

Ars poetica

- [1] Hūmānō capitī cervīcem pictor equīnam
[2] jungere sī velit et variās indūcere plūmās
[3] undique collātīs membrīs, ut turpiter ātrum
[4] dēsinat in piscem mulier fōrmōsa supernē,
[5] spectātum admissī, rīsum teneātis, amīcī?
[6] Crēdite, Pīsōnēs, istī tabulae fore librum
[7] persimilem, cujus, velut aegrī somnia, vānae
[8] fingentur speciēs, ut nec pēs nec caput ūnī
[9] reddātur fōrmae. "Pictōribus atque poētīs
[10] quidlibet audendī semper fuit aequa potestās."
[11] Scīmus, et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim,
[12] sed nōn ut placidīs coeant immītia, nōn ut
[13] serpentēs avibus geminentur, tigribus agnī.
[14] Inceptīs gravibus plērumque et magna professīs
[15] purpureus, lātē quī splendeat, ūnus et alter
[16] adsuitur pannus, cum lūcus et āra Diānae
[17] et properantis aquae per amoenōs ambitus agrōs
[18] aut flūmen Rhēnum aut pluvius dēscrībitur arcus;
[19] sed nunc nōn erat hīs locus. Et fortasse cupressum
[20] scīs simulāre; quid hoc, sī frāctīs ēnatat exspēs
[21] nāvibus, aere datō quī pingitur? Amphora coepit
[22] īstituī; currēte rotā cūr urceus exit?
[23] Dēnique sit quod vīs, simplex dumtaxat et ūnum.
[24] Maxima pars vātum, pater et juvenēs patre dignī,
[25] dēcipimur speciē rēctī. Brevis esse labōrō,
[26] obscūrus fiō; sectantem lēvia nervī
[27] dēficiunt animīque; professus grandia turget;
[28] serpit humī tūtus nimium timidusque procellae;
[29] quī variāre cupit rem prōdigīāliter ūnam,
[30] delphīnum silvīs adpingit, flūctibus aprum.
[31] In vitium dūcit culpae fuga, sī caret arte.
[32] Aemiliū circā lūdum faber īmus et unguīs
[33] exprimet et mollīs imitābitur aere capillōs,
[34] īnfēlīx operis summā, quia pōnere tōtum
[35] nesciet. Hunc ego mē, sīquid compōnere cūrem,
[36] nōn magis esse velim quam nāsō vīvere prāvō
[37] spectandum nigrīs oculīs nigrōque capillō.
[38] Sūmite māteriam vestrīs, quī scribitis, aequam
[39] vīribus et versātē diū quid ferre recūsent,
[40] quid valeant umerī. cui lēcta potenter erit rēs,
[41] nec fācundia dēseret hunc, nec lūcidus ōrdō.
[42] Ōrdinis haec virtūs erit et venus, aut ego fallor,
[43] ut jam nunc dīcat jam nunc dēbentia dīcī,
[44] plēraque differat et praesēns in tempus omittat,
[45] hoc amet, hoc spernat prōmissī carminis auctor.
[46] In verbīs etiam tenuis cautusque serendīs
[47] dīxeris ēgregiē, nōtum sī callida verbum
[48] reddiderit jūnctūra novum. Sī forte necesse est
[49] indicīis mōnstrāre recentibus abdita rērum, et

[50] fingere cīnctūtīs nōn exaudīta Cethēgīs
[51] continget dabiturque licentia sūmpta pudenter,
[52] et nova fictaque nūper habēbunt verba fidem, sī
[53] Graecō fonte cadent parcē dētorta. Quid autem
[54] Caeciliō Plautōque dabit Rōmānus, adēmptum
[55] Vergiliō Variōque? Ego cūr, adquīrere pauca
[56] sī possum, invideor, cum lingua Catōnis et Ennī
[57] sermōnem patrium dītāverit et nova rērum
[58] nōmina prōtulerit? Licuit semperque licēbit
[59] signātum praeſente notā prōducere nōmen.
[60] Ut silvae foliīs prōnōs mūtantur in annōs,
[61] prīma cadunt, ita verbōrum vetus interit aetās,
[62] et juvēnum rītū flōrent modo nāta vigēntque.
[63] Dēbēmur mortī nōs noſtraque. Sīve receptus
[64] terrā Neptūnus classēs Aquilōnibus arcet,
[65] rēgis opus, sterilisve diū palus aptaque rēmīs
[66] vīcīnās urbēs alit et grave sentit arātrum,
[67] seu cursum mūtāvit iniquum frūgibus amnis,
[68] doctus iter melius, mortālia facta peribunt,
[69] nēdum sermōnem stet honōs et grātia vīvāx.
[70] Multa renāſcentur quae jam cecidēre, cadentque
[71] quae nunc sunt in honōre vocābula, sī volet ūsus,
[72] quem penes arbitrium est et jūs et norma loquendī.
[73] Rēs gestae rēgumque ducumque et trīstia bella
[74] quō scribī possent numerō, mōnstrāvit Homērus.
[75] Versibus impariter jūnctīs querimōnia prīmum,
[76] post etiam inclūsa est vōtī sententia compos;
[77] quis tamen exigūōs elegōs ēmīserit auctor,
[78] grammaticī certant et adhūc sub jūdice līs est.
[79] Archilochum propriō rabiēs armāvit iambō;
[80] hunc soccī cēpēre pedem grandēsque coturnī,
[81] alternīs aptum sermōnibus et populāris
[82] vincentem strepitūs et nātum rēbus agendīs.
[83] Mūsa dedit fidibus dīvōs puerōsque deōrum
[84] et pugilem victōrem et equum certāmine prīmum
[85] et juvēnum cūrās et lībera vīna referre.
[86] Dīſcripītās servāre vicēs operumque colōrēs
[87] cūr ego, sī nequeō ignōrōque, poēta salūtor?
[88] Cūr nescīre pudēns prāvē quam discere mālō?
[89] Versibus expōnī tragicīs rēs cōmica nōn vult;
[90] indignātur item prīvātīs ac prope soccō
[91] dignīs carminibus nārrārī cēna Thyestae.
[92] Singula quaeque locum teneant sortīta decentem.
[93] Interdum tamen et vōcem cōmoedia tollit,
[94] īrātusque Chremēs tumidō dēlītigat ōre;
[95] et tragicus plērumque dolet sermōne pedestrī
[96] Tēlephus et Pēleus, cum pauper et exul uterque
[97] prōicit ampullās et sēsquipedālia verba,
[98] sī cūrat cor spectantis tetigisse querellā.
[99] Nōn satis est pulchra esse poēmata; dulcia suntō
[100] et, quōcumque volent, animū audītōris aguntō.
[101] Ut rīdentibus adrīdent, ita flentibus adsunt

[102] hūmānī voltūs; sī vīs mē flēre, dolendum est
[103] prīmūm ipsī tibi; tum tua mē īfōrtūnia laendent,
[104] Tēlephe vel Pēleu; male sī mandāta loquēris,
[105] aut dormītābō aut rīdēbō. Trīstia maestum
[106] voltūm verba decent, īrātūm plēna minārum,
[107] lūdentem lascīva, sevērum sēria dictū.
[108] Fōrmāt enim nātūra prius nōn intus ad omnem
[109] fortūnārum habitum; juvat aut impellit ad īram,
[110] aut ad humum maerōre gravī dēdūcit et angit;
[111] post effert animī mōtūs interprete linguā.
[112] Sī dīcentis erunt fortūnīs absona dicta,
[113] Rōmānī tollent equitēs peditēsque cachinnum.
[114] Intererit multum, dīvusne loquātur an hērōs,
[115] mātūrusne senex an adhūc flōrente juventā
[116] fervidus, et mātrōna potēns an sēdula nūtrīx,
[117] mercātorne vagus cultorne virentis agellī,
[118] Colchus an Assyrius, Thēbīs nūtrītus an Argīs.
[119] Aut fāmam sequere aut sibi convenientia finge
[120] scrīptor. Honōrātūm sī forte repōnis Achillem,
[121] impiger, īrācundus, inexōrābilis, ācer
[122] jūra neget sibi nāta, nihil nōn arroget armīs.
[123] Sit Mēdēa ferōx invictaque, flēbilis īnō,
[124] perfidus Ixīōn, īō vaga, trīstis Orestēs.
[125] Sīquid inexpertūm scaenae committis et audēs
[126] persōnam fōrmāre novam, servētur ad īmūm
[127] quālis ab inceptō prōcesserit et sibi cōnstet.
[128] Difficile est propriē commūnia dīcere, tūque
[129] rēctius īliacum carmen dēdūcis in āctūs
[130] quam sī prōferrēs ignōta indictaque prīmus.
[131] Pūblica māteriēs privātī jūris erit, sī
[132] nōn circā vīlēm patulumque morāberis orbem,
[133] nec verbō verbum cūrābis reddere fidus
[134] interpres nec dēsiliēs imitātor in artum,
[135] unde pedem prōferre pudor vetet aut operis lēx.
[136] Nec sīc incipiēs, ut scrīptor cyclicus ūlim:
[137] "Fortūnam Priamī cantābō et nōbile bellum".
[138] Quid dignum tantō feret hic prōmissor hiātū?
[139] Parturient montēs, nāscētur rīdiculus mūs.
[140] Quantō rēctius hic, quī nīl mōlītūr ineptē:
[141] "Dīc mihi, Mūsa, virum, captae post tempora Trōjāe
[142] quī mōrēs hominū multōrum vīdit et urbēs".
[143] Nōn fūmum ex fulgōre, sed ex fūmō dare lūcem
[144] cōgitat, ut speciōsa dehinc mīrācula prōmat,
[145] Antiphatēn Scyllamque et cum Cyclōpe Charybdim.
[146] Nec reditum Diomēdis ab interitū Meleagrī,
[147] nec geminō bellum Trōjānum ūrdītūr ab ūvō;
[148] semper ad ēventūm festīnat et in mediās rēs
[149] nōn secus ac nōtās audītōrem rapit, et quae
[150] dēspērat tractāta nitēscere posse relinquit,
[151] atque ita mentītūr, sīc vērīs falsa remiscet,
[152] prīmō nē medium, mediō nē discrepet īmūm.
[153] Tū quid ego et populus mēcum dēsideret audī,

- [154] sī plōsōris egēs aulaea manentis et usque
[155] sessūrī dōnec cantor. "Vōs plaudite" dīcat.
[156] Aetātis cujusque notandī sunt tibi mōrēs,
[157] mōbilisbusque decor nātūrīs dandus et annīs.
[158] Reddere quī vōcēs jam scit puer et pede certō
[159] signat humum, gestit paribus conlūdere et īram
[160] colligit ac pōnit temere et mūtātur in hōrās.
[161] inberbus juvenis tandem cūstōde remōtō
[162] gaudet equīs canibusque et aprīcī grāmine Campī,
[163] cēreus in vitium flectī, monitōribus asper,
[164] ūtilium tardus prōvīsor, prōdigus aeris,
[165] sublīmis cupidusque et amāta relinquere pernīx.
[166] Conversīs studīs aetās animusque virīlis
[167] quaerit opēs et amīcītiās, īnservit honōrī,
[168] commīsisse cavet quod mox mūtāre labōret.
[169] Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod
[170] quaerit et inventīs miser abstinet ac timet ūtī,
[171] vel quod rēs omnīs timidē gelidēque ministrat,
[172] dīlātor, spē longus, iners avidusque futūrī,
[173] difficilis, querulus, laudātor temporis āctī
[174] sē puerō, castigātor cēnsorque minōrum.
[175] Multa ferunt annī venientēs commoda sēcum,
[176] multa recēdēntēs adimunt. Nē forte senīlēs
[177] mandentur juvenī partēs puerōque virīlēs;
[178] semper in adjūnctīs aevōque morābitur aptīs.
[179] Aut agitur rēs in scaenīs aut ācta refertur.
[180] Sēgnius inrītant animōs dēmissa per aurem
[181] quam quae sunt oculīs subjecta fidēlibus et quae
[182] ipse sibī trādit spectātor; nōn tamen intus
[183] digna gerī prōmēs in scaenam multaque tollēs
[184] ex oculīs, quae mox nārret fācundia praeſēns.
[185] Nē puerōs cōram populō Mēdēa trucīdet,
[186] aut hūmāna palam coquat exta nefārius Atreus,
[187] aut in avem Procnē vertātur, Cadmus in anguem.
[188] Quodcumque ostendis mihi sīc, incrēdulus ūdī.
[189] Nēve minor neu sit quīntō prōductior āctū
[190] fābula, quae poscī volt et spectanda repōnī;
[191] nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nōdus
[192] inciderit; nec quārta loquī persōna labōret.
[193] Āctōris partīs chorus officiumque virīle
[194] dēfendant, neu quid mediōs intercinat āctūs,
[195] quod nōn prōpositō condūcat et haereat aptē.
[196] Ille bonīs faveatque et cōnsiliētur amīcē
[197] et regat īrātōs et amet peccāre timentīs;
[198] ille dapēs laudet mēnsae brevis, ille salūbrem
[199] jūstitiam lēgēsque et apertīs ūtia portīs;
[200] ille tegat commissa deōsque precētūr et ūret,
[201] ut redeat miserīs, abeat Fortūna superbīs.
[202] Tībia nōn, ut nunc, orichalcō vīncta tubaeque
[203] aemula, sed tenuis simplexque forāmine paucō
[204] adspīrāre et adesse chorīs erat ūtilis atque
[205] nōndum spissa nimis complēre sedīlia flātū,

[206] quō sānē populus numerābilis, utpote parvus,
[207] et frūgī castusque verēcundusque coībat.
[208] Postquam coepit agrōs extendere victor et urbēs
[209] lātior amplexī mūrus vīnōque diurnō
[210] plācārī Genius fēstīs impūne diēbus,
[211] accessit numerīsque modīsque licentia major.
[212] Indoctus quid enim saperet līberque labōrum
[213] rūsticus urbānō cōnfūsus, turpis honestō?
[214] Sīc pīscae mōtumque et luxuriem addidit artī
[215] tībīcen trāxitque vagus per pulpita vestem;
[216] sīc etiam fidibus vōcēs crēvēre sevērīs
[217] et tulit ēloquium īsolitum fācundia praeceps,
[218] ūtiliumque sagāx rērum et dīvīna futūrī
[219] sortilegīs nōn discrepuit sententia Delphīs.
[220] Carmine quī tragicō vīlem certāvit ob hircum,
[221] mox etiam agrestīs Satyrōs nūdāvit et asper
[222] incolumī gravitāte jocum temptāvit eō quod
[223] inlecebṛīs erat et grātā novitāte morandus
[224] spectātōr functusque sacrīs et pōtus et exlex.
[225] Vērum ita rīsōrēs, ita commendāre dicācīs
[226] conveniet Satyrōs, ita vertere sēria lūdō,
[227] nē quīcumque deus, quīcumque adhibēbitur hērōs,
[228] rēgālī cōspectus in aurō nūper et ostrō,
[229] migret in obscurās humili sermōne tabernās,
[230] aut, dum vītat humum, nūbēs et inānia captet.
[231] Effūtīre levīs indigna tragedia versūs,
[232] ut fēstīs mātrōna movērī jussa diēbus,
[233] intererit Satyrīs paulum pudibunda protervīs.
[234] Nōn ego inōrnāta et dominantia nōmina sōlum
[235] verbaque, Pīsōnēs, Satyrōrum scrīptor amābō,
[236] nec sīc ēnītar tragicō dīferre colōrī
[237] ut nihil intersit Dāvusne loquātur et audāx
[238] Pīthias, ēmūnctō lucrāta Simōne talentum,
[239] an cūstōs famulusque deī Sīlēnus alumnī.
[240] Ex nōtō fictum carmen sequar, ut sibi quīvīs
[241] spēret idem, sūdet multum frūstrāque labōret
[242] ausus idem; tantum seriēs jūnctūraque pollet,
[243] tantum dē mediō sūmptīs accēdit honōris.
[244] Silvīs dēductī caveant mē jūdice Faunī
[245] nē, velut innātī trivīs ac paene forēnsēs,
[246] aut nimium tenerīs juvenentur versibus unquam
[247] aut inmundā crepent ignōminiōsaque dicta;
[248] offenduntur enim quibus est equus et pater et rēs,
[249] nec, sī quid frictī ciceris probat et nucis ēmptor,
[250] aequīs accipiunt animīs dōnantve corōnā.
[251] Syllaba longa brevī subjecta vocātur iambus,
[252] pēs citus; unde etiam trimetrīs adcrēscere jussit
[253] nōmen iambēs, cum sēnōs redderet ictūs,
[254] pīmus ad extrēmum similis sibi; nōn ita pīdem,
[255] tardior ut paulō graviorque venīret ad aurīs,
[256] spondēos stabilīs in jūra paterna recēpit
[257] commodus et patiēns, nōn ut dē sēde secundā

[258] cēderet aut quārtā sociāliter. Hic et in Accī
[259] nōbilis trimetrī adpāret rārus, et Ennī
[260] in scaenam missōs cum magnō pondere versūs
[261] aut operaē celeris nimium cūrāque parentis
[262] aut ignōrātae premit artis crīmine turpī.
[263] Nōn quīvīs videt inmodulāta poēmata jūdex,
[264] et data Rōmānīs venia est indigna poētīs.
[265] Idcircōne vager scrībamque licenter? An omnīs
[266] vīsūrōs peccāta putem mea, tūtus et intrā
[267] spēm veniae cautus? Vītāvī dēnique culpam,
[268] nōn laudem meruī. Vōs exemplāria Graeca
[269] nocturnā versāte manū, versāte diurnā.
[270] At vestrī proavī Plautīnōs et numerōs et
[271] laudāvēre salēs, nimium patienter utrumque,
[272] nē dīcam stultē, mīrātī, sī modo ego et vōs
[273] scīmus inurbānum lepidō sēpōnere dictō
[274] lēgitimumque sonum digitīs callēmus et aure.
[275] Ignōtūm tragicae genus invēnisse Camēnae
[276] dīcitur et plaustrīs vēxisse poēmata Thespis
[277] quae canerent agerentque perūnctī faecibus ūra.
[278] Post hunc persōnae pallaeque repertor honestae
[279] Aeschylus et modicīs īstrāvit pulpita tignīs
[280] et docuit magnumque loquī nītīque coturnō.
[281] Successit vetus hīs cōmoedia, nōn sine multā
[282] laude; sed in vitium lībertās excidit et vim
[283] dignam lēge regī; lēx est accepta chorusque
[284] turpiter obticuit sublātō jūre nocendī.
[285] Nīl intemptātum nostrī līquēre poētæ,
[286] nec minimum meruēre decus vestīgia Graeca
[287] ausī dēserere et celebrāre domestica facta,
[288] vel qui prae{textā}s vel qui docuēre togātās.
[289] Nec virtūte foret clārisve potentius armīs
[290] quam linguā Latium, sī nōn offenderet ūnum
[291] quemque poētārum līmae labor et mora. Vōs, ū
[292] Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite quod nōn
[293] multa diēs et multa litūra coercuit atque
[294] prae{sectum} deciēns nōn castīgāvit ad unguem.
[295] Ingenium miserā quia fortūnātius arte
[296] crēdit et exclūdit sānōs Helicōne poētās
[297] Dēmocritus, bona pars nōn unguīs pōnere cūrat,
[298] nōn barbam, sēcrēta petit loca, balnea vītat;
[299] nancīscētūr enim pretium nōmenque poētæ,
[300] sī tribus Anticyrīs caput īsānābile nunquam
[301] tōnsōrī Licinō commīserit. Ū ego laevus
[302] qui pūrgor bīlem sub vernī temporis hōram!
[303] Nōn alius faceret meliōra poēmata; vērum
[304] nīl tantī est. Ergō fungar vice cōtis, acūtum
[305] reddere quae ferrum valet exsors ipsa secandī;
[306] mūnus et officium, nīl scribēns ipse, docēbō,
[307] unde parentur opēs, quid alat fōrmētque poētam,
[308] quid deceat, quid nōn, quō virtūs, quō ferat error.
[309] Scrībendī rēctē sapere est et prīncipium et fōns.

[310] Rem tibi Sōcraticae poterunt ostendere chartae,
[311] verbaque prōvisam rem nōn invīta sequentur.
[312] Quī didicit, patriae quid dēbeat et quid amīcis,
[313] quō sit amōre parēns, quō frāter amandus et hospes,
[314] quod sit cōnscrīptī, quod jūdicis officium, quae
[315] partēs in bellum missī ducis, ille profectō
[316] reddere persōnae scit convenientia cuique.
[317] Respicerē exemplar vītae mōrumque jubēbō
[318] doctum imitātōrem et vīvās hinc dūcere vōcēs.
[319] Interdum speciōsa locīs mōrātaque rēctē
[320] fābula nūllīus veneris, sine pondere et arte,
[321] valdius oblectat populum meliusque morātur
[322] quam versūs inopēs rērum nūgaeque canōrae.
[323] Grāīs ingenium, Grāīs dedit ōre rotundō
[324] Mūsa loquī, praeter laudem nūllīus avārīs;
[325] Rōmānī puerī longīs ratiōnibus assem
[326] discunt in partīs centum dīdūcere. "Dīcat
[327] filius Albīnī: sī dē quīncunce remōta est
[328] uncia, quid superat? Poterās dīxisse. " "Triēns. " "Eu!
[329] Rem poteris servāre tuam. Redit uncia, quid fit? "
[330] "Sēmis. " An, haec animōs aerūgō et cūra pecūlī
[331] cum semel imbuerit, spērāmus carmina fingī
[332] posse linenda cedrō et lēvī servanda cupressō?
[333] Aut prōdesse volunt aut dēlectāre poētae
[334] aut simul et jūcunda et idōnea dīcere vītae.
[335] Quicquid praeciōs, estō brevis, ut cito dicta
[336] percipiāt animī docilēs teneantque fidēlēs.
[337] Omne supervacuum plēnō dē pectore mānat.
[338] Ficta voluptātis causā sint proxima vērīs,
[339] nē quodcumque volet poscat sibi fābula crēdī,
[340] neu prānsae Lamiae vīvum puerum extrahat alvō.
[341] Centuriae seniōrum agitant expertia frūgis,
[342] celsī praetereunt austēra poēmata Ramnēs.
[343] Omne tulit pūnctum quī miscuit ūtile dulcī,
[344] lēctōrem dēlectandō pariterque monendō;
[345] hic meret aera liber Sosiīs, hic et mare trānsit
[346] et longum nōtō scrīptōrī prōrogat aevum.
[347] Sunt dēlicita tamen quibus ignōvisse velīmus;
[348] nam neque chorda sonum reddit quem volt manus et mēns,
[349] poscentique gravem persaepe remittit acūtum,
[350] nec semper feriet quodcumque minābitur arcus.
[351] Vērum ubi plūra nitent in carmine, nōn ego paucīs
[352] offendar maculīs, quās aut incūria fūdit,
[353] aut hūmāna parum cāvit nātūra. Quid ergō est?
[354] Ut scrīptor sī peccat idem librārius usque,
[355] quamvīs est monitus, veniā caret, et Citharoedus
[356] rīdētur, chordā quī semper oberrat eādem,
[357] sīc mihi, quī multum cessat, fit Choerilus ille,
[358] quem bis terque bonum cum rīsū mīror; et īdem
[359] indignor quandōque bonus dormītat Homērus;

[360] vērum operī longō fās est obrēpere somnum.
[361] Ut pictūra poēsis; erit quae, sī propius stēs,
[362] tē capiat magis, et quaedam, sī longius abstēs;
[363] haec amat obscūrum, volet haec sub lūce vidērī,
[364] jūdicis argūtum quae nōn formīdat acūmen;
[365] haec placuit semel, haec deciēns repetīta placēbit.
[366] Ō major juvenum, quamvīs et vōce paternā
[367] fingeris ad rēctum et per tē sapīs, hoc tibi dictum
[368] tolle memor, certīs medium et tolerābile rēbus
[369] rēctē concēdī; cōnsultus jūris et āctor
[370] causārum mediocris abest virtūte disertī
[371] Messallae nec scit quantum Cascellius Aulus,
[372] sed tamen in pretiō est; mediocribus esse poētīs
[373] nōn hominēs, nōn dī, nōn concessēre columnae.
[374] Ut grātās inter mēnsās symphōnia discors
[375] et crassum unguentum et Sardō cum melle papāver
[376] offendunt, poterat dūcī quia cēna sine istīs,
[377] sīc animīs nātum inventumque poēma juvandīs,
[378] sī paulum summō dēcessit, vergit ad īmum.
[379] Lūdere quī nescit, campestribus abstinet armīs,
[380] indoctusque pilae discīve trochīve quiēscit,
[381] nē spissae rīsum tollant impūne corōnae;
[382] quī nescit, versūs tamen audet fingere. Quidnī?
[383] Liber et ingenuus, praeſertim cēnsus equeſtreſ
[384] summam nummōrum vitiōque remōtus ab omnī.
[385] Tū nihil invītā dīcēs faciēſve Minervā;
[386] id tibi jūdīcīum est, ea mēns. Sīquid tamen ūlīm
[387] scripſeris, in Maecī dēſcendat jūdicis aurīs
[388] et patris et nostrās, nōnumque premātur in annum
[389] membrāniſ intus positīs; dēlēre licēbit
[390] quod nōn ēdiderīs; nescit vōx missa revertī.
[391] Silvestrīſ hominēs ſacer interpresque deōrum
[392] caedibus et vīctū foedō dēterrūt Orpheus,
[393] dictus ob hoc lēnīre tigrīs rabidōſque leōnēs;
[394] dictus et Amphīon, Thēbānae conditor urbīs,
[395] ſaxa movēre ſonō testūdinis et prece blandā
[396] dūcere quō vellet. Fuit haec ſapiēntia quondam,
[397] pūblica prīvatīſ ſēcernere, ſacra profānīſ,
[398] concubitū prohibēre vagō, dare jūra marītīſ,
[399] oppida mōlīrī, lēgēs incīdere lignō.
[400] Sīc honor et nōmen dīvīnīſ vātibus atque
[401] carminibus vēnit. Post hōs īsignis Homērus
[402] Tyrtaeusque marēs animōs in Mārtia bella
[403] versibus exacuit, dictae per carmina sortēs,
[404] et vītae mōnstrāta via est et grātia rēgum
[405] Pīeriſ temptāta modīs lūdusque repertus
[406] et longōrum operum finis: nē forte pudōrī
[407] ſit tibi Mūſa lyrae ſollers et cantor Apollō.
[408] Nātūrā fieret laudābile carmen an arte,
[409] quaesītum est; ego nec ſtudium ſine dīvite vēnā
[410] nec rude quid prōſit videō ingenium; alterius ſīc
[411] altera poſcit opem rēs et conjūrat amīcē.

[412] Quī studet optātam cursū contingere mētam,
[413] multa tulit fēcitur puer, sūdāvit et alsit,
[414] abstinuit venere et vīnō; quī Pȳthia cantat
[415] tībīcen, didicit prius extimuitque magistrum.
[416] Nunc satis est dīxisse: "Ego mīra poēmata pangō;
[417] occupet extrēmum scabiēs; mihi turpe relinquī est
[418] et, quod nōn didicī, sānē nescīre fatērī."
[419] Ut praecō, ad mercēs turbam quī cōgit emendās,
[420] adsentātōrēs jubet ad lucrum īre poēta
[421] dīves agrīs, dīves positīs in fēnore nummīs.
[422] Sī vērō est ūncum quī rēctē pōnere possit
[423] et spondēre levī prō paupere et ēripere ātrīs
[424] lītibus implicitum, mīrābor sī sciet inter
[425] nōscere mendācem vērumque beātus amīcum.
[426] Tū seu dōnārīs seu quid dōnāre volēs cui,
[427] nōlīto ad versūs tibi factōs dūcere plēnum
[428] laetitia; clāmābit enim: "Pulchrē, bene, rēctē",
[429] pallēscet super hīs, etiam stillābit amīcīs
[430] ex oculīs rōrem, saliet, tundet pede terram.
[431] Ut quī conductī plōrant in fūnere dīcunt
[432] et faciunt prope plūra dolentibus ex animō, sīc
[433] dērīsor vērō plūs laudātōre movētur.
[434] Rēgēs dīcuntur multīs urgēre culillīs
[435] et torquēre merō, quem perspexisse labōrent
[436] an sit amīcītiā dignus; sī carmina condēs,
[437] numquam tē fallent animī sub volpe latentēs.
[438] Quīntiliō sīquid recitārēs: "Corrige, sōdēs,
[439] hoc" ajēbat "et hoc"; melius tē posse negārēs,
[440] bis terque expertum frūstrā; dēlēre jubēbat
[441] et male tornātōs incūdī reddere versūs.
[442] Sī dēfendere dēlictum quam vertere māllēs,
[443] nūllum ultrā verbum aut operam īnsūmēbat inānem,
[444] quīn sine rīvālī tēque et tua sōlus amārēs.
[445] Vir bonus et prūdēns versūs reprehendet inertīs,
[446] culpābit dūrōs, incōmptīs adlinet ātrum
[447] trānsversō calamō signum, ambitiōsa recīdet
[448] ḥrnāmenta, parum clārīs lūcem dare cōget,
[449] arguet ambiguē dictum, mūtanda notābit,
[450] fīet Aristarchus, nec dīcet: "Cūr ego amīcum
[451] offendam in nūgīs? " Hae nūgae sēria dūcent
[452] in mala dērīsum semel exceptumque sinistrē.
[453] Ut mala quem scabiēs aut morbus rēgius urget
[454] aut fānāticus error et īrācunda Diāna,
[455] vēsānum tetigisse timent fugiuntque poētam,
[456] quī sapiunt; agitant puerī incautīque sequuntur.
[457] Hic dum sublīmis versūs ructātur et errat,
[458] sī velutī merulīs intentus dēcidit auceps
[459] in puteum foveamve, licet "succurrīte" longum
[460] clāmet "iō cīvēs", nōn sit quī tollere cūret.
[461] Sī cūret quis opem ferre et dēmittere fūnem,
[462] "quī scīs an prūdēns hūc sē dējēcerit atque
[463] servārī nōlit? " dīcam, Sīculīque poētae

[464] nārrābō interitum. Deus inmortālis habērī
[465] dum cupit Empedoclēs, ārdentem frīgidus Aetnam
[466] īnsiluit. Sit jūs liceatque perīre poētīs;
[467] invītum quī servat, idem facit occīdentī.
[468] Nec semel hoc fēcit nec, sī retractus erit, jam
[469] fīet homō et pōnet fāmōsae mortis amōrem.
[470] Nec satis appāret cūr versūs factitet, utrum
[471] mīnxerit in patriōs cinerēs, an trīste bidental
[472] mōverit incestus; certē furit, ac velut ursus,
[473] objectōs caveae valuit sī frangere clātrōs,
[474] indoctum doctumque fugat recitātor acerbus;
[475] quem vērō arripuit, tenet occīditque legendō,
[476] nōn missūra cutem nisi plēna cruōris hirūdō.