

Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.417-428: The Art of the Lover

Continuing from the last reading, this passage is Ovid's warning to men about how crafty women can be when they want to get presents or money from their boyfriends. Just before this passage, Ovid lists all the holidays on which men should stay away from their girlfriends in order to avoid giving them presents. The text leaves the impression that Ovid is speaking from some unfortunate personal experience.

Text and Translation

Magna superstitio tibi sit natalis amicae:

Let the birthday of your girlfriend be a great object of dread for you:

Quāque aliquid dandum est, illa sit atra dies.

On which anything must be given, let that day be a black one.

Cum bene vitaris, tamen auferet; invenit artem

Although you might shun it well, nevertheless she will carry off (a present);

Femina, quā cupidi carpat amantis opes.

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A woman finds the art by which she might devour the wealth of the desirous lover.

Institor ad dominam veniet discinctus emacem,

A slovenly peddler will come to your mistress (when she is) in a buying mood,

Expediet merces teque sedente suas:

And he will spread his wares before her while you sit by:

(continued on the next page)

Quas illa inspicias, sapere ut videare, rogabit:
(Wares) which she will ask you to inspect so that you might seem to be wise:

Oscula deinde dabit, deinde rogabit emas.
Then she will give kisses, then she will ask that you buy (it).

Hōc fore contentam multos iurabit in annos,
She will swear that she will be content with this for many years,

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Nunc opus esse sibi, nunc bene dicet emi.
That she needs it now, that now's a good time to buy.

Si non esse domi, quos des, causabere nummos,
If you make an excuse that you don't have any money on you to give,

Littera poscetur—ne didicisse iuuet.
Your signature will do—and you'll wish you never learned how (to sign your name).

Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.417-428 – Worksheet

a. The questions below pertain to the forms underlined in the passage

b. When you're asked to change a word from one form to another, change only **that** form of the word. For instance, if you're asked to change *habet* to the passive voice, make *habet* passive but leave it in the 3rd person singular, present indicative.

1. What case is **superstitio** and why? _____
2. What mood is **sit** and why? _____
3. What case is **quā** and why? _____
4. Make **atra dies** dative. _____
5. Change **auferet** to pluperfect subjunctive. _____
6. Change **invenit** to future passive. _____
7. Make **amantis** future. _____
8. Change **veniet** to imperfect passive subjunctive second person plural. _____
9. Make **emacem** agree with *te* (422). _____
10. Make **expediat** imperative (pres.) _____
11. What case is **merces** and why? _____
12. What case is **sedente** and why? _____
13. Change **quas** to genitive singular. _____
14. What mood is **sapere** and why? _____
15. What mood is **videare** and why? _____
16. What tense **videare** and why? _____
17. Change **rogabit** to future perfect first person. _____

(continued on the next page)

18. What mood is **emas** and why? _____

19. What case is **hōc** and why? _____

20. Make **sibi** plural. _____

21. Make **emi** perfect (acc., neut., sing.) _____

22. What case is **domi** and why? _____

23. What mood is **des** and why? _____

24. What mood and tense is **causabere** and why? _____

25. Make **didicisse** the same form (person, number, tense, voice, mood) as *dabit* (424).

Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.417-428 – Notes and Vocabulary

[See back of Wheelock]

Line Note/ Vocabulary

417. **superstitio**: *superstitio*, -onis, f.: source of dread
 amicae: *amica*, *amicae*, f.: girlfriend
418. **atra**: here, “unlucky”
419. **vitaris**: indicative in *cum* clause; see Wheelock, p. 147
420. **amantis**: *amans*, *amantis*: lit. “loving”; here “lover”
421. **institor**: *institor*, -oris, m.: peddler
 discinctus: *discinctus*, -a, -um: slovenly
 emacem: *emax*, -acis: lit. “ready/eager to buy”, i.e. “in a buying mood”
422. **expedio**: *expedio*, -ire, -ivi, -itum: free, spread
 merces: *merx*, *mercis*, f.: merchandise, goods
423. **(ut) inspicias**: *inspicio*, -ere, *inspexi*, *inspectum*: look at
 sapere: *sapio*, -ere, -ivi: be wise
 ut: postpositive; read *ut* before *sapere*
 videare = *videaris*
424. **oscula**: *osculum*, -i, n.: kiss
 (ut) emas
425. **fore** = *futurum esse*
 contentam: *contentus*, -a, -um: content, satisfied
426. **opus esse**: *opus est*: there is need of
 emi: impersonal sense, “it is bought”, i.e. “it is a (good) buy”
427. **domi**: lit. “at home”; i.e. “in the man’s pocket or purse”
 causabere = *causaberis*: *causor* (1): make an excuse
 nummus: *nummus*, -i, m.: money, coin
428. **littera**: here, “a written IOU, a signature on a check”
 poscetur: *posco*, *poscere*, *poposci*: demand
 iuvet: here, “it helps, it gives pleasure”