

CHAPTER

7

Third Declension Masculine and Feminine Nouns; Indirect Statement:
Accusative and Infinitive



A loving couple on a fresco from Pompeii.

MEMORĀBILE DICTŪ

Ōdī et amō.

“I hate and I love.” (Catullus, 85)

The Roman poet Catullus wrote these contradictory words in line one of poem 85 to express his conflicted and painful feelings about his beloved.

READING

Gāius Valerius Catullus (who lived from approximately 84 to 54 BCE) is one of the greatest Latin poets, and the best known among the neoteric, or “new” poets of the first century BCE. They modeled their works and literary personalities on those of Greek writers from the Hellenistic era (third and second centuries BCE). Among them is Callimachus, best remembered for the phrase *Mega biblion, mega kakon*, “a big book is a big evil.”

Catullus also places a distinctive stamp on what he writes by giving voice to his own emotions, frankly and often bawdily. Many of his poems treat his passionate and often painful love affair with a woman whom he calls “Lesbia,” in homage to the literary achievements and sensibilities of the sixth century BCE Greek female poet Sappho. The name “Lesbia” is evidently a metrically equivalent pseudonym for Clodia, a Roman matron from a politically powerful family.

Several historical figures from the turbulent period in which he lived—Caesar and Cicero among them—figure in Catullus’ poems, both those in lyric meters and those in the elegiac couplet.

His elegies greatly influenced the love poetry of Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid, who wrote during the principate of Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE), and whose work in turn had a major impact on the romantic poetry of the Middle Ages. Like Catullus, they characterize erotic passion as a form of enslavement, referring to the female beloved with the term *domina*, meaning “mistress of slaves.” So, too, they emphasize the obstacles to the fulfillment of their desires, ranging from jealous husbands and rivals to locked doors and other forms of physical separation.

DĒ AMŌRE

1 Puella mea passerem habet. Ō, passer, dēliciae meae puellae! Cum
passere puella mea lūdit, passerem tenet, passerī digitum dat, digitus
ā passere mordētur. Puella nārrat sē passerem amāre. Puella passerem
plūs quam oculōs amat. Nam passer est mellitus. Catullus videt
5 passerem esse semper in gremiō puellae. Passer ad dominam semper
pīpiat. Catullus tamen vult cum puellā esse et ā puellā amārī. Itaque
Catullus passerī invidet. Tū, puella, Catullum amāre dēbēs, nōn
passerem. Senēs autem sevērī putant puellam Catullum amāre nōn
dēbere. Verba senum, puella, unīus assis aestimāre possumus. Nam vīta
10 nōn est longa.



READING VOCABULARY

ā passere (ablative singular) – by the sparrow

*aestimō ūnīus assis – I do not care a bit (as, assis, m. is the Latin word for a small copper coin)

*aestimō, aestimāre, aestimāvī, aestimātum – to regard, esteem

*amor, amōris, m. – love

Catullus, Catullī, m. – Catullus

*dēliciae, dēliciārū, f. pl. – delight, pet

*digitus, digitī, m. – finger

*domina, dominae, f. – mistress

*gremium, gremiī, n. – lap

*invidēō, invidēre, invidī, invīsum + dative – to envy someone

lūdit – plays

mellitū, mellitā, mellitū – sweet as honey

*meus, mea, meum – my

mordeō, mordēre, momordī, morsum – to bite

nārrat sē passerem amāre – tells that she loves the sparrow

ō (interjection) – oh!

*oculus, oculī, m. – eye

*passer, passeris, m. – sparrow

passerī (dative singular) – to the sparrow

pīpiō, pīpiāre, —, — – to chirp

plūs quam – more than

putant puellam . . . dēbēre – think that the girl should . . .

*putō, putāre, putāvī, putātum – to think, consider

*sē (reflexive pronoun, accusative) – she/he (in an indirect statement)

senēs (nominative plural) – old men

*senex, senis, m. – old man

senum (genitive plural) – of the old men

*sevērus, sevēra, sevērū – serious, strict, severe

*verbum, verbī, n. – word

videt passerem esse – sees that the sparrow is

vult – wants

*Words marked with an asterisk will be need to be memorized.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the poet feel about the girl's pet bird? Why?
2. Who is in the way of the poet's and the girl's love?
3. What is the poet's reason for his impatience to enjoy love?

LANGUAGE FACT I

THIRD DECLENSION MASCULINE AND FEMININE NOUNS

You have already learned the ending patterns of nouns belonging to the first and second declensions. In the reading passage for this chapter, you saw nouns belonging to the third declension. Their forms are new and distinctive: for example, *amōre, passerem, senum*.

For a noun of the third declension **there is no difference in the case endings between masculine and feminine nouns**. Therefore, the gender of each new noun of this type must be learned along with its meaning.

Third Declension Masculine and Feminine Nouns					
	Singular			Plural	
Nominative	passer	the sparrow	passerēs	the sparrows	
Genitive	passeris	of the sparrow	passerum	of the sparrows	
Dative	passerī	to/for the sparrow	passeribus	to/for the sparrows	
Accusative	passerem	the sparrow	passerēs	the sparrows	
Ablative	passere	by/with the sparrow	passeribus	by/with the sparrows	
Vocative	passer	o, sparrow	passerēs	o, sparrows	



STUDY TIP

The nominative singular form of third declension nouns follows no regular pattern, but the stem is easy to find: look at the genitive singular form and remove the ending *-is*. For this reason the genitive singular and the nominative singular should always be learned together.

► EXERCISE 1

Find all the third declension nouns in the Latin reading passage. Identify the case and number of each form. If the same noun occurs more than once, write it only once.

VOCABULARY TO LEARN

NOUNS

amor, amōris, m. – love
dēliciae, dēliciārūm, f. pl. – delight, pet
digitus, digitī, m. – finger
domina, dominae, f. – mistress
gremium, gremiī, n. – lap
oculus, oculī, m. – eye
passer, passeris, m. – sparrow
pāx, pācis, f. – peace
senex, senis, m. – old man
soror, sorōris, f. – sister
verbum, verbī, n. – word

PRONOUN

sē (reflexive pronoun, accusative) – s/he (her/himself)/they (themselves) in an indirect statement

ADJECTIVES

meus, mea, meum – my (a possessive adjective)
sevērus, sevēra, sevērūm – serious, strict, severe

VERBS

aestimō, aestimāre, aestimāvī, aestimātum – to regard, to esteem
aestimō ūnīus assis – I do not care a bit
invidēō, invidēre, invidī, invīsum + dative – to envy someone
putō, putāre, putāvī, putātum – to think, to consider



A coin called an *as* was among those that held the least value for Romans. Nero's head is on one side of this coin.

► EXERCISE 2

Find the English derivatives based on the Vocabulary to Learn in the following sentences. Write the corresponding Latin word.

1. The whole dinner was delicious.
2. Throughout my college years, I was always a member of the same sorority.
3. Senior citizens can purchase tickets at a discount price.
4. The story is about an amorous relationship.
5. We are equipped with digital technology.
6. A strong pacifist movement developed in the country.
7. Can I have an estimate for this repair?
8. This is the dominion of a dark power.
9. We have a verbal agreement.
10. Don't be so severe with me!
11. I bought myself a new computer.

► EXERCISE 3

Decline the following noun.

1. *soror, sorōris, f.* – sister

► EXERCISE 4

Translate into Latin.

1. I have beautiful sisters.
2. Many are the tears of love.
3. We do not fear peace.
4. The girl is being taken care of by the sister.
5. The poet envies the sparrow.
6. The old men envy the poet.
7. The poet tells the old men a story.



STUDY TIP

Note that the rules of agreement for nouns and adjectives apply to any noun, regardless of declension: any adjective modifying a noun of the third declension will agree with the noun in case, number, and gender.

► EXERCISE 5

Make the adjective agree with the noun and translate the phrase into English.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. praemium (māgnus) | 5. lacrimās (multus) |
| 2. sorōribus (pulcher) | 6. senum (sevērus) |
| 3. amōrī (miser) | 7. passerēs (miser) |
| 4. senis (armātus) | 8. pācis (iūstus) |

LANGUAGE FACT II

INDIRECT STATEMENT: ACCUSATIVE AND INFINITIVE

In the chapter reading you notice some sentences with a new construction.

Catullus videt passerem esse semper in gremiō puellae.

Catullus sees that the sparrow is always on the girl's lap.

In Latin, **verbs of saying** (e.g., *nārrō* “I report [that] . . .”), **thinking** (e.g., *putō* “I think [that] . . .”), and **observing** (e.g., *videō*, “I see [that] . . .”) appear with a construction called an **indirect statement**. While a *direct* statement is an exact quotation of someone's words, perceptions, thoughts, or words, an *indirect* statement indirectly reports these thoughts or words. In English,

the conjunction “that” commonly follows such verbs. Classical Latin, however, has no conjunction equivalent to “that.” Instead, the subject of the indirect statement becomes the **accusative** (not nominative), and the verb of the indirect statement becomes an **infinitive**.

Look more closely at the previous example. The direct statement would be:

Passer est semper in gremiō puellae.

The sparrow is always on the girl’s lap.

After the main verb *videt* (a verb of observing) introduces the statement indirectly, the nominative subject of the direct statement (*passer*) becomes the accusative subject of the indirect statement (*passerem*), and the verb *est* becomes the infinitive *esse*.

Catullus videt passerem esse semper in gremiō puellae.

Catullus sees that the sparrow is always on the girl’s lap.

If the **subject of the infinitive** is also the **subject of the main verb**, then the accusative *sē* (called a reflexive pronoun because it refers back to the subject) is used as the subject in the indirect statement. For a good example of this, look at another sentence from the chapter reading:

Puella nārrat sē passerem amāre.

The girl reports that she (herself) loves the sparrow.

The direct statement would be:

Passerem amō.

I love the sparrow.

In this sentence, the first person subject of the direct statement becomes third person (just as in English) and is expressed as accusative *sē*, which is translated “s/he/they (herself/himself/themselves).” The verb of the direct statement then becomes an infinitive.

If there is a **predicate nominative** in the direct statement, this predicate becomes **accusative** too, in agreement with the subject of the indirect statement. Look at this sentence:

Puella putat passerem esse mellitum.

The girl thinks that the sparrow is sweet as honey.

The direct statement would be:

Passer est mellitus.

The predicate nominative *mellitus* becomes accusative *mellitum* in the indirect statement.



The dove was a bird sacred to Venus, goddess of love.
A mosaic from Pompeii.



BY THE WAY

In a direct statement, the subject of a verb is often expressed in Latin by the verb ending alone (e.g., *damus* for “we give”). But in an indirect statement the accusative subject (e.g., *sē*) is typically expressed in Latin. Why? The answer is simple: the infinitive lacks personal endings, so another word is needed to express the subject!

Find one more indirect statement in the Latin reading passage.

► EXERCISE 6

Translate into English. The Reading Vocabulary may be consulted.

1. Catullus videt passerem ā puellā amārī.
2. Poēta nārrat passerem digitum puellae mordēre.
3. Catullus nārrat sē passerī invidēre.
4. Puella putat sē passerem plūs quam Catullum amāre.
5. Catullus putat sē puellam plūs quam oculōs amāre.
6. Catullus putat vītam nōn esse longam.



Sparrows and other small birds in ancient times, like now, can be quite tame and become like a pet.

► EXERCISE 7

Change the following direct statements into indirect statements using the accusative and infinitive construction. The Reading Vocabulary may be consulted.

Example: Puella nārrat: “Passer digitum mordet.”

Puella nārrat passerem digitum mordēre

1. Vir cōgitat: “Oculī puellae sunt pulchrae.”
2. Poēta nārrat: “Puella ā familiā amātur.”
3. Catullus videt: “Puella dēliciās amat.”
4. Puella putat: “Passer est pulcher.”
5. Poēta cōgitat: “Doleō.”
6. Senēs nārrant: “Vīta nōn est semper pulchra.”
7. Poēta et puella putant: “Malae fābulae ā senibus nārrantur.”

TALKING

Ēsuriō. “I am hungry.”

Bene tibi sapiat! Bene vōbīs sapiat! “Bon appetit!” (singular and plural)

Quid comedēs . . . ? “What are you going to eat . . . ?”

Vīsne comedere (+ accusative)? “Do you want to eat . . . ?”

Vīsne bibere (+ accusative)? “Do you want to drink . . . ?”

Volō comedere . . . “I want to eat . . .”

Da mihi, quaesō (a word in accusative) “Give me, please, . . .”

Grātiās tibi agō! “Thank you.”

Libenter! “Not at all, gladly done.”

Quōmodo sapit? “How does it taste?”

Bene. Optimē. Male. “Well. Excellent. Bad.”

Sum bene sagīnātus/sagīnāta. “I ate well (male/female).”

cibus, cibī, m. – food

Mexicānus, Mexicāna, Mexicānum – Mexican

sapidus, sapida, sapidum – delicious

pānis, pānis, m. – bread

pānis infersus – sandwich

lac, lactis, n. – milk

īsicium, īsiciī, n. Hamburgēse – hamburger

pōtiō, pōtiōnis, f. Arabica – coffee

carō, carnis, f. – meat

piscis, piscis, m. – fish

māla, mālōrum, n. pl. terrestria – potatoes

lactūca, lactūcae, f. – lettuce

acētāria, acētāriōrum, n. pl. – salad

pasta, pastae, f. – pasta

placenta, placentae, f. Neāpolitāna – pizza

mālum, māli, n. – apple

banāna, banānae, f. – banana

crūstulum, crūstulī, n. – cookie

thermopōlium, thermopōliī, n. – cafeteria

Romans often bought food or beverages from establishments like this *thermopōlium* in Herculaneum. They would line up at the fast-food counter to make their purchases quickly.





IN THE CAFETERIA

Mārcus: Salvē, Mariā!

Mariā: Salvē, Mārce!

Mārcus: Quid comedēs? Visne comedere banānam?

Mariā: Volō comedere nōn solum banānam, sed etiam īsicium Hamburgēse. Nam valdē ēsuriō. Quid tū comedēs?

Mārcus: Ego volō comedere pānem īfersum.

Christīna et Helena: Salvēte, Mārce et Mariā!

Christīna: (TO THE WAITER) Da mihi, quaesō, placentam Neāpolitānam. Grātiās tibi agō.

Mārcus: Quōmodo placenta Neapolitāna sapit?

Christīna: Bene. Quōmodo pānis īfersus sapit?

Mārcus: Optimē. Cibus est sapidissimus (*very delicious*). Sum bene sagīnātus.

Helena: Nārrās, Mārce, cibum esse sapidissimum. Sed ego volō comedere cibum Mexicānum. Placentam Neāpolitānam et īsicium Hamburgēse unīus assis aestimō.

Mariā: Hīc (*here*) nōn est cibus Mexicānus.

Helena: Tum tantum crūstula comedere volō. Nam crūstula valdē amō.

Mārcus: (TO HIMSELF) Ego tē, Helena, amō. Volō (*I want*) tē esse meam puellam . . .

