

# Ars poetica

- [1] Hūmānō capitī cervicem pictor equīnam  
[2] jungere sī velit et variās indūcere plūmās  
[3] undique collātis membris, 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 qui 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 dēscribitur arcus;  
[19] sed nunc nōn erat hīs locus. Et fortasse cupressum  
[20] scīs simulāre; quid hoc, sī frāctīs ēnatat exspēs  
[21] nāvibus, aere datō qui pingitur? Amphora coepit  
[22] īstituī; currente 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] obscurus fiō; sectantem lēvia nervī  
[27] dēficiunt animiqüe; professus grandia turget;  
[28] serpit humī tūtus nimium timidusque procellae;  
[29] qui variāre cupit rem prōdigialiter ūnam,  
[30] delphīnum silvis 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] īfēlīx 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, qui scribitis, aequam  
[39] vīribus et versāte 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 verbū  
[48] reddiderit jūnctūra novum. Sī forte necesse est  
[49] indiciīs mōnstrāre recentibus abdita rērum, et

[50]  **fingere cīnctūtis 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 prōdūcere nōmen.**  
[60]  **Ut silvae foliis prōnōs mūtantur in annōs,**  
[61]  **prīma cadunt, ita verbōrum vetus interit aetās,**  
[62]  **et juvenum rītū flōrent modo nāta vigentque.**  
[63]  **Dēbēmur mortī nōs noſtraque.** Sive 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 vivāx.**  
[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 jūntīs querimōnia prīmum,**  
[76]  **post etiam inclūsa est vōtī sententia compos;**  
[77]  **quis tamen exiguōs elegōs ēmiserit 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 juvenum cūrās et libera vīna referre.**  
[86]  **Dīſcriptās servāre vīcēs 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]  **indignātūr item privātīs 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 dēlitigat 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] prīnum ipsī tibi; tum tua mē īfortūnia laedent,  
[104] Tēlephe vel Pēleu; male sī mandāta loquēris,  
[105] aut dormītābō aut rīdēbō. Trīstia maestum  
[106] voltūm verba decent, īrātūm plēna minārum,  
[107] lūdentem lasciva, 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] scripтор. 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 Ixiōn, īō vaga, trīstis Orestēs.  
[125] Sīquid inexpertūm scaenae committis et audēs  
[126] persōnam fōrmāre novam, servētur ad īmū  
[127] quālis ab inceptō prōcesserit et sibi cōnstet.  
[128] Difficile est propriē commūnia dīcere, tūque  
[129] rēctius īlliacum carmen dēdūcis in āctūs  
[130] quam sī prōferrēs ignōta indictaque prīmus.  
[131] Pūblica māteriēs privātī jūris erit, sī  
[132] nōn circā vīlem 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 scripтор cyclicus ūlīm:  
[137] "Fortūnam Priamī cantābō et nōbile bellum".  
[138] Quid dignum tantō feret hic prōmissor hiātū?  
[139] Parturient montēs, nāscētūr rīdiculus mūs.  
[140] Quantō rēctius hic, qui 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 redītūm 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 mentītur, sīc vēris 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 nātūris 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] īberbus juvenis tandem cūstōde remōtō  
[162] gaudet equīs canibusque et aprīcī grāmine Campī,  
[163] cēreus in vitium flectī, monitōribus asper,  
[164] ūtilium tardus prōvisor, prōdigus aeris,  
[165] sublīmis cupidusque et amāta relinquere pernīx.  
[166] Conversī studiīs aetās animusque virīlis  
[167] quaerit opēs et amīcītiās, īservit honōrī,  
[168] commīsisse cavet quod mox mūtāre labōret.  
[169] Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod  
[170] quaerit et inventīs miser abstinet ac timet ūti,  
[171] vel quod rēs omnīs timidē gelidēque ministrat,  
[172] dīlātor, spē longus, iners avidusque futūrī,  
[173] difficilis, querulus, laudātor temporis āctī  
[174] sē puerō, castīgātor cēnsorque minōrum.  
[175] Multa ferunt anni venientēs commoda sēcum,  
[176] multa recēdēntēs adimunt. Nē forte senīlēs  
[177] mandentur juvenī partēs puerōque virilēs;  
[178] semper in adjūnctis aevōque morābitur aptīs.  
[179] Aut agitur rēs in scaenīs aut ācta refertur.  
[180] Sēgnius inrītant animōs dēmissa per aurem  
[181] quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidēlibus et quae  
[182] ipse sibi 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 ōdī.  
[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 cōsiliētūr amīcē  
[197] et regat īrātōs et amet peccāre timentīs;  
[198] ille dapēs laudet mēnsae brevis, ille salūbrem  
[199] jūstitiām lēgēsque et apertīs ūtia portīs;  
[200] ille tegat commissa deōsque precētūr et ūret,  
[201] ut redeat miserīs, abeat Fortūna superbīs.  
[202] Tibia 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 sedilia 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 numerisque modisque licentia major.  
[212] Indoctus quid enim saperet liberque labōrum  
[213] rūsticus urbānō cōnfūsus, turpis honestō?  
[214] Sīc prīscae mōtumque et luxuriem addidit artī  
[215] tībicen trāxitque vagus per pulpita vestem;  
[216] sīc etiam fidibus vōcēs crēvēre sevēris  
[217] et tulit ēloquium īsolitum fācundia p̄raecep̄s,  
[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] inlecebris erat et grātā novitāte morandus  
[224] spectātor fūncusque 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 obsūrās humili sermōne tabernās,  
[230] aut, dum vītat humum, nūbēs et inānia captet.  
[231] Effūtire 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 s̄criptor amābō,  
[236] nec sīc ēnītar tragicō dīferre colōrī  
[237] ut nihil intersit Dāvusne loquātur et audāx  
[238] Pȳthias, ēmūntō lucrāta Simōne talentum,  
[239] an cūstōs famulusque deī Silēnus 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 sūmp̄tis accēdit honōris.  
[244] Silvīs dēductī caveant mē jūdice Faunī  
[245] nē, velut innātī triviis ac paene forēnsēs,  
[246] aut nimium tenerīs juvenentur versibus unquam  
[247] aut inmunda 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 iambēis, cum sēnōs redderet ictūs,  
[254] prīmus ad extrēmum similis sibi; nōn ita prīdem,  
[255] tardior ut paulō graviorque venīret ad aurīs,  
[256] spondēōs stabilis in jūra paterna recēpit  
[257] commodus et patiēns, nōn ut dē sēde secundā

[258] cēderet aut quārtā sociāliter. Hic et in Accī  
[259] nōbilis trimetrīs adpāret rārus, et Ennī  
[260] in scaenam missōs cum magnō pondere versūs  
[261] aut operaē celeris nimium cūrāque parentis  
[262] aut ignōrātae premit artis crīmīne turpī.  
[263] Nōn quīvis videt inmodulāta poēmata jūdex,  
[264] et data Rōmānīs venia est indigna poētīs.  
[265] Idcīrcōne vager scribamque 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, mīrāti, 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 nītique coturnō.  
[281] Successit vetus hīs cōmoedia, nōn sine multā  
[282] laude; sed in vitium libertās excidit et vim  
[283] dignam lēge regī; lēx est accepta chorusque  
[284] turpiter obticuit sublātō jūre nocendī.  
[285] Nil intemptātum nostrī liquēre poētae,  
[286] nec minimum meruēre decus vestigia Graeca  
[287] ausī dēserere et celebrāre domestica facta,  
[288] vel quī prae{text}tās vel quī 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, ō  
[292] Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite quod nōn  
[293] multa diēs et multa litūra coercuit atque  
[294] prae{sect}um 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 vītā;  
[299] nancīscētūr enim pretium nōmenque poētae,  
[300] sī tribus Anticyrīs caput īsānābile nunquam  
[301] tōnsōrī Licinō commiserit. Ō ego laevus  
[302] quī 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] Scribēndī rēctē sapere est et pīncipium et fōns.

[310] **Rem tibi Sōcraticae poterunt ostendere chartae,**  
[311] **verbaque prōvisam rem nōn invīta sequentur.**  
[312] **Qui didicit, patriae quid dēbeat et quid amīcis,**  
[313] **quō sit amore parēns, quō frāter amandus et hospes,**  
[314] **quod sit cōscripti, quod jūdicis officium, quae**  
[315] **partēs in bellum missī ducis, ille profectō**  
[316] **reddere persōnae scit convenientia cuique.**  
[317] **Respicere exemplar vitae mōrumque jubēbō**  
[318] **doctum imitātōrem et vīvās hinc dūcere vōcēs.**  
[319] **Interdum speciōsa locīs mōrātaque rēctē**  
[320] **fābula nūllius veneris, sine pondere et arte,**  
[321] **valdius oblectat populū meliusque morātur**  
[322] **quam versūs inopēs rērum nūgaeque canōrae.**  
[323] **Grāis ingenium, Grāis dedit ōre rotundō**  
[324] **Mūsa loquī, praeter laudem nūllius avāris;**  
[325] **Rōmānī puerī longīs ratiōnibus assem**  
[326] **discunt in partīs centum dīducere. "Dīcat**  
[327] **fīlius Albīni: 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 vitae.**  
[335] **Quicquid praecipiēs, estō brevis, ut cito dicta**  
[336] **percipient animī docilēs teneantque fidēlēs.**  
[337] **Omne supervacuum plēnō dē pectore mānat.**  
[338] **Ficta voluptātis causā sint proxima vēris,**  
[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 qui miscuit ūtile dulcī,**  
[344] **lēctōrem dēlectandō pariterque monendō;**  
[345] **hic meret aera liber Sosiīs, hic et mare trānsit**  
[346] **et longum nōtō scriptōrī prōrogat aevum.**  
[347] **Sunt dēlicita tamen quibus ignōvisse velīmus;**  
[348] **nam neque chorda sonum reddit quem volt manus et mēns,**  
[349] **poscentīque 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 scriptor sī peccat idem librārius usque,**  
[355] **quamvīs est monitus, veniā caret, et Citharoedus**  
[356] **rīdētur, chordā qui semper oberrat eādem,**  
[357] **sīc mihi, qui multum cessat, fit Choerilus ille,**  
[358] **quem bis terque bonum cum rīsū mīror; et idem**  
[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 vidēri,**  
[364] **jūdicis argūtum quae nōn formidat acūmen;**  
[365] **haec placuit semel, haec deciēns repetīta placēbit.**  
[366] **Ō major juvenum, quamvis et vōce paternā**  
[367] **fingeris ad rēctum et per tē sapis, hoc tibi dictum**  
[368] **tolle memor, certis medium et tolerābile rēbus**  
[369] **rēctē concēdī; cōnsultus jūris et āctor**  
[370] **causārum mediocris abest virtute disertī**  
[371] **Messallae nec scit quantum Cascellius Aulus,**  
[372] **sed tamen in pretiō est; mediocribus esse poētis**  
[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 īum.**  
[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 equestrem**  
[384] **summam nummōrum vitiōque remōtus ab omnī.**  
[385] **Tū nihil invītā dīcēs faciēsve Minervā;**  
[386] **id tibi jūdīcīum est, ea mēns. Sīquid tamen ōlim**  
[387] **scripseris, in Maeci dēscendat jūdīcīs aurīs**  
[388] **et patris et nostrās, nōnumque premātur in annum**  
[389] **membrānis intus positis; dēlēre licēbit**  
[390] **quod nōn ēdiderīs; nescit vōx missa revertī.**  
[391] **Silvestrīs hominēs sacer interpresque deōrum**  
[392] **caedibus et vīctū foedō dēterrīt Orpheus,**  
[393] **dictus ob hoc lēnīre tigrīs rabidōsque leōnēs;**  
[394] **dictus et Amphīon, Thēbānae conditor urbīs,**  
[395] **saxa movēre sonō testūdinīs et prece blandā**  
[396] **dūcere quō vellet. Fuit haec sapientia quondam,**  
[397] **pūblica prīvātī sēcernere, sacra profānīs,**  
[398] **concubitū prohibēre vagō, dare jūra marītīs,**  
[399] **oppida mōlīrī, lēgēs incīdere lignō.**  
[400] **Sīc honor et nōmen dīvīnīs vātībus atque**  
[401] **carminibus vēnit. Post hōs īsignis Homērus**  
[402] **Tyrtaeusque marēs animōs in Mārtia bella**  
[403] **versībus exacuit, dictae per carmina sortēs,**  
[404] **et vītae mōnstrāta via est et grātia rēgum**  
[405] **Pīerīs temptāta modīs lūdusque repertus**  
[406] **et longōrum operū finis: nē forte pudōrī**  
[407] **sit tibi Mūsa lyrae sollers et cantor Apollō.**  
[408] **Nātūrā fieret laudābile cārmen an arte,**  
[409] **quaesītūm 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 fēcīque puer, sūdāvit et alsit,  
[414] abstinuit venere et vīnō; quī Pȳthia cantat  
[415] tībicen, 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 fatēri."  
[419] Ut praecō, ad mercēs turbam quī cōgit emendās,  
[420] adsentātōrēs jubet ad lucrum īre poēta  
[421] dīves agrīs, dīves positis 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] laetitiae; clāmābit enim: "Pulchrē, bene, rēctē",  
[429] pallēscet super hīs, etiam stillābit amīcis  
[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 amīciā dignus; sī carmina condēs,  
[437] numquam tē fallent animī sub volpe latentēs.  
[438] Quīntiliō sīquid recitārēs: "Corrigē, 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 īnānem,  
[444] quīn sine rivālī tēque et tua sōlus amārēs.  
[445] Vir bonus et prūdēns versūs reprehendet inertīs,  
[446] culpābit dūrōs, incōmptīs adlinet ātrum  
[447] trānsvorsō 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, Siculīque poētae

[464] nārrābō interitum. Deus inmortālis habēri  
[465] dum cupit Empedoclēs, ārdentem frigidus Aetnam  
[466] īnsiluit. Sit jūs liceatque perīre poētis;  
[467] invītum quī servat, idem facit occīdenti.  
[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] móverit 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.