

# Vergil

*Selections and  
Suggested Companion Texts*

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# Vergil

— SELECTIONS FROM VERGIL'S *AENEID* —



Aeneas and Achates enter Carthage, *Vergilius Vaticanus*

## Book 1.1–33

*Arma virumque canō, Troiae quī prīmus ab ōrīs*

*Ītaliā fātō profugus Lāvīniaque vēnit*

3 *litora, multum ille et terrīs iactātus et altō*

**Lāvīn(i)us, -a, -um, adj.**, Lavinian, of Lavinium

**profugus, -a, -um, adj.**, exiled, fugitive

1–7. The theme of the poem, namely, the wanderings and wars of Aeneas, who after many struggles established the foundation for the greatness of future Rome, in accordance with the decrees of fate.

From the more extended introduction to the poem (lines 1–33) we learn: (1) the plan of the poet to describe the adventures of his hero, as is done in the *Odyssey*, and to depict wars and battles, as in the *Iliad*; (2) the importance of the gods, ruling over all mortal affairs, in the design of the poem; and (3) the story's relevance to Roman history, focusing as it does on the human trials that made possible the birth of Rome.

**1. Arma virumque:** the theme of the *Aeneid*; **arma** stands by METONYMY for *deeds of arms, wars*, referring to the wars in which Aeneas engaged, both in Troy and in Italy; **virum** refers to Aeneas, so well known that he is not mentioned by name until line 92. **Troiae:** with the first syllable long by position; App. 6, b. **quī prīmus ab ōrīs Troiae (ad) Ītaliā vēnit:** Aeneas was the first of the Trojans to come to Italy after his native city Troy had been captured, sacked, and destroyed by the Greeks in the Trojan War. Strictly speaking, the Trojan Antenor had preceded him, but Antenor's arrival, is part of a narrative tradition different from that followed by Vergil here, and is not associated with the foundation of Rome proper.

**2–3. (ad or in) Ītaliā, (ad or in) litora:** acc. of place to which; the omission of prepositions here is typical of Latin poetry, and you will see this often in the *Aeneid*; App. 315. **fātō:** abl. of means or cause; App. 331, 332; “through the will of heaven.” **Lāvīn(i)a:** of Lavinium, an ancient city on the western coast of Italy, near the spot where Rome was later founded. Lavinium was said by many historians in antiquity to have been the first Trojan settlement in Italy and to have been named for Lavinia, the Italian princess whom Aeneas eventually married. Lavinia was the daughter of Latinus, king of the Latins. Lavinia herself first appears in the *Aeneid* in Book 7 (although a reference to her is made earlier by Anchises, at 6.764). Some of the oldest manuscripts of the *Aeneid* we have, dating from the fourth and fifth centuries CE, have the alternate spelling **Lāvīna**, because Vergil's earliest readers recognized that he was doing something unusual with the scansion of this line. The epithet **Lāvīn(i)a** must be scanned as two long syllables followed by one short syllable, and so the usual second **i** in the word must either drop out (i.e., **Lāvīna**) or be treated as a semi-consonant (i.e., **Lāvīnia**, with the second **i** sounding more like **y**, as in the English word “yoyo”).

**3. multum:** adverbial, modifying **iactātus**. **ille:** Aeneas, the **virum** of line 1. **et (in) terrīs, et (in) altō:** abl. of place where; App. 319. **iactātus (est).**

5 *vī superum, saevae memorem Iūnōnis ob iram,  
multa quoque et bellō passus, dum conderet urbem  
inferretque deōs Latiō; genus unde Latinum  
Albānīque patrēs atque altae moenia Rōmae.*

**Albānus, -a, -um, adj.,** Alban, of Alba Longa in central Italy, mother city of Rome

**inferrō, -ferre, -tulī, -lātum,** bring (into)  
**Latinus, -a, -um, adj.,** Latin, of Latium

4. **vī:** abl. of cause or means; App. 331, 332. **superum** = **superōrum**, gen. pl., of the gods above. **memorem:** an example of ENALLAGE (OR TRANSFERRED EPITHET), logically describing **Iūnōnis**, but poetically applied to **iram**. **saevae memorem Iūnōnis ob iram:** an example of SYNCHYSIS (OR INTERLOCKED ORDER), **saevae** modifying **Iūnōnis**, and **memorem** modifying **iram**. This pattern is often found in Latin poetry. **Iūnōnis ob iram:** the reasons for Juno's hatred of Aeneas and the Trojans are given by Vergil at 12–28.

5–6. **conderet, inferret:** subjunctives in a purpose clause introduced by **dum**, expressing anticipated rather than completed action; App. 374.

5. **urbem:** Lavinium. **passus (est Aenēās).** (in) **bellō:** abl. of place; App. 319; referring to the enemies whom he had to conquer after landing in Italy. **multa:** obj. of the participle **passus**; App. 307, 313.

6. **inferret deōs:** App. 374; when traveling to found a new settlement, the migrating peoples of the ancient Greek and Roman world regularly carried with them their gods, either as images or other sacred symbols; see 68 and 378. **Latiō:** dat. of motion toward = **ad (in) Latium**; App. 306. **unde genus Latinum (est):** Roman legends traced the origin of the Latin people, the kingdom of Alba Longa (forerunner of Rome), and the founding of Rome back to the coming of the Trojans under Aeneas to Italy.

7. (unde) **Albānī patrēs (sunt):** many of the noble senatorial families of Rome took much pride in tracing their families back to the early inhabitants of Alba Longa. **patrēs:** with the first syllable short; App. 17. **altae:** ENALLAGE (TRANSFERRED EPITHET). Since it more accurately describes the walls, the transferred epithet suggests both the position, *situated on the (seven) high hills*, and the power and prestige of *lofty (mighty) Rome*.

## Book 6.788–800

“*Hūc geminās nunc flecte aciēs, hanc aspice gentem*

*Rōmānōsque tuōs. Hic Caesar et omnis Iūli*

790 *prōgeniēs magnum caelī ventūra sub axem.*

*Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem prōmitti saepius audīs,*

**axis, -is, m.,** axis; region of the heavens;  
wagon-pole

**Caesar, -aris, m.,** the *cognomen* used by  
members of the *gens Iulia*, including  
Julius Caesar and Augustus

**Iūlus, -i, m.,** Ascanius, son of Aeneas  
**prōgeniēs, -iēi, f.,** lineage, offspring, family  
**prōmittō, -mittere, -misi, -missum,**  
promise, predict

788–800. Anchises continues his description of the many figures passing by in the “parade of heroes” destined to make Rome great. Here he focuses Aeneas’s attention on Augustus himself—like all the other characters in the parade, not yet born but guaranteed by fate to lead Rome to incomparable heights and to extend the boundaries of empire around the known world. His speech here resembles in some respects the prophecy given by Jupiter to Venus at 1.257–96, and in others, the speech of Evander at 8.314–36. The temporal range and repetitive pattern of the passage are noteworthy: Anchises offers a picture of the future that is directly linked to the past, and that renews, but in even greater terms, the great achievements of the past.

**788–90. Hūc . . . hanc:** an unusual example of ANAPHORA pairing an adverb with an adjective. Here as often elsewhere ANAPHORA is combined with ASYNDETON. **geminās . . . aciēs:** a redundant expression for *eyes*;

**aciēs** itself can mean *sharpness, keenness*, and thus is often applied to one’s (line of) sight. **gentem / Rōmānōsque tuōs:** the possessive adj. *is* masc. pl. in agreement with **Rōmānōs**, but it also applies to **gentem**, i.e., **gentem [tuam] Rōmānōsque tuōs. Hic Caesar [est]:** the name **Caesar** here indicates Augustus Caesar, the adopted son of Julius Caesar and the ruler during whose reign Vergil was writing the *Aeneid*; but some initial ambiguity persists, most likely intentionally; see also 1.286. **Iūli:** trisyllabic; gen. of **Iūlus**, the alternative name by which Ascanius was known, as at 1.267 and 288. **magnum caelī ventūra sub axem:** the acc. object of **sub** and its adj. (**magnum . . . axem**) encircle the remainder of the phrase; the gen. noun **caelī** modifies **axem. ventūra** is a fem. sing. fut. act. participle agreeing with **prōgeniēs**.

**791. Hic . . . hic:** ANAPHORA draws the viewer’s attention. In the first instance, the **i** is long by position; in the second instance, it is short. **tibi:** dat. of reference or advantage with **prōmitti. quem:** acc. subject of indir. stmt. introduced by **audīs. saepius:** comparative of **saepe** (*rather often*).

Augustus Caesar, *divī genus, aurea condet*  
*saecula quī rursus Latiō rēgnāta per arva*  
 Sātūrnō quondam, *super et Garamantas et Indōs*

795 *prōferet imperium; iacet extrā sīdera tellūs,*

**Augustus, -ī, m.**, Augustus, adopted son of Julius Caesar; an honorific (*the lofty one*), given to him by the senate in 27 BCE

**Caesar, -aris, m.**, the *cognomen* used by members of the *gens Julia*, including Julius Caesar and Augustus

**extrā, prep. + acc.**, outside of, beyond

**Garamantes, -tum, m. pl.**, the Garamantes, a people of North Africa

**Indī, -ōrum, m. pl.**, the Indi, a people of south Asia

**prōferō, -ferre, -tulī, -lātum**, bring forth, extend

**quondam, adv.**, at one time, once, formerly

**rēgnō, 1**, rule, have royal power

**Sātūrnus, -ī, m.**, the god Saturn, a god of early Italy

**792–94. Augustus Caesar:** The line opens with three spondees, lending weight to the importance of the man described; the identity of the Caesar first mentioned in 789 is now defined with precision. The appositive **divī genus** echoes the title favored by Augustus himself, who frequently identifies himself with the phrase *divi filius* in inscriptions and on coins; he thus reminds observers of his close relationship to Julius Caesar, and of Julius Caesar’s apotheosis. **aurea condet / saecula quī:** the long-delayed relative pronoun (HYPERBATON) creates some initial confusion that serves to draw greater attention to the passage, with emphasis placed on the epithet **aurea** and the verb **condet**. The phrase **aurea . . . saecula** offers the promise of a new golden age, and the fut. indicative verb suggests that Aeneas, through his successors, will accomplish the “founding” that was presented as a challenge at the opening of the poem (1.5). **rursus Latiō rēgnāta per arva / Sātūrnō quondam:** a striking example of CHIASMUS. The outer frame consists of two temporal adverbs (**rursus . . . quondam**) surrounding two proper nouns (**Latiō . . . Sātūrnō**), which in turn enclose a prep. phrase consisting of a noun and the participle modifying it (**rēgnāta per arva**). **Latiō:** abl. of place where. **Sātūrnō:** dat. of agent. The god Saturn was an ancient agricultural divinity identified with the Greek

Titan Kronos. At 8.319–23, Evander explains to Aeneas that the place-name *Latium* was introduced by Saturn, who had escaped from war with Jupiter and had come to hide in Italy. In *Latium* he became king and ruled over a golden age (8.324–25). According to the legend, the place-name *Latium*, as well as the adj. based on it, is derived from the verb **latēre, to hide**. **super et:** the conjunction is postponed, again to place emphasis on the first word of the clause. **Garamantas et Indōs:** two different ethnic groups, associated with two different geographical regions: the **Garamantes** in North Africa, and the **Indī** in ancient India (i.e., south Asia). Note that **Garamantas** is a Greek noun, and therefore, the final syllable is short. While the Romans did control a strip of the African coastline along the Mediterranean, Anchises exaggerates here (HYPERBOLE) when he suggests that Augustus will expand his empire to the east just as Alexander the Great did; in fact, under Augustus Rome’s eastern boundaries did not extend to India, although the Indians did establish trading relations with Rome during this period. **imperium:** the quintessential Latin word for the powers held by an emperor, derived from its initial sense as the power of a general.

**795. tellūs:** used METAPHORICALLY here, almost equivalent to **imperium**.

## Book 12.818–28

*Et nunc cēdō equidem pugnāsque exōsa relinqū.*

*Illud tē, nūllā fātī quod lēge tenētur,*

820 *prō Latiō obtestor, prō maiestāte tuōrum:*

*cum iam cōnūbiīs pācem fēlicibus (estō)*

*compōnent, cum iam lēgēs et foedera iungent,*

**exōsus, -a, -um, adj.**, hating, detesting  
**foedus, -eris, n.**, pact  
**iungō, -ere, iūnxī, iūnctum**, join, unite, yoke

**maiestās, -tātis, f.**, greatness, dignity  
**obtestor, -āri, -ātus sum**, make appeal to,  
 beseech

**818. exōsa** is ambiguous here; Juno is saying either that she hates the battles, and so is abandoning them, or that she is abandoning the battles although she hates to do so.

**819. Illud:** looks ahead to Juno's entire request, contained in lines 821–28. **nūlla . . . lege:** abl. of means. **quod:** antecedent is **illud**.

**820. tuōrum:** Juno refers to the Italians as Jupiter's people because their posterity is to descend from Latinus, son of Faunus,

grandson of Picus, and great-grandson of Saturnus, father also of the Olympians.

**821. cōnubiīs . . . fēlicibus:** abl. of means. **estō:** third sing. fut. imperat., used concessively: *and so be it*; App. 255.

**822. compōnent . . . iungent:** Juno never identifies the subject explicitly, but she refers here to the Trojans and Latins joined and at peace.



*Aeneid* 12: Turnus and Aeneas Engage in Single Combat While Juturna and Venus Assist and Jupiter and Juno Confer on High. 1698. Francis Cleyn (1582–1658), designer, and Wenceslaus Hollar (1607–1677), engraver, The Warburg Institute Library, London.

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COMPANION TEXTS

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Wedding of Peleus and Thetis. Attic red-figure pyxis, ca. 470–460 BCE. Louvre.

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# CATULLUS

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***Carmina 5; 7; 85; 101; 64.1–25, 43–266***

## **Introduction to Catullus**

Gaius Valerius Catullus (c. 84–c. 54 BCE) appears to have settled in Rome as a young man, coming from northern Italy (Verona, in Cisalpine Gaul). Almost nothing is known about his life aside from the occasional references he makes in his poems to places, people, and events. His poetry ranges widely across themes and genres, but all of his work—from the shortest poem, a two-verse elegiac couplet, to the longest, a miniature epic in 408 verses of dactylic hexameter—reveals a poet passionate about the world around him and gifted with a clever and fluent mind. The selections included here reflect in a very modest way his remarkable range.

## Carmen 5

Vivamus mea Lesbia, atque amemus,  
 rumoresque senum severiorum  
 omnes unius aestimemus assis!  
 Soles occidere et redire possunt:  
 5 nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,  
 nox est perpetua una dormienda.  
 Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,  
 dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,  
 deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.  
 10 Dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,  
 conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,  
 aut ne quis malus invidere possit,  
 cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

**Meter:** hendecasyllables

Both poems 5 and 7 offer an exuberant and intimate picture of Catullus's love affair with Lesbia.

**1–3. Vivamus . . . atque amemus:** hortatory subjunctive. **mea Lesbia:** voc. **Lesbia** is a poetic pseudonym for Catullus's beloved, who most scholars agree is likely to have been a woman named Clodia Metelli. It was a convention of ancient love poetry that the beloved would be given a pseudonym, generally related in some way to another love poet or to a divine patron of poetry (primarily Apollo). C. uses **Lesbia** in homage to Sappho, the great lyric poet of sixth-century BCE Lesbos. **rumores . . . omnes:** acc. dir. obj. of **aestimemus** in line 3. **senum severiorum:** masc. gen. pl. modifying **rumores**; C. is fond of the comparative degree of adjectives, as seen here. **unius . . . assis:** masc. sing., gen. of price or value with **aestimemus**, another hortatory subjunctive.

**4–6. occidere et redire:** complementary infs. with **possunt**. **nobis:** dat. of agent with pass. periphrastic **nox est . . . dormienda.**

**cum:** introduces a temporal **cum**-clause. **occidit:** pres. tense in a generalizing stmt. **brevis lux:** a METAPHOR for the span of life, which is generally somewhat shorter than we would like. **perpetua una:** fem. nom. pl. adjectives modifying **nox**.

**7–9. da:** pres. act. imperat.; the remainder of these three lines contains a series of dir. objs. **mi = mihi,** dat. indir. obj. **basia:** neut. acc. pl. dir. obj.; like **da**, to be supplied with each of the six numbered phrases in these lines. **dein = deinde.** **usque:** adv.; *yet again, in addition.*

**10–13. cum:** introduces a temporal clause in the fut.; **fecerimus** is fut. perf. indicative. **conturbabimus:** fut. act. indicative, the main verb of this sentence. **ne sciamus . . . aut ne . . . possit:** two negative purpose clauses. **quis:** following **ne = aliquis**. **invidere:** complementary inf. with **possit**; its implied indir. obj. is **nobis**. **cum . . . sciat:** temporal **cum**-clause subordinate to the purpose clauses here. **tantum:** used as a substantive: *how great an amount*. **basiorum:** partitive gen. with **tantum**.

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# PETRARCH

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## *Africa* 5.64–84, 670–89

### Introduction to Petrarch

Francesco Petrarca (1304–74 CE), known in English as Petrarch, is one of the greatest writers of the European Renaissance and indeed one of the first great celebrities. Born in Arezzo, near Florence, Italy, Petrarch divided his time between Italy and France but traveled widely throughout Europe. Though trained in legal studies, he wanted instead to devote himself to learning and to imaginative writing, and he soon developed a deep love for classical literature. He wrote poetry in both Italian and Latin, using Italian for his more personal work (lyric, sonnets, and other short forms) and Latin for work on an epic scale. He also wrote fictional letters to famous writers of classical antiquity, including Cicero and Vergil. The most famous of these Latin works is his epic poem *Africa*, about the Second Punic War (218–201 BCE), in which the Carthaginians and their allies under the leadership of the great Hannibal invaded the European continent; the very real threat they posed to the Romans lasted for over a decade, until P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus invaded North Africa in 204 BCE and subsequently defeated the Carthaginians at the battle of Zama. This period is the subject of Petrarch's *Africa*, which is a laudatory work highly influenced by Vergil and Latin epic generally. The greatness of his achievement caused the Roman senators to crown Petrarch as poet laureate in 1341.

The text used is available online at [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1304-1374,\\_Petrarca,\\_Francesco,\\_Africa,\\_LT.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1304-1374,_Petrarca,_Francesco,_Africa,_LT.pdf).

### A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

By the fourteenth century CE, Latin was changing, both in grammar and in pronunciation. Petrarch loved the classical writers, and his written Latin is therefore quite faithful to what he learned from Cicero, Vergil, and the other writers from antiquity whose works he had read. You should therefore find these excerpts very accessible as part of this course. His orthography (spelling), however, and that of those who first printed his works, has begun to appear a bit like Italian. This is especially obvious with the Latin diphthong *ae*, so familiar from the genitive and dative of the first declension, as well as from many other Latin words. In Petrarch's text, this diphthong is written as a long *e*. In *Africa* 5.67, for example, the words *reginae* . . . *maestae* are written as *regine* . . . *meste*. To help with this, the words appear in the vocabulary list with their original spelling in parentheses.

Watch out for these words in *Africa* 5.64–84:

(a)equandus  
 (a)estivo  
 (a)estus  
 acerb(a)e  
 captiv(a)e  
 c(o)eperat  
 m(a)est(a)e  
 mi(c)hi  
 regin(a)e  
 vidu(a)e

Watch out for these words in *Africa* 5.670–89:

(a)equus  
 anim(a)e  
 annos(a)e  
 Elisias = Elysias  
 Fortun(a)e  
 h(a)ec  
 lir(a)e = lyrae  
 mi(c)hi  
 nostr(a)e  
 pro(h)  
 qu(a)e

*Africa* 5.64–84

- 65      Hac igitur forma nulli cessura dearum  
 occurrit iuveni mulier: nec cultus in illa  
 signior effigie; variis nam purpura gemmis  
 intertexta tegit regine pectora meste;  
 et dolor ipse decet miseras, nec compta placere  
 tempore felici poterat magis. Illicet ergo  
 70      vulnus inardescens totis errare medullis  
 ceperat: estivo glacies ceu lenta sub estu,  
 cera vel ardentis facilis vicina camino,  
 liquitur ille tuens, captiva captus ab hoste,

**Meter:** dactylic hexameter

64–84. Massinissa (c. 238–148 BCE), king of Numidia and ally of Scipio, meets Sophonisba, queen of Carthage. Planning to take her prisoner, he instead falls in love with her.

**64–65. hac . . . forma:** abl. of means or abl. of specification. Petrarch has just finished a long description of Sophonisba's beauty. **nul-li:** dat. with **cessura**. **iuveni:** Massinissa is a young man, rather than a youth.

**65–67. cultus:** not only her clothing, but also the care with which she is dressed. **signior:** *more sluggish*, that is, more careless. **effigie:** abl. of comparison. **variis . . . gemmis:** abl. of specification; together with **purpura . . . intertexta**, an example of INTERLOCKING WORD ORDER suggesting woven fabric (**intertexta** < **intertextere**, *interweave*). **regin(a)e . . . m(a)est(a)e:** gen. modifying **pectora**.

**68–69. decet miseras:** the impersonal verb with acc., *it complements sorrowful women*, i.e., makes their beauty seem even greater; a generalizing expression about beauty. **compta:** often used of a woman's hair; **crines** is implied. **placere:** complementary inf. with **nec . . . poterat**. **tempore felici:** abl. of time when, suggesting that S.

is no less beautiful now in her sorrow than she had been in happier times. **magis:** adv. modifying **placere**.

**70–71. vulnus:** a frequent METAPHOR for love. **inardescens:** fire is a second common METAPHOR for desire. **errare:** complementary infinitive with **ceperat** (= **coeperat** < **coepi**; **plpf. in form but perfect in meaning**). **totis . . . medullis:** abl. of place where.

**71–73. (a)estivo . . . (a)estu:** abl. of means, with a play on two words associated with heat. **liquitur ille:** the main verb and its subject are preceded by two SIMILES comparing M.'s reaction as he "melts." The similes are marked by ALLITERATION of **c. glacies . . . lenta (liquitur)**. **ceu:** postponed; logically introduces the first simile. **cera . . . facilis (liquitur)**. **vel:** postponed; logically introduces the second simile. **ardenti . . . camino:** dat. with **vicina**, (*when it is*) *next to*. **captiva captus:** POLYPTOTON, involving two words from the same stem (**cap-**) to designate two different characters and their relationship to each other: S. is literally a captive of the Romans, with whom M. is allied, but M. is metaphorically "captured" by his sudden desire; here, the two similar words create an OXYMORON. **captiva . . . ab hoste:** abl. of agent; the phrase "surrounds" its captive, again creating an OXYMORON.

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# SULPICIA

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## Poems 1–6

### Introduction to Sulpicia

Very little if anything is known about Sulpicia aside from what she tells us herself. The poems are generally thought to offer at least a little contextual information, but beyond that, she remains a literary mystery. Some think on the basis of poem 4, where she describes herself as *Servi filia Sulpicia*, that her background is servile; similarly, the name she uses for her beloved, *Cerintus*, which does not correspond to standard Roman nomenclature for free citizens, is thought by some to be a current or former slave. The most solid evidence in these poems concerns her patron, the Roman nobleman Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus, who is known to have been a patron of the elegist Tibullus (c. 55 BCE–c. 19 BCE) as well. In fact, these poems are preserved under Tibullus' name in a collection known as the *corpus Tibullianum*, containing works by several roughly contemporaneous poets who were likely, like Tibullus and Sulpicia, to have been recipients of Messalla's patronage.

The parenthetical notation after each poem's number in this book, e.g., Poem 1 (CT 3.13 Fulkerson), indicates that this poem is so numbered in the third book of the *corpus Tibullianum*, and its text is based on the 2019 edition of the *corpus Tibullianum* by Laurel Fulkerson.

Elegy is a word derived from Greek, and was thought by the Greeks and Romans to be derived from the sounds made by a person in mourning (e.g., *eh, eh*) and the verb for speaking (*legein*). The earliest elegies were in fact verse inscriptions used to mark the burial place of deceased loved ones. The form soon gained popularity more generally as an alternative to epic and became one of the major genres in antiquity for love poetry. All of Sulpicia's poems are elegies.

## Poem 1 (CT 3.13 Fulkerson)

Tandem venit amor, qualem texisse pudore  
 quam nudasse alicui sit mihi fama magis.  
 Exorata meis illum Cytherea Camenis  
 adtulit in nostrum deposuitque sinum.  
 5 Exsolvit promissa Venus: mea gaudia narret,  
 dicetur siquis non habuisse sua.

**Meter:** elegiac couplets

Sulpicia announces that Venus has answered her prayers, and she is in love. She writes to reveal her love, regardless of any social repercussions.

1–2. After the three simple opening words, Sulpicia begins a convoluted wish: she would rather have exposed her love than conceal it out of shame. **qualem:** antecedent is **amor**; dir. obj. of the two infinitives **texisse** and **nuda(vi)sse** in the indir. stmt. dependent on **sit . . . fama. pudore:** abl. of cause. **quam . . . magis:** sets up a comparison of the two infinitives. **nuda(vi)sse:** syncopated form. **alicui:** dat. of reference or advantage. **sit:** subjunctive expressing a wish. **fama:** there appears to be a play on the two meanings of the word: S. wishes for fame and wants to avoid the shameful rumors that would result if she attempted to conceal her desire.

3–4. **Exorata meis . . . Cytherea Camenis:** the opening participle indicates not only that S. has prayed for divine assistance, but that she has been successful in doing so. Note the INTERLOCKING WORD ORDER. **illum:**

probably refers back to **amor** (1), although some scholars have suggested that it is a vague reference to Cerinthus. It functions here as dir. obj. of **adtulit** and **deposuit**. **Cytherea:** epithet of Venus; one version of her origins locates her birth on the Greek island of Cytherea. **meis . . . Camenis:** dat. of agent. The Camenae were Italian equivalents of the Greek Muses. S. links Venus and the Muses to give her poetry a sense of authority. **adtulit . . . deposuitque:** another INTERLOCKING arrangement. **nostrum:** here as elsewhere, equivalent to **meum**.

5–6. **Exsolvit promissa:** technical language for fulfilling a promise; **exsolvere** is lit. *pay off, pay in return for*. S. suggests that Venus promised her a love and has fulfilled her promise. **mea gaudia:** acc.; the phrase can be very general, but often in elegy has an erotic connotation. **narret:** jussive subjunctive; the subject is **(si)quis** (NB: **si** before **quis** = **si aliquis**). **dicetur siquis:** the indef. pron. introduces the protasis in a fut. real condition; translate as a pres., *if anyone is said . . .*. **habuisse:** complementary inf. with **dicetur. sua (gaudia).**

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## GLOSSARY

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### A

**a, ab, abs**, *prep.* + *abl.*, (away)  
from, by

**a, ah**, *interj.*, alas!, woe!, ah!

**abduco, -ducere, -duxi,**  
-**ductum**, lead away, abduct,  
seduce

**abeo, -ire, -ivi (-ii), -itum**, go  
away, depart

**abiegnus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, made of  
fir-wood

**abrumpo, -ere, -rupi, -ruptum**,  
break off, break; exclude

**absum, abesse, afui**, be away, be  
distant, be lacking

**absumo, -ere, -mpsi, -mptum**,  
use up, spend, waste, consume

**ac**, *see atque*

**accedo, -ere, -cessi, -cessum**,  
follow, accompany

**accipio, -ere, -cepi, -ceptum**,  
receive, accept; learn, hear,  
conceive

**accipiter, -trix, m.**, hawk

**acer, -cris, -cre**, *adj.*, sharp, fierce,  
bitter

**acerbus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, bitter

**acies, -iei, f.**, line of soldiers,  
straight line; line of sight

**ad**, *prep.* + *acc.*, to, toward, at, near,  
about

**adeo, -ire, -ivi (-ii), -itum**,  
approach, encounter

**adfero**, *see affero*

**adimo, -ere, -emi, -emptum**,  
deprive, take away, steal

**admiror, -ari, -atus sum**, wonder  
at, regard with admiration,  
admire

**adoro, 1**, worship

**adsterno, -ere, -stravi, -stratum**,  
lie prone, lie extended

**adsum, -esse, -fui**, be present, be  
at hand

**adurgeo, -ere**, pursue closely

**advenio, -ire, -veni, -ventum**,  
come (to), arrive (at), reach

**advento, 1**, come toward

**adventus, -us, m.**, approach,  
arrival

**adversus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, opposite,  
facing

**Aeeteus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, of or having  
to do with Aeetes, king of  
Colchis and father of Medea

**Aegeus, -ei, m.**, Aegeus, king of  
Athens and father of Theseus

**aeque, adv.**, equally, as, just as; as  
much as

**(a)equo, 1**, compare, make equal

**aequor, -oris, n.**, sea, waves;  
(level) plain