negative purpose clause “lest I perish”
situ senili: abl. of cause “lest I perish from a senile situation”
desinite: imper., “cease to be!”

fibulam: a device attached to the penis of a singer to delay puberty (and the consequent voice change)

Priapo: dat. after imponite “don’t put a pin on Priapus”

LXXVIII

A curse for a cunnilinguist

At di deaeque dentibus tuis escam
negent, amicae cunnilinge vicinae,
per quem puella fortis ante nec mendax
et quae solebat impigo celer passu
ad nos venire, nunc misella landicae
vix posse jurat ambulare praes fossis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ambulo (1): to walk</th>
<th>juro (1): to swear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amica, -ae f: girl friend</td>
<td>landica, -ae f: clitoris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ante: before, previously</td>
<td>mendax, mendacis (gen.): lying, false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>celer, -e: swift, quick</td>
<td>misellus, -a, -um: poor, wretched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cunnilingus, -i m: one who licks the cunnus</td>
<td>nego (1): to deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dens, dentis m: a tooth</td>
<td>passus, -us m: step, gait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esca, -ae f: food</td>
<td>prae: before, because of (+ abl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fortes, -e: strong, steadfast</td>
<td>soleo (2): to be in the habit of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fossa, -ae f: ditch</td>
<td>vicinus, -a, -um: neighboring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impiger, -gra, -grum: eager, energetic</td>
<td>vix: hardly, scarcely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

dentibus tuis: dat. of reference, “food for your teeth”
negent: pres. subj. jussive, “may the gods deny”
impigro passu: abl of manner, “come with an eager step”
posse: pres. inf. in ind. st. after jurat, “swears that she is scarcely able to” + inf.
prae fossis: “on account of her ditches” i.e. the folds of her vagina, which have become sore
**LXXIX**

**ELEGIAIC COUPLETS**

*Size doesn’t matter*

At non longa bene est, at non bene mentula crassa
et quam si tractes, crescere posse putes?
me miserum, cupidas fallit mensura puellas:

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crassus, -a -um</td>
<td>thick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cresco (3)</td>
<td>to increase in size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cupidus, -a -um</td>
<td>eager, passionate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fallo (3)</td>
<td>to deceive, disappoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longus, -a -um</td>
<td>long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mensura, -ae f</td>
<td>length, size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miser, -a -um</td>
<td>miserable, wretched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puella, -ae f</td>
<td>girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puto (1)</td>
<td>to suppose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tracto (1)</td>
<td>to handle, manage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Songs for a Phallic God**

*The poet’s mighty member*

Priape, quod sis fascino gravis tento,
quod exprobravit hanc tibi suo versu
poeta nostra, erubescere hoc noli:
non es poeta fascinosior nostro.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>erubesco (3)</td>
<td>to blush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exprobro (1)</td>
<td>to reproach, upbraid X (dat.) about Y (acc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fascinosus, -a, -um</td>
<td>heavily endowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fascinum, -i n</td>
<td>an amulet (= mentula)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gravis, -e</td>
<td>heavy, painful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nolo, nolle</td>
<td>to be unwilling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poeta, -ae m</td>
<td>poet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tentus, -a, -um</td>
<td>stretched, extended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>versus, versus m</td>
<td>line, verse (of poetry)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*quod sis*: pres. subj. causal, “*because you are heavy*”
*fascino tento*: abl. of specification, “*heavy with a tense member*”
*quod exprobravit*: noun clause in apposition to *hoc* below, “*this, namely that he has reproached*”
*hanc (sc. mentulam)*: acc. of respect, “*reproached you for this*”
*suo versu*: abl. means, “*reproached with his verse*”
*hoc*: abl. of cause, “*blush because of this*” i.e. the reproach of the poet
*noli*: imper., “*don’t!*” + inf.
*poeta… nostro*: abl. of comparison, “*more endowed than our poet*”

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**LXXX**

**ELEGIAIC COUPLETS**

*Size doesn’t matter*

At non longa bene est, at non bene mentula crassa
et quam si tractes, crescere posse putes?
me miserum, cupidas fallit mensura puellas:

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>non longa bene</td>
<td>litotes, “not particularly long”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>si tractes</td>
<td>pres. subj. in future less vivid protasis, “which <em>if you were to handle</em>”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>putes</td>
<td>pres. subj. in future less vivid apodosis, “would you suppose?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me miserum</td>
<td>acc. exclamation, “O miserable me!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fallit</td>
<td>“size deceives” i.e. girls suppose that size matters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
non habet haec aliud mentula majus ea. 
utilior Tydeus qui, si quid credis Homero, 
ingenio pugnax, corpore parvus erat. 
sed potuit damno nobis novitasque pudorque esse, repellendus saepius iste mihi. 
dum vivis, sperare licet: tu, rustice custos,
huc ades et nervis, tente Priape, fave.

adsum, adesse: be near, be present  
corpus, -oris n: body  
credo (3): to trust, believe  
custos, -odis m: guard, sentry  
dannum, -i n: ruin  
faveo (2): to favor, support (+ dat.)  
ingeniurn, -i n: nature, innate quality  
liset (2): it is permitted to (+ inf.:)  
major, -us: larger, greater  
nervus, -i m: muscle, nerve, penis  
novitas, -tatis f: strangeness, inexperience  
parvus, -a, -um: small, little  
possum, posse, potui: to be able  
pudor, -oris m: shame  
pugnax, -acis (gen.): pugnacious  
repello: to repel, rebuff  
rusticus, -a, -um: homely, rustic  
saeplius: more often, again and again  
spero (1): to hope  
tentus, -a, -um: stretched, taut  
Tydeus, -i m: Diomedes, a Homeric hero  
utilis, -e: useful, profitable  
vivo (3): to be alive

ea: abl. of comp. after majus, referring to mensura, “this prick has no other thing greater than that” i.e. than size  
Tydeus: this hero was famous for his ferocity, despite his small stature  
Homero: dat. after credis, “if one believes Homer”  
ingeniun ... corpore: abl. of specification, “pugnacious in nature, although small in body”  
damno: predicate dat. after esse, “could be my ruin”  
repellendus (sc. est): gerundive in periphrastic, “this must be repelled” i.e. is a constant obstacle  
iste: i.e. pudor  
dum vivis: pres. indefinite, “while one is alive”  
adese: pres. imper., “be present!”
GLOSSARY

A a
a, ab, abs: from, by (+ abl.)
ad: to, up to, towards (+ acc.)
amica, -ae f: a girlfriend
aperio, aperire, aperui, apertum: to open
at: but, but yet
aut: or

B b
barba, -ae f: a beard
bene: well
bonus, -a, -um: good, noble

caput, capitis n: a head
carmen, -inis n: a song
circa: around, about (+ acc.)
coleus, -i m: sack; (pl.) testicles, “balls”
culus, -i m: anus, “ass(hole)”
cum: with (prep. + abl.); when, since, although (conj. + subj.)
cunnus, -i m: female genitalia (obsc.), “cunt”
cupido, -inis f: desire
cur: why?

C c
caput, capitis n: a head
carmen, -inis n: a song
circa: around, about (+ acc.)
coleus, -i m: sack; (pl.) testicles, “balls”
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cum: with (prep. + abl.); when, since, although (conj. + subj.)
cunnus, -i m: female genitalia (obsc.), “cunt”
cupido, -inis f: desire
cur: why?

D d
de: down from, about, concerning (+ abl.)
deus, -i m; dea, -ae f: god; goddess
dico, dicere, dixi, dictum: to say, speak
do, dare, dedi, datum: to give
dum: while (+ indic.); until (+ subj.); provided that (+ subj.)
duo: two

E e
ego, mei, mihi, me: I, me
ergo: therefore
et: and

F f
facio, facere, feci, factus: to do, make
fero, ferre, tuli, latus: to bear, carry
forma, -ae f: shape, form
fur, furis m: a thief

H h
habeo, -ere, -ui, -itus: to have, hold
hic, haec, hoc: this, these
hortus, -i m: a garden

I i
ille, illa, illud: that
in: in, on (+ abl.); into, onto (+ acc.)
inter: between, among; during (+ acc.)
inha: within, during (+ acc.); (adv.) inside
ipse, ipsa, ipsum: himself, herself, itself
is, ea, id: he, she, it
iste, ista, istud: that, that of yours

J j
jam, jamque: now; already

L l
licet: it is permitted (+ inf.); although (+ subj.)

M m
malus, -a, -um: bad, evil
manus, -us f: a hand
membrum, -e n: body part, member
mentula, -ae f: penis (obsc.), “dick”
meus, -a, -um: my, mine
Glossary

N n
nam: for, indeed, really
ne: lest, that not (+ subj.)
 nec: and not, nor; nec ... nec: neither ... nor
nemo, neminis: no one
nihil, nil: nothing; not at all
nisi, ni: if not, unless
non: not
nos, nostrum/nostri, nobis, nos: we, us
noster, nostra, nostrum: our
nox, noctis f: night
nullus, -a, -um: not any, no one
num: surely not? (interrogative particle expecting negative answer)
nunc: now
O o
omnis, -e: all, every, as a whole
opus, operis m: work, need
P p
pars, partis f: a part
per: through (+ acc.)
plenus, -a, -um: full
poena, -ae f: punishment
poeta, -ae m: poet
pomum, -i n: a fruit, apple
possum, posse, potui: to be able, be possible
Priapus, -i m: Priapus
primus, -a, -um: first; primum: (adv.) at first, firstly
pro: for, on behalf of, in proportion to (+ abl.)
propter: because of, on account of (+ acc.)
pella, -ae f: a girl
puto, -are, -avi, -atus: to think, suppose
Q q
quamvis: however, although
qui, quae, quod: who, which, what
quicquum: anything
quicumque, quaecumque, quodcumque: whoever, whichever
quis, quid: who? what? which?
quisquis, quidquid: whoever, whichever
quondam: formerly, once
quoque: also, too
quot: how many?
R r
res, rei f: a thing, matter
S s
satis: enough, sufficient
sed: but
semper: always, ever
si: if
sic: in this manner, thus; sic ... ut: in the same way as
sine: without (+ abl.)
soleo, -ere, -ui, -itus: to be accustomed
sub: under, close to (+ acc. or abl.)
sui, sibi, se/sese: him/her/itself, themselves
sum, esse, fui, futurus: to be, exist
suus, sua, suum: his/her/its own), (pl.) their own
T t
tam: so, so much
tamen: nevertheless, still	endo, tendere, tetendi, tentus: to stretch, extend, direct
teneo, -ere, tenui, tentus: to hold
tot: so many
totus, -a, -um: whole, entire
tu, tui, tibi, te: you (sing.)
tuus, -a, -um: your

U u

unus, -a, -um: one
usque: up to, continuously
ut, uti: as (+ indic.); so that, with the result that (+ subj.)

V v

venio, venire, veni,ventus: to come
video, videre, vidi, visum: to see, (pass.) to seem
vir, viri m: a man
voco, -are, -avi, -atus: to call, name
The aim of this book is to make the Priapea (known as the Corpus Priapeorum or Carmina Priapea) accessible to intermediate students of Ancient Latin. The running vocabulary and grammatical commentary are meant to provide everything necessary to read each page so that readers can progress through the text, improving their knowledge of Latin while enjoying a fascinating group of poems. The Priapea is a great text for intermediate readers. The sentence structure is fairly simple, and the range of syntax is rather narrow. However, there are many off-color jokes and double entendre that require some thoughtful attention to the connotations of many ordinary words. There is considerable wittiness deployed in creating variations on a small number of obscene themes and scenarios, so that there are examples of the whole range of technique in Roman poetic practice.