

# Ovid: Epistulae ex Ponto Book 1

A Latin to English Translation

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## Bruto

Naso Tomitanae iam non novus incola terrae  
hoc tibi de Getico litore mittit opus.

- *Tomitanae... terrae* in apposition to *Naso*.
- Naso, now not a new inhabitant of the country of Tomis, sends this work to you from the Getic shore.

si vacat, hospitio peregrinos, Brute, libellos  
excipe, dumque aliquo, quolibet abde loco.

- *vacat* from *vaco*, *vacare* is 3rd singular present active indicative, meaning to be empty/vacant.
- *dumque... loco* is a brachylogical expression for *et dum aliquo loco libellos abdas, quolibet abde loco*.
- If he is idle, extract, Brutus, the foreign books with hospitality, and while you may put away the books in some place, put them away in whatever place.

publica non audent intra monimenta venire, 5  
ne suus hoc illis clausurit auctor iter.

- *clausurit* from *claudio*, *claudere*, *clausi*, *clausus* is 3rd singular perfect active subjunctive, meaning to close. This is within a *ne* clause, therefore *fear* clause? *non audent* isn't really fear, it could be negative purpose clause?
- They do not dare to enter within public monuments, lest their own author close this road for them.

a, quotiens dixi: 'certe nil turpe docetis,  
ite. patet castis versibus ille locus.'

- *quotiens* weird adverb meaning 'how many times' in either interrogative or exclamatory sense.
- Ah, How many times did I say: 'You all certainly teach nothing ugly, go. That place is open to pure verses.

non tamen accedunt, sed, ut aspicias ipse, latere

sub lare privato tutius esse putant. 10

- *putant* opens up indirect speech, taking *esse* not *latere*. In turn, *latere* feeds *esse*.
- They nevertheless do not approach, but, as you yourself see, they think that it is safer to lurk under a private home.

quaeris, ubi hos possis nullo componere laeso?  
qua steterant Artes, pars vacat illa tibi.

- *nullo* for *nemine*, poetic usage.
- Why is *possis* subjunctive? *ubi* takes the indicative.
- Not sure how to translate *qua*. I tried the adverbial usage. I want it to be relative describing *pars*, but it doesn't seem to be fitting in case/gender.
- You seek, where you may be able to compose these with no one having been offended? Where the Ars Amatoria had stood, that part is empty for you.

quid veniat, novitate roges fortasse sub ipsa.  
accipe quodcumque est, dummodo non sit amor.

- *veniat* is impersonal question, and then *roges* is subjunctive because it's subordinate to it.
- *roges* is potential subjunctive, and then *veniat* is subjunctive because indirect question.
- *est* is impersonal.
- *dummodo* takes the subjunctive (*sit*).
- what is coming, you perhaps could ask under the newness itself. Take whatever is it, provided it is not love.

invenies, quamvis non est miserabilis index, 15  
non minus hoc illo triste, quod ante dedi.

- *illo* as ablative of comparison.
- You will discover, although it is not a miserable sign, that this is not less sad than that, because I gave it earlier.

rebus idem, titulo differt, et epistula cui sit  
non occultato nomine missa docet.

- *missa sit* is 3rd singular perfect passive subjunctive, meaning to send.
- Why is this subjunctive. No fucking clue! Suppressed indefinite => relative clause of characteristic?
- the same with respect to things, it differs with respect to title, and the letter teaches to whom it is sent with the name not having been concealed.

nec vos hoc vultis, sed nec prohibere potestis,  
Musaque ad invitos officiosa venit. 20

- You all do not wish this, but you all are not able to prohibit it, and the dutiful Muse comes to those reluctant.

quidquid id est, adiunge meis: nihil impedit ortos  
exule servatis legibus Urbe frui.

- Such as it is, add it to my works: With the laws maintained nothing impedes that the children enjoy the city of exile from enjoying the city.

quod metuas non est: Antoni scripta leguntur,  
doctus et in promptu scrinia Brutus habet-  
nec me nominibus furiosus confero tantis: 25  
saeva deos contra non tamen arma tuli.

- There is nothing which you fear, the writings of Antony, and educated Brutus has a shelf at the ready - neither do I compare myself to such names, I nevertheless did not bring such savage arms against the gods.

- TODO

denique Caesareo, quod non desiderat ipse,  
non caret e nostris ullus honore liber.

si dubitas de me, laudes admitte deorum  
et carmen dempto nomine sume meum. 30

adiuvat in bello pacatae ramus olivae-  
proderit auctorem pacis habere nihil?

- A branch of peaceful olive helps in war - will it be not at all useful to have the author of peace?

cum foret Aeneae cervix subiecta parenti,  
dicitur ipsa viro flamma dedisse viam.

When the neck of Aeneas was laden by his parent, it is said that the flame itself gave way to the man.

- TODO

fert liber Aeneaden, et non iter omne patebit? 35  
at patriae pater hic, ipsius ille fuit.

- the book brings Aeneas' descendent, and will the journey not be open? But the latter was the father of the countryside, the former was the father of he himself.

ecquis ita est audax, ut limine cogat abire  
iactantem Pharia tinnula sinistra manu?

- TODO

Is anyone so bold as to turn away by force from his doorstep a follower of Isis shaking the ringing rattle in his Pharian hand?

ante deum matrem cornu tibicen adunco  
cum canit, exiguae quis stipis aera negat? 40

- TODO

[scimus ab imperio fieri nil tale Dianae;  
unde tamen vivat vaticinator habet.

- TODO

ipsa movent animos superorum numina nostros,  
turpe nec est tali credulitate capi.]

- The divine wills of the gods move our minds, nor is it a disgrace to be seized by such credulity.

en ego pro sistro Phrygiique foramine buxi  
gentis Iuleae nomina sancta fero.

- TODO

vaticinor moneoque: 'locum date sacra ferenti;  
non mihi, sed magno poscitur ille deo.'

- Not sure how to resolve *sacra ferenti*.
- I prophesize and remind you: give the place to the one bearing sacred objects; not for me, but that is demanded for the great god.'

nec, quia vel merui vel sensi principis iram,  
a nobis ipsum nolle putate coli. 50

- I think that *coli* is from *colo, colere, colui, cultus*, meaning to cultivate/care for.
- Nor think that, because I either earned or perceived the wrath of the princeps, he himself is unwilling to be cared for by us.

vidi ego linigerae numen violasse fatentem  
Isidis Isiacos ante sedere focos.

- I saw a person confessing to have offended the divine will of Isis wearing linen, sitting before the hearth of Isis.

alter ob huic similem privatus lumine culpam  
clamabat media se meruisse via.

- *privatus* takes ablative *lumine*.
- One, having been deprived of a eye on account of a blame similar to this, was proclaiming in the middle of the road that he earned it.

taliam caelestes fieri praeconia gaudent, 55  
ut sua, quid valeant numina, teste probent.

- Gaertner tells me to translate *probent* as prove.
- Ehhhh, I hate my translation. Plus I put *sua* into the *quid* clause, which seems like I'm stretching it.
- The divinities are glad that such proclamations happen, so that they may prove with a witness how their own divine wills are strong.

saepe levant poenas ereptaque lumina reddunt,  
cum bene peccati paenituisse vident.

- *cum* clause!
- *paenituisse* apparently takes the genitive.

- often they will lift the penalty and return the having been snatched away eye, when they see that he repented well of the offense.

paenitet, o-si quid miserorum creditur ulli-  
paenitet, et facto torqueor ipse meo. 60

- I regret, O if anything of wretched people is trusted by anyone. I regret, and I myself am twisted by my deed.

cumque sit exilium, magis est mihi culpa dolori,  
estque pati poenam quam meruisse minus.

- What the fuck?
- and although it is exile for my pain, to a greater extent i

While exile is a source of my distress, a still greater source is my guilt, and the fact that I suffer punishment grieves me less than the fact that I deserved it.

ut mihi di faveant, quibus est manifestior ipse,  
poena potest demi, culpa perennis erit.

- although the gods, to whom he himself is more guilty, favors me, the penalty is able to be removed, the blame will be perennial.

[mors faciet certe, ne sim, cum venerit, exul; 65  
ut non peccarim, mors quoque non faciet.

- *quoque* as even.
- Result subjunctives here? Something with *ne* makes that hinky.
- Death will certainly make it so that, when it will have come, I am not a exile; so that I did not sin, even death will not do it.

non igitur mirum, si mens mea tabida facta  
de nive manantis more liquescit aquae.]

- More wtf.
- therefore, it is not strange if my mind, becoming rotten, melts like the custom of flowing water into snow.

estur ut occulta vitiata teredine navis,  
aequorei scopulos ut cavat unda salis,  
roditur ut scabra positum rubigine ferrum,  
conditus ut tineae carpitur ore liber,  
sic mea perpetuos curarum pectora morsus,  
fine quibus nullo conficiantur, habent.

Just as a decaying ship is eaten up by a hidden worm, just as the wave of the salty sea hollows rocks, just as a sword that has been laid aside is gnawed by scaly rust, just as a stored book is nibbled by the mouth of the bookworm, my heart suffers from the permanent bites of my sorrows by which it is worn out with no end.

nec prius hi mentem stimuli, quam vita relinquet,

quique dolet, citius quam dolor ipse cadet.

And these stings will not leave my mind before life leaves it, and the one who suffers will die sooner than the pain itself.

hoc mihi si superi, quorum sumus omnia, credent,  
forsitan exigua dignus habebor ope,  
inque locum Scythico vacuum mutabor ab arcu.  
plus isto, duri, si precer, oris ero.

If the gods above, on whom we depend entirely, will believe me in this, maybe I shall be considered worthy of some minimal assistance, and I shall be sent to a place which is free from the Scythian bow. Should I ask for more than this, I shall be shameless.

## Fabio Maximo

Maxime, qui tanti mensuram nominis impleo  
et geminas animi nobilitate genus,  
qui nasci ut posses, quamvis cecidere trecenti,  
non omnis Fabios abstulit una dies,  
forsitan, haec a quo mittatur epistula, quaeras,  
quisque loquar tecum, certior esse velis.

Maximus, you who fill the measure of such a big name and you who double noble descent by nobility of mind, and, to allow whose birth, one single day—even though 300 fell—did not carry off all the Fabians, maybe you ask from whom this letter is sent and you wish to know who is conversing with you.

ei mihi, quid faciam? vereor, ne nomine lecto  
durus et aversa cetera mente legas.

Oh dear, what shall I do? I fear that, after reading my name, you may read the rest of the letter with a hard and unfavourable disposition.

videris: audebo tibi me scripsisse fateri  
qui, cum me poena dignum graviore fuisse  
confitear, possum vix graviora pati.

You shall see: I will dare to tell you that I have written the letter, I who admit that I have deserved an even harsher punishment but at the same time can hardly endure circumstances which are harder than these.

hostibus in mediis interque pericula versor  
(tamquam cum patria pax sit adempta mihi),  
qui, mortis saevo gement ut vulnere causas,  
omnia vipereo spicula felle linunt.

I am in the middle of enemies and in the midst of perils (as if, together with my native country, peace, too, has been taken away from me), (15) enemies who dip the sharp points of all their

arrows in viper venom in order to double the causes of death by a cruel wound.

his eques instructus perterrita moenia lustrat  
more lupi clausas circumeuntis oves,  
et semel intentus nervo levis arcus equino  
vincula semper habens inresoluta manet.

Equipped with these weapons horsemen ride around the terrified city walls, like a wolf circling sheep which are shut up, and once the light bow has been bent with its horse-tendon string (20) it so remains, always keeping its fastenings unloosened.

tecta rigent fixis veluti vallata sagittis,  
portaque vix firma summovet arma sera.

Like a wall with palisades the rooftops bristle with arrows, which have been shot into them, and although shut with a secure bar, the door can hardly keep out the armed enemies.