

CHAPTER XX: ODI ET AMO

DATE	54 BC
TOP STORY	Julius Caesar invades Britain, again!
FEATURE	Interview with Catullus' "Lesbia" and a reading by the poet himself

PROLOGVS

Today's news is that Julius Caesar has invaded Britain for a second time. While he was engaged in his Gallic campaign, Caesar made two incursions into Britain (in 55 and 54 BC). These were more for exploratory purposes than anything else; the region was reported to be wealthy and its remoteness lent it an air of mystery. After some heavy fighting in 54, Caesar withdrew from the island, leaving it aside for future Roman conquest. An entire century passed before the Romans began to make progress in the Romanization of Britain.

This episode focuses on Gaius Valerius Catullus, a young poet who traveled in the same social circles as Julius Caesar and whose poetry was all the rage in Rome in the middle of the first century BC. Catullus applied his poetic talents to a range of styles and subjects, but without a doubt he is best known for the emotionally charged love poetry he addressed to his girlfriend, whom he called by the nickname Lesbia. In today's broadcast a woman claiming to be Lesbia speaks with Iulia Pauli, giving exclusive details of her tumultuous love affair with Catullus. That affair has ended badly, apparently because of Lesbia's infidelities. In the *De Ludis* segment of this episode, Catullus recites a poem in which he makes the final break with his former lover.

The language of this episode is full of Catullan allusions and quotations. Now Catullus is celebrated for his lively subject matter and colloquial Latin, but in his own day there were those who disapproved of his style of poetry—in fact, our Scirtus Agitator is one of them. But Catullus seems to have cared little what others thought of him; even to the great Julius Caesar he wrote, "I have no particular desire to be liked by you."

Here are some questions to help you know what to look for:

1. According to Favonius, what do Romans think of Catullus' poetry?
2. Lesbia says she is a big fan of which member of the *Forum Romanum* cast?
3. In the dialogue between Julia and Lesbia, what lines from (and references to) Catullus' poetry can you recognize?
4. What is Scirtus Agitator's opinion of Catullus' poetry?
5. During Aulus Serenus' weather segment, what quotes from and references to Catullan poems can you pick up?

VERSUS

Nota Bene: People, places, things explained in the Notes section are in boldface. Terms defined in the Vocabulary section are underlined.

SALUTATIO

FAVONIUS

Salvete, omnes! Mihi nomen est Marcus Favonius et hoc est Forum Romanum! Quid novi est hodie? Summatim praedicam: hodie audiemus de carminibus Catulli, nam nobiscum est mulier quae dicit se esse Lesbiam ipsam—mulierem illam apud carmina Catulli et formosam et famosam. Hoc facto, feliciter nobis eveniet ut possimus audire Valerium Catullum, poetam ipsum, recitantem unum e suis carminibus. Omnia haec—plus etiam—agentur hac editione Fori Romani. Ante omnia, autem, ecce Dictum Hodiernum!

DICTIONUM HODIERNUM

LECTOR

Hoc est dictum hodiernum: **Amantes sunt amentes.**

QUID NOVI?

FAVONIUS

Verba notanda. Et nunc videamus quid novi sit. Hi nuntii modo Romam adlati sunt: Gaius Iulius Caesar, **proconsul** in Gallia, bellum Britannis iterum intulit! Et nunc ad alias res. Ego nuper inter cenam sumptuosam, apud Marcum Crassum consularem, audivi illum poetam Valerium Catullum unum e carminibus recitantem. Nonnulli carmina Catulli amant, nonnulli oderunt. Cum sic loquamur, opportunitum est introducere mulierem quae dicit se esse Lesbiam illam, mulierem bene notam omnibus qui Catulli carmina audiverunt. Haec “**Lesbia**” est cum Iulia Pauli.

PERSONA NOTANDA (INTERVIEW WITH LESBIA)

IULIA

Gratias, Favoni. Carmina Catulli sunt bene nota—aut fortasse male nota—totam per Urbem Romam. Atque his de carminibus nemo est aut melius aut peius nota quam Lesbia illa. His dictis, gratum est mihi hoc dicere: hodie nobiscum est quaedam mulier quae declarat se esse illam Lesbiam, puellam quondam Catulli poetae. Multum salve, Lesbia!

LESBIA

Salve, Iulia Pauli.

IULIA

Gaudemus maxime te adesse nobiscum, Lesbia, quia omnes volunt cognoscere plura de te.

LESBIA

Et pergratum est mi adesse vobiscum nam mihi placet esse in Foro Romano—id est, in hoc spectaculo optimo.

IULIA

Gratias, Lesbia. Nimis benigna es.

LESBIA

At vero, praesertim mihi placet adesse quod iam dudum cupiebam **Aulum Serenum** ipsum praesentem videre! Quam bellus homo est—quavisumque tempestate!

IULIA

Facete dictum, Lesbia. Sed tamen, narres pauca de hac “familiaritate” cum illo poeta Valerio Catullo.

LESBIA

Ita faciam libenter. Verum dicis: Catullum bene novi, ut ita dicam.

IULIA

Ubi tu primum Catullum aspexisti?

LESBIA

Non pro certo memini. Ut mi videtur erat apud virum...em oblita sum. Non memini ubi essemus.

IULIA

Nil refert. Narra nobis, quaeso, vidistine tu illum aut ille te?

LESBIA

Si recte memini...ego cum quodam homine lepide loquebar ridebamque identidem, cum aspexi hunc—Gaium Catullum—me spectare stupefactum quasi lupo fame paene confectus.

IULIA

Horrendum visu!

LESBIA

Non tam horrendum, ut mi visum est. Melius *inspectari* quam *non spectari*, nonne?

IULIA

Lepide. At vero, nunc memini. Erat sic ut in illius versibus:

“**Ille mi par esse deo videtur**

ille, si fas est, superare divos

qui sedens adversus identidem te...”

LESBIA

Sic erat, atque “lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus flamma demanat” et cetera.

IULIA

Itaque quid tunc?

LESBIA

Quid tunc? Ego mulier eram, ille amans cupidus erat. Cetera, quis nescit?

IULIA

Etiam lepide, sed cave ne sis tam lasciva, Lesbia! Nonne te pudet ita dicere?

LESBIA

Nil me pudet.

IULIA

Hoc in aperto est. Sed tamen, perge dicere, quaeso, de hoc amore inter te et Valerium Catullum.

LESBIA

Quid dicam? Eram mulier urbana et ille adulescens amans atque poeta doctus. Primo omnia optime suavissimeque agebantur...

IULIA

Sed deinde...

LESBIA

Sed deinde...at vero tu bene scis: "Da mi basia mille, deinde centum, dein mille altera, dein secunda centum..." Nimis erat! Immo etiam taedet obestque magis. "Sat superque" dixi.

IULIA

Tu ergo non dilexisti eum ita ut ille te, nonne?

LESBIA

Ille me amabat plus quam oculos suos...

IULIA

Sed tu...

LESBIA

Sed ego ... melius hoc dicere: Oculi mei amabant alios plus quam Catullum.

IULIA

O factum male! O miselle Catulle!

LESBIA

Re vera, quondam fulsere vere candidi nobis soles. Sed omnia mutantur. Melius est, ut mihi videtur, quod vides perisse, perditum ducere. Quare iam amplius te excrucies?

IULIA

Cur etiam. Sed tamen, vae nobis, nil temporis relictum est. Summas ergo gratias tibi ago, Lesbia, et bene vale. Totum est, Favoni. Rursus ad te!

FAVONIUS

Et nunc, praesto est Scirtus Agitator!

DE LUDIS (RECITATIO CATULLI CARMINIS)

SCIRTUS

Avete omnes! Scirtus Agitator nominor sed, vae nobis, ludi non sunt hodie. Sed voluptatis vestrae causa—qualiscumque erit—audiemus Catullum ipsum recitantem unum e carminibus.

CATULLUS

Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli –
 sive in extremos penetrabit Indos,
 litus ut longe resonante Eoa
 tunditur unda,
 sive in Hyrcanos Arabasve molles,
 seu Sagas **sagittiferosve Parthos**,
 sive quae septemgeminus colorat
 aequora Nilus,
 sive trans altas gradietur Alpes,
 Caesaris visens monimenta magni,
 Gallicum Rhenum, horribile aequor, ulti-
 mosque Britannos –
 omnia haec, quaecumque feret voluntas
 caelitem, temptare simul parati,
 pauca nuntiate meae puellae
 non bona dicta:
 cum suis vivat valeatque moechis,
 quos simul complexa tenet trecentos,
 nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium
 ilia rumpens;
 nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,
 qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati
 ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam
 tactus aratro est.

SCIRTUS

Ita est ut mater mea semper dixit, “Amantes sunt amentes!” Sane hoc carmen aliquid veri habet, sed de aliis carminibus Catulli... nugae, si me roges, nil nisi nugae! Nam qui Romanus vult audire de rebus quam levissimis... “passer deliciae meae puellae.” Quisnam curat? Gaudeo passerem mortuum esse! Melius si poetae Romani res gestas gloriosas canant—exempli gratia, **de aurigis audacibus** qui, quasi heroes prisci, multas palmas in Circo complant! Immo etiam, Valeri Catulle, tu ineptus es, aio, multo ineptior **Marrucino Asinio aut Arrio** illo qui fluctus Ionios “**Hionios**” dixit!... Sed tamen, ut dicunt in ludis scaenicis “Haec est fabula!” Itaque, spectator bone, vive valeque et otiosus esto!

TEMPESTAS HODIERNA

FAVONIUS

Tempus est audire de tempestate hodierna. Itaque, ecce Aulus Serenus!

SERENUS

Gratias tibi ago, Favoni. Audistine id quod Lesbia dixit: me esse hominem bellum—quacumque tempestate?

FAVONIUS

Etiam audivi. Sed mulier fatuo quod dicit Sereno, in vento et rapida scribere oportet aqua!

SERENUS

Fugit te, Favoni. Sed tamen, videamus quaenam sit tempestas hodie. Hodie Romae, quam dies bellissimus, ut saepe fit primo vere! Ita est ut Catullus scripsit:

“Iam ver egelidos refert tepores...
Iam mens praetrepidans avet vagari,
iam laeti studio pedes vigescunt!”

Et qualis sit tempestas alibi circum mare nostrum, fortasse requiris? Scio. Apud “monimenta magni Caesaris”—id est, apud “Gallicum Rhenum horribilesque ultimosque Britannos”—pluit, nec mirum. In parte orientali, apud “Arabas molles” et “sagittiferos Parthos” sol plerumque lucet. Etiam sol lucet in Aegypto ubi “septemgeminus colorat aequora Nilus.” Sed tamen, tempus fugere sentio et excrucior. Ergo eundem est mihi. Aulus Serenus sum atque spero caela sint vobis valde serena!

VALEDICTIO

FAVONIUS

Gratias, Serene. At tamen, ut repetamus nuntios principales: Gaius Iulius Caesar bellum Britannis iterum intulit—sane res gestae litteris dignae. Itaque, spectatores, totum est ad hanc editionem Fori Romani. Gratias summas agimus et vobis feliciter eveniat. Valete, omnes!



Poeta puellae carmen recitans

COMMENTARIUM

Amantes sunt amentes. “Lovers are lunatics.” (People in love are out of their mind.)

proconsul. In the Republic, consuls were given the title *proconsul* the year following their consulship and were sent to govern a Roman province.

Lesbia. “Lesbia” is the name Catullus gives to his love interest in many of his most famous poems. This Lesbia has often been identified as Clodia Metelli, sister of Clodius Pulcher and wife of Metellus Celer.

Aulum Serenum. Lesbia clearly is a fan of the show and of Aulus Serenus, our weatherman.

Ille mi par esse deo videtur. Julia quotes the opening of Catullus’ Poem 51. This interview has many other references to Catullan poetry.

Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli. A recitation of Catullus’ Poem 11, which refers in part to Caesar’s military achievements in Gaul and Britain.

Gallicum Rhenum. The Rhine River.

sagittiferosve Parthos. The Parthians, from the east, who were known for their skill as archers in battle.

de aurigis audacibus. Scirtus is no fan of Catullus’ introspective poetry. He’d much rather hear Catullus sing of glorious, heroic achievements like charioteers winning races in the Circus. (Scirtus, of course, is an ex-charioteer himself.)

Marrucino Asinio aut Arrio. References to two characters mocked in other poems of Catullus.

GLOSSARIUM

Salutatio et Dictum et Quid Novi

Summatim – in summary form
et formosam et famosam – beautiful and infamous
iterum – a second time

consularem – a man of consular rank
opportunum est – it’s a good time to . . .

Persona Notanda

Nimis – too
praesertim – especially
iam dudum – for a long time now
Facete – wittily, cleverly

novi – I know
virum – my husband
lasciva – “dirty” (as in a dirty mind)

De Ludis et Tempestas Hodierna

aliquid veri – some truth (something of truth)
nugae – nonsense
rebus levissimis – such silly (unimportant) stuff
palmas complent – (who) won many prizes

hominem bellum – a handsome man
fatuo – foolish, gullible
primo vere – at the start of spring

Latine Loquamur!

Useful Expressions

Here are some examples of conversational Latin used in this show. Try out some or all of these useful expressions in your own Latin conversations.

pergratum est mi(hi) – I’m really happy (to)	Sed tamen – But anyhow
At vero – But really	perge dicere – Keep talking (about)
Facete dictum! – How clever (what you said)!	Quid dicam – What is there to say?
Ita faciam libenter – I’ll gladly do so	suavissimeque agebantur – things were going very nicely
Verum dicis – What you say is true	tu bene scis – (as) you know well
ut ita dicam – so to speak	Re vera – indeed, in fact
Non pro certo memini – I don’t remember for sure	si me roges – if you ask me
Ut mihi videtur – as it seems to me	nil nisi nugae – nothing but nonsense
Nil refert. – It doesn’t matter.	Quisnam curat? – Who the heck cares?
quaeso – please	Immo etiam – On the contrary
Si recte memini – If I remember correctly	, aio, - I say; I declare
nonne – right? (“ain’t it?”)	otiosus esto! – Take it easy!
Lepide – well said	Fugit te – It escapes you; You don’t get it.
Cetera, quis nescit? – Who doesn’t know the rest?	Ita est ut . . . – It’s just as . . .
cave ne sis tam . . . – Don’t be so . . .	nec mirum – and no wonder
Nil me pudet – I’m not ashamed at all	eundem est mihi – I’ve got to go
Hoc in aperto est – That’s obvious.	

Talking the Talk

Below is a short conversation that uses some of these useful expressions. Do your best to translate the conversation, then practice the dialogue in Latin with a partner.

Serenus: Salve, Marce! Pergratum est mihi te videre!

Favonius: Et tu salve, Aule! Quomodo res se habent?

Serenus: Suavissime aguntur, ut mihi videtur, quod sol splendide lucet. Iupiter nobis favet.

Favonius: Verum dicis, amice. Modo audivi tempestatem crastinam horrendum fore, nonne?

Serenus: At vero, Favoni, si me roges, hi rumores sunt nil nisi nugae! Etiam sol splendide lucebit cras, aio! Quisnam haec dixisti?

Favonius: Quaeso, Serene, cave ne sis tam iracundus! Nil refert. Sed tamen, eundem est mihi. Vale, Serene!

Serenus: Et tu, vale! Otiosus esto!

GRAMMATICA

As a grammarian, you should know a grammatical form when you see it. But as a translator, always use context as your guide and remember that a true translation sounds good in English.

1. Subjunctive Uses

Verbs in the subjunctive mood are common in Latin, much more so than in English. So you should be able to recognize a subjunctive form when you see one. And once you have recognized a subjunctive, use the context in which it appears to help you decide what is the most sensible translation. Subjunctives in main clauses are translated in particular ways based on their use, but subjunctives in dependent clauses are often translated into English as if they were in the indicative mood.

Example in Context

1. Et nunc videamus quid novi sit.
2. Cum sic loquamur . . .
3. ut ita dicam
4. Non memini ubi essemus.
5. Cave ne sis tam . . .
6. Quid dicam?
7. Vivat valeatque . . .
8. si me roges
9. Ut repetamus nuntios principales . . .
10. Vobis feliciter eveniat!

Translation

1. And now let's see what's new.
2. Since we are talking in this way . . .
3. so to speak (if I may say so)
4. I don't remember where we were.
5. Don't be so . . . (Take care that you not be so . . .)
6. What can I say?
7. May she live and be happy with . . .
8. if you ask me
9. To repeat our top story . . .
10. May you be fortunate (May it turn out fortunately/prosperously for you)

2. Participles

Participles are part adjective and part verb: they have tense and voice like a verb, and like adjectives they agree in gender, number, and case with the nouns they modify. Present participles are recognizable by the suffix *-nt* with a third declension ending.

Example in Context

1. . . . audire Catullum recitantem
unum e suis carminibus
2. Hoc facto, . . .
3. His dictis, gratum est mihi . . .
4. Amantes sunt amentes.
5. Facete dictum.
6. sedens adversus te

Translation

1. . . . to hear Catullus reciting one of his poems
2. This done, . . .
3. That said, it's my pleasure to . . .
4. Lovers are lunatics. (Those in love are out of their minds.)
5. Cleverly said.
6. (who is) sitting opposite you

RECITATIO

Practice reading aloud—with your teacher or in pairs—these excerpts. After you practice reading aloud, sum up in a few words what the excerpt is about. At this point, don't translate, just give the gist—that is, an in-a-nutshell summary or paraphrase.

1. Hi nuntii modo Romam adlati sunt: Gaius Iulius Caesar, proconsul in Gallia, bellum Britannis iterum intulit!
2. Gaudemus maxime te adesse nobiscum, Lesbia, quia omnes volunt cognoscere plura de te.
3. Si recte memini, ego cum quodam homine lepide loquebar ridebamque identidem, cum aspexi Gaium Catullum me spectare stupefactum quasi lupus fame paene confectus.
4. Re vera, quondam fulsere vere candidi nobis soles. Sed omnia mutantur. Melius est, ut mihi videtur, quod vides perisse perditum ducere. Quare iam amplius te excrucies?
5. . . . nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem, / qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati / ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam tactus aratro est.
6. Iam ver egelidos refert tempores ... / iam mens praetrepidans avet vagari, / iam laeti studio pedes vigescunt!

DELIBERANDA

1. Do you agree with the assertion that the Lesbia character in Catullus' poetry is based on a real person? Why or why not?
2. In this episode Scirtus Agitator is clearly no fan of Catullus. He thinks the subjects of Catullus' poems are not worthy of Roman poetry. Do you think actual Romans of Catullus' day would have agreed with Scirtus? Why or why not?
3. What do you like most about Catullus' poetry? What do you like least?



The interior courtyard of a Roman villa (House of the Vetii in Pompeii)

STVDIA AMPLIVS: Common Threads

Form into work groups and review the following quotes and excerpts from the poetry of Catullus. For each one, try in your group to come up with a short, one-sentence statement that captures the meaning or sentiment of each quote. Then, go through the list a second time and see if your group can identify a line from a modern saying, song, poem, story, or movie that captures a similar sentiment.

1. Vivamus atque amemus! Soles occidere et redire possunt; nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux, nox est perpetua una dormienda.
2. Miser Catulle, desina ineptire, et quod vides perisse perditum ducas.
3. Hoc salsum esse putas? Fugit te, inepte!
4. Suus cuique attributus est error; sed non videmus manticae quod in tergo est.
5. Rumoresque senum severiorum omnes unius aestimemus assis!
6. O saeculum insapiens et infacetum!
7. Iam ver egelidos refert tepores, iam mens praetrepidans avet vagari, iam laeti studio pedes vigescunt.
8. Nec somnus teget quiete ocellos, sed toto indomitus furore lecto, versarer, cupiens videre lucem.
9. Lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus flamma demanat, sonitu suoapte tintinnant aures, gemina teguntur lumina nocte.
10. Otium et reges prius et beatas perdidit urbes.
11. Difficile est longum subito deponere amorem.
12. Nulla potest mulier tantum se dicere amatam vere, quantum a me Lesbia amata mea est.
13. Odi et amo. Quare id faciam, fortasse requiris? Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.
14. Ave atque vale!