

Amores 1 Commentary AS

1. Answer the questions on the following passage:

me specta nutusque meos vultumque loquacem;
excipe furtivas et refer ipsa notas.

verba superciliis sine voce loquentia dicam;
verba leges digitis, verba notata mero.

cum tibi succurret Veneris lascivia nostrae, 5
purpureas tenero pollice tange genas.

siquid erit, de me tacita quod mente queraris,
pendeat extrema mollis ab aure manus.

cum tibi, quae faciam, mea lux, dicamve, placebunt, 10
versetur digitis anulus usque tuis.

tange manu mensam, tangunt quo more precantes,
optabis merito cum mala multa viro.

Quod tibi miscuerit, sapias, bibat ipse, iubeto;
tu puerum leviter posce, quod ipsa voles.

quae tu reddideris ego primus pocula sumam, 15
et, qua tu biberis, hac ego parte bibam.

si tibi forte dabit, quod praegustaverit ipse,
reice libatos illius ore cibos.

Amores 1.4 17-34

- a) Briefly explain the circumstances in which the poet gives these instructions. (9)
- b) In lines 1 – 10, what instructions does the poet give? How does he emphasize the importance of secrecy? Make close reference to both the content and the style of the Latin and support your discussion with at least four examples from the text. (30)
- c) In lines 11-18, pick out three instances of Ovid's animosity towards his rival. (15)

[Quality of written communication: 6]
[Total: 54+6 = 60]

2. . Answer the questions on the following passage:

Iam super oceanum venit a seniore marito
flava pruinosa quae vehit axe diem.
'Quo properas, Aurora? mane! — sic Memnonis umbris
annua sollemni caede parentet avis!
nunc iuvat in teneris dominae iacuisse lacertis; 5
si quando, lateri nunc bene iuncta meo est.
nunc etiam somni pingues et frigidus aer,
et liquidum tenui gutture cantat avis.
quo properas, ingrata viris, ingrata puellis?
roscida purpurea supprime lora manu! 10
Ante tuos ortus melius sua sidera servat
navita nec media nescius errat aqua;
te surgit quamvis lassus veniente viator,
et miles saevas aptat ad arma manus.
prima bidente vides oneratos arva colentes; 15
prima vocas tardos sub iuga panda boves.
tu pueros somno fraudas tradisque magistris,
ut subeant tenerae verbera saeva manus;
atque eadem sponsum incautos ante atria mittis,
unius ut verbi grandia damna ferant. 20
nec tu consulto, nec tu iucunda diserto;
cogitur ad lites surgere uterque novas.
tu, cum feminei possint cessare labores,
lanificam revocas ad sua pensa manum.
Omnia perpeterer — sed surgere mane puellas, 25
quis nisi cui non est ulla puella ferat?
optavi quotiens, ne nox tibi cedere vellet,
ne fugerent vultus sidera mota tuos!
optavi quotiens, aut ventus frangeret axem,
aut caderet spissa nube retentus equus! 30

Amores 1.13 1-30

- (a) Working closely with the Latin text, who is inconvenienced by the arrival of Aurora and why? (18)
(b) What evidence can you find of Ovid's wit in this extract and in the remaining lines of this poem? (18)

[Quality of written communication: 4]
[Total: 36+4 = 40]

2. Answer the questions on the following passage:

quis nisi vel miles vel amans et frigora noctis
et denso mixtas perferet imbre nives?

mittitur infestos alter speculator in hostes;
in rivale oculos alter, ut hoste, tenet.

ille graves urbes, hic durae limen amicae
obsidet; hic portas frangit, at ille fores. 5

Saepe soporatos invadere profuit hostes
caedere et armata vulgus inerme manu.

sic fera Threicii ceciderunt agmina Rhesi,
et dominum capti deseruistis equi. 10

nempe maritorum somnis utuntur amantes,
et sua sopitis hostibus arma movent.

custodum transire manus vigilumque catervas
militis et miseri semper amantis opus.

Mars dubius nec certa Venus; victique resurgunt,
quosque neqes umquam posse iacere, cadunt. 15

Ergo desidiam quicumque vocabat amorem,
desinat. ingenii est experientis amor.

ardet in abducta Briseide magnus Achilles —
dum licet, Argeas frangite, Troes, opes! 20

Hector ab Andromaches complexibus ibat ad arma,
et, galeam capiti quae daret, uxor erat.

Amores 1.9 15-36

a) What arguments has Ovid previously used in this poem to support his main idea that “militat omnis amans...”

(9)

b) In lines 1- 14 how appropriate are the examples he uses to argue his case? You should make close reference to both the content and the style of the Latin and support your discussion with at least four examples from the text.

(30)

c) In lines 17 – 22, why does Ovid mention Achilles and Briseis, and Hector and Andromache? What two further mythological examples does he use in this poem?

(15)

**[Quality of written communication: 6]
[Total: 54+6 = 60]**

2 a)

The author uses several arguments to support his idea that every lover is a soldier. For example the age of a lover as well as the age of a soldier is significant for success. Furthermore both have to keep watch of a door, the lover who stands behind the door of his mistress and the soldier guarding the door.

Both have to go on long journeys as well, because love itself can be a journey through passion, despair and torment and because a soldier has to travel in order to attend a battle.

The lover and the soldier also follow a higher power. The lover is the slave of love and the soldier obeys a leader.

Moreover both of them face many obstacles on their journey; the lover might have to deal with doorkeepers who won't let him in (Poem 1.6) or husbands, while the soldier is exposed to high mountains, broad rivers or snow-drifts.

Ovid shows us that lovers and soldiers have a lot in common, as these arguments prove.

b)

Ovid uses several examples to argue his case.

In lines 1-2 he argues that lovers and soldiers in particular have to endure cold nights and bad weather. In my opinion this is appropriate in Ovid's case, as he already had to experience a cold and long night outside Corinna's door without any success.

In lines 3-4 Ovid further argues that both lover and soldier have to be aware of their rival/enemy and to spy on them ("speculator in hostes")("in rivale oculos tenet")

Furthermore, both of them are held up by a barrier. The lover has to stand outside the doorstep of his girlfriend ("durae limen amicae") in line 5, the soldier outside the walls of besieged cities.

It's noticeable that "urbes" (cities) as well as "amicae" are both female.

In this way Ovid indicates another similarity between lovers and soldiers, even if this is a subliminal example and perhaps not as strong as the other examples. I think that this example is suitable, because the object the lover/soldier desire most, i.e. triumph/girl, is behind physical barriers.

In lines 7-12 the author the poet further argues that the soldier/lover should take advantage of a sleeping enemy/husband. To prove his point, he refers to the Thracians who killed their enemy at night in line 9-10.

It is a common strategy at war to surprise the "hostes" in midst of night. That's why it's important, as he mentions in line 13-14, to be able to sneak past the "custodes" in order to fulfil plans such as to get to the mistress.

In my opinion all of Ovid's examples are appropriate in his case. The reader should nevertheless consider the significance of love and war. War can affect the whole world, be it politicians, soldiers or inhabitants of besieged cities, while love only concerns two individuals.

Therefore I think that it is quite bold of him to compare lovers and soldiers, perhaps this is an example of Ovid's humour.

c)

Achilles, Briseis, Hector and Andromache were characters from Homer's Iliad.

Powerful Achilles, who fought for the Greeks in the Trojan War, fell in love with the Trojan slave-girl Briseis who was taken away from him by Agamemnon. Consequently the mythological hero refused to fight. This gave the Trojan forces an opportunity to weaken the mighty enemy in battle. In this way Ovid supports his idea of lovers and soldiers, indicating that the great Achilles was a lover as well.

Furthermore he mentions the Trojan prince Hector, who was married to Andromache. He was a great warrior as well and killed by Achilles. With this example the poet supports his idea as well.

As further mythological reference Ovid talks about Mars and Venus, who were caught while being in action by the goddess's suspicious husband. As Mars is the god of war, this also supports the idea that every lover is a soldier.

Moreover, Ovid refers to characters of Homer's Iliad again, Agamemnon and Cassandra. Apparently the Greek king fell in love with the Trojan princess because she looked like a follower of the good Bacchus with her flowing hair.

Commentary and Essay A2

(a) In lines 1-14, how does Ovid create the mood of this poem?

Ovid creates the atmosphere of poem 1.5 by describing the daytime, the importance of secrecy, the daylight and Corinna as she makes her appearance in the poem.

The initial word of the poem ("aestus") is very important for the first impression the reader gets from the poem.

First of all, it is strong by position and a word with a lot of association.

As "aestus" can mean "hot" or "steamy", there is no doubt from the beginning on that this won't be a boring or dull poem, but that there will be passion and romance involved.

Moreover it is late afternoon ("mediamque dies exegerat horam", line 1), which also influences the ambience of the poem, because this is the time of day where one would hold a siesta and thus would stay in his or her house.

In lines 3-8 the author describes the light in the room.

In line 4 he pictures the light by comparing it to the light found in woods ("qualia fere silvae lumen habere solent"). The illumination in forests is mostly weakened by the treetops, so the light is dim. The idea of the woods also suggests a romantic atmosphere and a perfect location to have a furtive meeting.

In line 5 Ovid describes the light being like the light at sundown ("qualia sublucent fugiente crepuscula phoebo"). This suggests a romantic atmosphere, too and moreover marks the beginning of the time span where secret lovers preferably get together.

In line 7 and 8 he uses another simile to characterise the light. It is, as he says, the kind of light where shy girls can keep their modesty ("illa verecundis lux est praebenda puellis, qua timidus latebras speret habere pudor.")

He emphasizes the importance of secrecy by describing the window to be semi-open. In this way enough cool air can come into the room, but his privacy is protected at the same time.

His description of the light is interrupted by the sudden arrival of Corinna ("Ecce, Corinna venit" (line 9)). This has got a surprising effect on the reader, as he wouldn't have expected her to appear so suddenly.

She is wearing an unbelted tunic and loose hair ("tunica velata recincta" "candida dividua colla tegente coma") (lines 9-10)

This is a paradox to his description of the light being dim enough for a shy girl who wants to keep her modesty. Roman woman used to keep their hair tied up and their tunic held together with a belt.

The poet compares his mistress to Semiramis and Lais, who both are famous for their promiscuity. This description contributes to the picture we get of Corinna, because she must be as attractive and beautiful as the mythological references.

Therefore, the lines 9-12 suggest that the lovers will have sexual intercourse, and the erotic tension is heated up within these lines.

In line 13, before we even realise it, the actual action begins. Ovid rips off her tunic ("deripui tunicam"), which reveals his passionate, almost violent temperament.

We furthermore realize that her garments must have been made out of a transparent material ("rara"), which completes the image of Corinna and leaves us in no doubt that she couldn't have been very modest, despite the illumination.

As these examples show, the author uses several aspects of the poem to create the hot and steamy mood in these lines which prepare the reader for the climax of the poem

b) In lines 15-end, what qualities does Ovid recognize and admire in his mistress? What does this suggest about his relationship with her?

In these lines, Ovid sees several physical qualities in his mistress and he names nearly all of them.

In line 18, he adores her blemish free body. In line 19, he mentions her shoulders and arms and how nice they are to look at and to touch. It is noticeable that Ovid doesn't only look but also likes to feel, as the word order of "vidi" and "tetigi" indicates ("...vidi tetigique...").

Furthermore he admires her flat stomach beneath her well-formed bosom (line 21), her long flank and her youthful thigh (line 22).

He ends his portrayal of her figure with the words "...nil non laudabile vidi" (line 23), praising her body even more than necessary to point out that she is absolutely stunning (at least in his opinion)

It is again evident that words are quickly followed by action, as the sequence of the last word of line 23 ("vidi") and "pressi" in line 24 suggest.

The question "cetera quis nescit?" in line 25 implies that the couple had sexual intercourse now and it was obvious for a long time during this love-elegy that it would happen.

Ovid closes his poem with the hope of many more afternoons like this one.

This indicates another subtle quality of Corinna; not only is she attractive, she is also a pleasant company.

The description of their meeting definitely shows that the poet and his lover can't be a married couple, as their love-making can't happen very often and is therefore more "special" than habit.

If we only focus on this poem, we will imagine Ovid's and Corinna's relationship to be no more than a corporeal one. For it is conspicuous that he mentions various parts of her body but not her face. This supports the theory that their liaison only exists in order to satisfy their sexual needs rather than to have a serious long-term relationship. Perhaps Corinna is bored of her husband (if she has got one at all) and tries to find new pleasures in Ovid.

However, we have to be aware of the fact that Ovid is devoted to his mistress and declares his affection and loyalty to her in several other poems. Therefore this point of view is quite limited but relevant if only relating to this poem.