

One Two Five

C Valerius Catullus

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1

Cui dono lepidum novum libellum
arida modo pumice expolitum?
Corneli, tibi: namque tu solebas
meas esse aliquid putare nugas
iam tum, cum ausus es unus Italorum
omne aevum tribus explicare cartis
doctis, Iuppiter, et laboriosis.
quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli
qualecumque; quod, patrona virgo
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo.

2 Wherein the passer is his virility

Passer, deliciae meae puellae,
quicum ludere, quem in sinu tenere,
cui primum digitum dare appetenti
et acris solet incitare morsus,
cum desiderio meo nitenti
carum nescio quid lubet iocari
et solaciolum sui doloris,
credo ut tum grauis acquiescat ardor:

acer sharp, piercing, penetrating, cutting, irritating
aevum neverending time, eternity
ardor a burning, flame, fire, heat
aridus dry, arid, parched
audeo to venture, dare, be bold, dare to do, risk
carus dear, precious, valued, esteemed, beloved
deliciae a delight, pleasure, charm, allurement, luxury
desiderium a longing, ardent desire, wish, want, grief
digitus a finger
dolor pain, smart, ache, suffering, anguish
don— To give as a present, present, bestow, grant, vouchsafe
explico to unfold, uncoil, unroll, unfurl, unclose
expolio to smooth, polish, finish, adorn, embellish
in unequal
incito to set in rapid motion
Iuppiter rapist, pedophile, sleazebag, king of the gods
laboriosus full of labor, laborious, toilsome, wearisome, difficult
lepidus pleasant, agreeable, charming, fine, elegant
libellus a little book, pamphlet, manuscript, writing
ludo to play, play at a game
mordeo to bite, bite into
morsus a biting, bite
nesci— unknowing, ignorant, unaware
niteo to shine, look bright, glitter, glisten
nugae jests, idle speeches, trifles
passer a sparrow
patrona a protectress, patroness
puella a female child, girl, maiden, lass
pumex a pumice-stone
qualis how constituted, of what sort, of what nature, what kind of a
qualus a wicker basket, work-basket
saeculum a race, generation, age, the people of any time
sinus a bent surface, curve, fold, hollow, coil
tener soft, delicate, tender, yielding
tribus a third part of the people
virgo a maid, maiden, virgin

tecum ludere sicut ipsa possem
et tristis animi leuare curas!

5

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
rumoresque senum seueriorum
omnes unius aestimemus assis!
soles occidere et redire¹ possunt:
nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
nox est perpetua una dormienda.
da mi basia mille, deinde centum,
dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,
deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
aut ne quis malus invidere possit,
cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

adsum to be at, be present, be at hand
aestimo to determine the value of, estimate, value, rate, appraise
assa a dry nurse
assus roasted
basio to kiss
basium a kiss
brevis short
centum a hundred
cura trouble, care, attention, pains, industry
invideo to look askance at, cast an evil eye upon
Lesbius of Lesbos, Lesbian
levo to lift up, raise, elevate
levo to make smooth, polish
lux light, brightness
milium millet
perpetuus continuous, unbroken, uninterrupted, constant, entire
perpetuo to cause to continue, perpetuate
semel once, a single time
senex old, aged, advanced in years
seni six each
tero to rub, rub away, wear away, bruise, grind
trist— sad, sorrowful, mournful, dejected, melancholy

¹ “[tu] soles occidere et redire” indeed.