

Lesson 8

Catullus, 45

Acmen Septimios, suos amores,
tenens in gremio 'mea' inquit 'Acme,
ni te perdit amo atque amare porro
omnes sum assidue paratus annos
quantum qui pote plurimum perire,
solus in Libya Indiaque tosta
caesio ueniam obuius leoni.'
hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante
dextra sternuit approbationem.
at Acme, leuiter caput reflectens
et dulcis pueri ebrios ocellos
illo purpureo ore suauitata,
'sic,' inquit 'mea uita Septimille,
huic uni domino usque seruiamus
ut multo mihi maior acriorque
ignis mollibus ardet in medullis.'
hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante
dextra sternuit approbationem.
nunc ab auspicio bono profecti
mutuis animis amant amantur.
unam Septimios misellus Acmen
mauult quam Syrias Britanniasque;
uno in Septimio fidelis Acme
facit delicias libidinesque.
quis ullos homines beatiores
uidit, quis Venerem auspiciorem?

Translation A Guy Lee, The Poems of Catullus (Oxford University Press)
1998

Septimius, his beloved Acme
In his lap, said 'Acme darling,
If I'm not desperately in love
And set to go on loving you
Forever in utter desperation,

Then lone in Libya or scorched India
I'll face a lion with green eyes.'
At this Love sneezed, first on the right,
Then on the left, approvingly.
But Acme, lightly tilting back
Her head and kissing her sweet boy's
Drunken eyes with that rosy mouth,
Said 'Septimillus, so, my life,
May we always serve this one master
Surely as burns in my soft marrow
A bigger far and fiercer fire.'
At this Love sneezed, first on the right,
Then on the left, approvingly.
Now, setting out from this good omen,
With mutual minds they're loved and love.
Poor Septimius prefers his Acme
To all the Syrias and Britains.
Faithful Acme in her Septimius
Finds all desires and delights.
Who has seen any happier people?
Who a Venus more starry-eyed?

Translation B Gilbert Highet, Latin poetry in verse translation: from the beginnings to the Renaissance, ed. by L. R. Lind (Oxford University Press) 1967

Septimius held his Acme close,
Close to his heart, saying "My dearest,
Unless I love you desperately,
Constantly, always, forever, more than
The fondest lover n all the world,
May I be dropped in the African desert
To face a green-eyed lioness!"
Love had been slow before, but now
Sneezed on the right hand to show his favor.
Now Acme turned her head softly,
Kissing her lover's drunken eyes,
With crimson lips kissing them,
Saying, "My darling Septimillus,
Now let us worship Love for ever,

The God who has kindled a stronger & keener
Love-flame within my gentle heart."
Love had been slow before, but now
Sneezed on the right to show his favor.
And now their God is favorable,
Now they are both in love and beloved.
Septimius holds his Acme dearer
Than all the wealth of the furthest Indies.
Acme loves Septimius
Faithfully, gaily, deliciously.
Who ever saw a happier pair?
Where is a kindlier God of love?

Translation C F. W. Cornish (Loeb)

Septimius, holding in his arms his darling Acme, says, "My Acme, if I do not love thee to desperation, and if I am not ready to go on loving thee continually through all my years as much and distractedly as the most distracted of lovers, may I in Libya or sunburnt India meet a green-eyed lioness alone." As he said this, Love on the left, as before on the right, sneezed goodwill. The Acme, slightly bending back her head, kissed with that rosy mouth her sweet lover's swimming eyes, and said, "So, my life, my darling Septimius, so may we ever serve this one master as (I swear) more strongly and fiercely burns in me the flame deep in my melting marrow." As she said this, Love, as before on the left, now on the right, sneezed goodwill. And now, setting out from a good omen, heart in heart they live, loving and loved. Poor Septimius prefers Acme alone to whole Syrias and Britains. In Septimius, him alone, his faithful Acme takes her fill of loves and pleasures. Who ever saw human beings more blest? Who ever saw a more fortunate love?

Questions

1. Identify the forms of the following verbs ("1st person plural present subjunctive passive"):
 1. tenens (line 2)
 2. suaviata (line 12)
 3. perire (line 5)
 4. serviamus (line 14)
 5. tosta (line 6)

6. profecti (line 19)
7. dixit (line 8)
8. mavult (line 22)
9. sternuit (line 9)
10. vidit (line 26)

Give the dictionary form of each, and the range of meanings.

Identify the equivalents of each in translation A, and, for *tosta*, in B-D.

2. Identify the forms (i.e. what part of speech, what case, etc.) of:

1. plurimum (line 5)
2. leviter (line 10)
3. auspiciorem (line 26)

Give the meaning(s) of each.

3.

1. huic uni domino usque serviamus (line 14)
 - a. What case is *domino*, and why? What else agrees with it?
 - b. Translate the clause.
 - c. Find the equivalents in translations A-D, and compare these versions with the Latin.

2. multo mihi maior acriorque ignis mollibus ardet in medullis (line 15-16)
 - a. What rôle in this sentence is played by *multo*? Translate the sentence
 - i. literally
 - ii. idiomatically
 - b. What effects do you notice in the Latin in lines 15-16?
 - c. Find the equivalents of these two lines in each of translations A-D overleaf. Compare these versions with the Latin.

4. Translate lines 1-2. Discuss effects in the Latin here.

Compare the Latin with the versions of these lines in translations A-D overleaf.

5. at Acme....suaviata (line 10-12)

1. Give your own translation of these lines.
2. Compare the Latin with the versions given in translations A-D (paying particular attention to versions of *ebrios ocellos* and *purpureo ore*).

6. nunc ab aspicio...amantur (line 19-20)

1. Give your own translation of these lines.
2. Discuss any effects created by the Latin wording, word order etc.
3. Compare the Latin with the versions given in translations A-D.