

LIBER II

EPHEMERIS

ID EST

TOTIUS DIEI NEGOTIUM

I

MANE iam clarum reserat fenestras,
iam strepit nidis vigilax hirundo :
tu velut primam mediamque noctem,
Parmeno, dormis.

dormiunt glires hiemem perennem, 5
sed cibo parcunt : tibi causa somni,
multa quod potas nimiaque tendis¹
mole saginam.

inde nec flexas sonus intrat aures 10
et locum mentis sopor altus urget
nec coruscantis oculos lacesunt
fulgura lucis.

annuam quondam iuveni quietem, 15
noctis et lucis vicibus manentem,
fabulae fingunt, cui Luna somnos
continuarit.

¹ V: caedis, *Peiper*.

BOOK II

THE DAILY ROUND

OR

THE DOINGS OF A WHOLE DAY

I

ALREADY bright Morn is opening her windows,
already the watchful swallow twitters from her nest ;
but you, Parmeno, sleep on as if it were the first or
the middle watch of the night. Dormice sleep the
winter round, but they leave food alone ; while you
slumber on because you drink deep, and swell out
your paunch with too great a mass of food. And
so no sound enters the winding channels of your
ears, a deep stupor presses on your consciousness,
and all the dazzling beams of light do not vex your
eyes. Old tales pretend that once upon a time a
youth¹ slept on year in, year out, untroubled by the
interchange of night and day, because Luna made
his slumbers unending.

¹ sc. Endymion.

AUSONIUS

surge, nugator, lacerande virgis :
surge, ne longus tibi somnus, unde
non times, detur : rape membra molli,
Parmeno, lecto. 20

fors et haec somnum tibi cantilena
Sapphico suadet modulata versu ?
Lesbiae depelle modum quietis,
acer iambe.

II.—PARECBASIS

PUER, eia, surge et calceos
et linteam da sindonem.
da, quidquid est, amictui
quod iam parasti, ut prodeam. 5
da rore fontano abluam
manus et os et lumina.
pateatque, fac, sacrarium
nullo paratu extrinsecus :
pia verba, vota innoxia,
rei divinae copia est. 10
nec tus cremandum postulo
nec liba crusti mellei,
foculumque vivi caespitis
vanis relinquo altaribus. 15
Deus precandus est mihi
ac filius summi Dei,
maiestas unius modi,
sociata sacro spiritu.
et ecce iam vota ordior :
et cogitatio numinis 20
praesentiam sentit pavens.
pavetne quidquam spes, fides ?¹

¹ Added in margin of *V* by the first hand. Some editors reject the verse as an interpolator's correction.

THE DAILY ROUND

¹⁷ Up with you, you waster ! What a thrashing you deserve ! "Up, or a long, long sleep will come on you from where you dread it least."¹ Out with you, Parmeno, from your downy bed !

²¹ Perchance this ditty, tuned to the Sapphic mode, encourages your sleep ? Come you then, brisk Iambus, and banish hence the restful Lesbian strain.

II.—THE INTERLUDE

Hi, boy ! Get up ! Bring me my slippers and my tunic of lawn : bring all the clothes that you have ready now for my going out. Fetch me spring water to wash my hands and mouth and eyes. Get me the chapel opened, but with no outward display : holy words and guiltless prayers are furniture enough for worship. I do not call for incense to be burnt nor for any slice of honey-cake : hearths of green turf I leave for the altars of vain gods. I must pray to God and to the Son of God most high, that co-equal² Majesty united in one fellowship with the Holy Spirit. And lo, now I begin my prayers : my heart feels Heaven is near and trembles. Have faith and hope, then, anything to fear ?

¹ Quoted from Horace, *Odes*, III. xi. 38.

² *lit.* "of one extent."

VI.—LOCUS ORDINANDI COQUI.

SOSIA, prandendum est. quartam iam totus in horam
 sol calet: ad quintam flectitur umbra notam.
 an vegeto madeant condita opsonia gustu
 (fallere namque solent), experiundo proba.
 concute ferventes palmis volventibus ollas, 5
 lingue celer digitos iure calente tuos,
 vibranti lambat quos umida lingua recursu ¹

* * * * *

VII.—[IN NOTARIUM IN SCRIBENDO VELOCISSIMUM]

PUER, notarum praepetum
 sollers minister, advola.
 bipatens pugillar expedi,
 cui multa fandi copia, 5
 punctis peracta singulis,
 ut una vox absolvitur.
 ego volvo libros uberes
 instarque densae grandinis
 torrente lingua perstrepo: 10
 tibi nec aures ambigunt,
 nec occupatur pagina
 et mota parce dextera
 volat per aequor cereum.
 cum maxime nunc proloquor 15
 circumloquentis ambitu,
 tu sensa nostri pectoris
 vix dicta iam ceris tenes.
 sentire tam velox mihi
 vellem dedisset mens mea,

¹ The remainder of this poem together with much else has been lost.

VI.—THE TIME FOR DIRECTING THE COOK

SOSIAS, I must have lunch. The warm sun is already passed well on into his fourth hour, and on the dial the shadow is moving on towards the fifth stroke. Taste and make sure—for they often play you false—that the seasoned dishes are well soured and taste appetisingly. Turn your bubbling pots in your hands and shake them up: quick, dip your fingers in the hot gravy and let your moist tongue lick them as it darts in and out . . .

VII.—TO HIS STENOGRAPHER, A READY WRITER

HI, boy! My secretary, skilled in dashing shorthand, make haste and come! Open your folding tablets wherein a world of words is compassed in a few signs and finished off as it were a single phrase. I ponder works of generous scope; and thick and fast like hail the words tumble off my tongue. And yet your ears are not at fault nor your page crowded, and your right hand, moving easily, speeds over the waxen surface of your tablet. When I declaim, as now, at greatest speed, talking in circles round my theme, you have the thoughts of my heart already set fast in wax almost before they are uttered. I would my mind had given me power to think as

AUSONIUS

quam praepetis dextrae fuga
 tu me loquentem praevenis. 20
 Quis, quaeso, quis me prodidit?
 quis ista iam dixit tibi,
 quae cogitabam dicere?
 quae furta corde in intimo 25
 exercet ales dextera?
 quis ordo rerum tam novus,
 veniat in aures ut tuas,
 quod lingua nondum absolverit?
 doctrina non hoc praestitit 30
 nec ulla tam velox manus
 celeripedis compendii:
 natura munus hoc tibi
 deusque donum tradidit,
 quae loquerer, ut scires prius 35
 idemque velles, quod volo.

VIII

[DISCUTIUNT nobis placidos portenta sopores,
 qualia miramur, cum saepius aethere in alto
 conciliant varias coetu vaga nubila formas]¹
 quadrupedum et volucrum, vel cum terrena marinis
 monstra admiscuntur; donec purgantibus euris
 difflatae liquidum tenuentur in aera nubes.
 nunc fora, nunc lites, lati modo pompa theatri
 visitur: et turmas equitum caedesque latronum 5
 perpetior: lacerat nostros fera belua vultus
 aut in sanguinea gladio grassamur harena.

¹ Schenkl observes that a leaf containing the end of the *Ephemeris* and the beginning of this poem has fallen out of the archetype. The Translator's supplement (in brackets) is intended to suggest the general sense immediately preceding.

THE DAILY ROUND

swiftly as you outstrip me when I speak, and as your
 dashing hand leaves my words behind.
²² Who, prithee, who is he who has betrayed me?
 Who has already told you what I was but now think-
 ing to say? What thefts are these that your speeding
 hand perpetrates in the recesses of my mind? How
 come things in so strange an order that what my
 tongue has not yet vented comes to your ears? No
 teaching ever gave you this gift, nor was ever any
 hand so quick at swift stenography: Nature endowed
 you so, and God gave you this gift to know before-
 hand what I would speak, and to intend the same
 that I intend.

VIII

[STRANGE monsters disturb our calm slumbers, like
 those we marvel at when, sometimes, in the high
 upper air the wandering clouds unite and blend to-
 gether the various shapes] of four-footed beasts and
 winged creatures; when monstrous shapes of earth
 and sea are mingled in one, until the cleansing
 eastern winds blow the clouds to shreds and thin
 them out into the clear air. Now the courts pass
 before my eyes with suits at law, and now the spacious
 theatre with its shows. Here I endure the sight of
 troops of cavalry cutting down brigands: or in the
 bloody arena some wild beast tears my face, or I am
 butchered with the sword. I go afoot across the

per mare navifragum gradior pedes et freta cursu
 transilio et subitis volito super aera pinnis.
 infandas etiam veneres incestaque noctis 10
 dedecora et tragicos patimur per somnia coetus.
 perfugium tamen est, quotiens portenta soporum
 solvit rupta pudore quies et imagine foeda
 libera mens vigilat: totum bene conscia lectum
 pertractat securo manus: probrosa recedit 15
 culpa tori et profugi manascunt crimina somni.
 cerno triumphantes inter me plaudere: rursus
 inter captivos trahor exarmatus Alanos.
 templa deum sanctasque fores palatiaque aurea
 specto et Sarrano videor discumbere in ostro 20
 et mox fumosis conviva adcumbo popinis.

Divinum perhibent vatem sub frondibus ulmi
 vana ignavorum simulacra locasse soporum
 et geminas numero portas: quae fornice eburno
 semper fallaces glomerat super aera formas: 25
 altera, quae veros emittit cornea visus.
 quod si de dubiis conceditur optio nobis,
 desse fidem laetis melius quam vana timeri.
 ecce ego iam malim falli; nam, dum modo semper
 tristia vanescant, potius caruisse fruendis, 30
 quam trepidare malis. satis est bene, si metus absit.
 sunt et qui fletus et gaudia controversum
 coniectent varioque trahant eventa relatu.

wrecking sea, bound at a stride across the straits,
 and flit above the air on new-found wings. Then,
 too, in dreams we undergo amours unspeakable, and
 night's foul shames, and unions which are the themes
 of tragedy. Yet there is escape from these when-
 ever shame bursts through the bonds of sleep, scat-
 tering the horrors of our dreams, and the mind freed
 from filthy fancying keeps watch. Then the hands
 untainted feel about the bed nor find cause for re-
 morse: the sinful guilt of luxury departs, and as the
 dream fades from us, so its stain. Now, I see myself
 applauding, one of a triumphant throng: again I am
 dragged through the streets a disarmed Alan prisoner
 of war. And now I gaze upon the temples of the
 gods, their sacred portals and golden palaces; or
 seem to recline at a feast upon a couch of Sarran
 (Tyrian) purple, and presently sit feasting at the
 table of some steamy eating-house.

²² They say the heavenly bard¹ set for the empty
 phantoms of sluggish sleep a place beneath an elm-
 tree's leaves, and appointed them two gates: that
 which is arched with ivory ever pours forth upon the
 air a host of deceptive shapes: the second is of horn
 and sends forth visions of the truth. But if dreams
 of doubtful import leave us the choice, better that
 cheerful sights deceive us than we should fear with
 a cause. Look you, I would even rather be deceived;
 for, if only gloomy dreams always prove void, it is
 better to have missed what might have been enjoyed
 than to tremble at ill-fortune. 'Tis well enough if
 only fear be far from us. Some there are also who
 argue their woe and weal by contraries, and who
 forecast results by opposite interpretation.

¹ *sc.* Virgil (*Aen.* vi. 282 ff.).

AUSONIUS

Ite per oblicos caeli, mala somnia, mundos,
 inrequieta vagi qua difflant nubila nimbi ; 35
 lunares habitate polos : quid nostra subitis
 limina et angusti tenebrosa cubilia tecti ?
 me sinite ignavas placidum traducere noctes,
 dum redeat roseo mihi Lucifer aureus ortu.
 quod si me nullis vexatum nocte figuris 40
 mollis tranquillo permulserit aere somnus,
 hunc lucum, nostro viridis qui frondet in agro
 ulmeus, excubiis habitandum dedico vestris.

THE DAILY ROUND

³⁴ Away, you evil dreams, through the sloping
 firmaments of heaven, where wandering storms
 scatter the still-vexed clouds ; dwell in the moon-lit
 skies. Why steal you in at my doors and haunt the
 darkling couch in my confined dwelling ? Leave
 me to pass night unexcited in calm repose till golden
 Lucifer comes back for me in the rosy east. But if
 soft sleep shall soothe me with his gentle breath,
 nor any shapes trouble my rest by night, this grove
 —the elm which spreads its green leaves on my
 estate—I dedicate for you to dwell in on your night
 watches.