METER: choliambic (a variant of the iambic line, devised by Greek poets for satire and mockery, the term means "limping iambic." The limping effect has been achieved by making the next to the last syllable long instead of short). The pattern is:

\[\begin{array}{cccccc}
| & | & = | & = | & = | & = |
\end{array}\]

A caesura (word-end within a metrical foot, frequently coinciding with a pause in the sense of the line) often falls in the middle of the third foot.

1 Catulle: vocative, from Catullus, -i [m].
   *désinô, désinere [3], désî, désitum (+ infinitive), to give up, stop. Translate the hortatory subjunctives désinás (1) and dûcás (2) as imperatives.
   ineptiô, ineptire [4], to play the fool, be a fool.

2 quod . . . dûcás: supply id as the understood antecedent of quod. Word order: dûcás [id], quod perisses vidès, perditum (esse). perisse: from the verb pereô, perire.
   perisse: = perissē. What tense is the infinitive? *perdô, perdere (3), perdîdi, perditum, to destroy, ruin, lose. perditum esse: what tense and voice?
   dûcô, dûcere (3), dûxi, ductum, (here) to consider, (in line 4) lead.

3 fulgeô, fulgére (2), fulfil, to shine, glitter. Fulsēre: = Fulsērunt.
   *quondam, once. *candidus, -a, -um, bright, dazzling.

4 ventitiô [1], to come often.

5 nôbis: = à mé. nulla: supply puella.

6 ibi, then, at that time. illa multa: with iocōsa after cum. iocōsa, -ôrum (n plural), playful things, playful moments.

9 *iam . . . nón, no longer. illa: i.e., puella. volt: = vult. impotêns, impotentis, lacking self-control, headstrong, powerless, weak in will. Which definition fits the context best? nôli: what form is this?

10 quae: supply eam as antecedent of quae and object of sectâre. sector, sectâri (1), sectâtus sum, to chase after. sectâre: the present singular imperative of the deponent verb sector. The imperative of deponent verbs ends in -re in the singular and -mini in the plural.

11 obstinâtus, -a, -um, resolved, determined. perferô, perferre [irreg.], pertuli, perlâte, to bear through, endure. *obdûro (1), to be firm, persist.

13 requiô, require [3], requisivi, requisitum, to look for again, seek after.
   *invitûs, -a, um, unwilling. invitam: tê is understood.

14 nulla: adverbial, "not," "not at all" [a colloquial usage].

15 scelestus, -a, -um, wicked, unfortunate, wretched. vaê tê, woe to you.
   quae: take this interrogative adjective with vita.

16 adeô, adire [irreg.], adi, aditum, to approach, visit. *bellus, -a, -um, pretty, nice, cute.

17 Cuius esse dîcîris: first translate this literally, then find a more idiomatic way of saying it. In the 3rd conjugation, an e is used for both the present and future of the 2nd person singular passive. How does the length of the vowel help you decide the tense?

18 basîo (1), to kiss. Cui: dative of reference; here, translate as a genitive, "Whose . . . ?" labellum, -i [n], little lip. Catullus is fond of using diminutives [words with suffixes, such as -ellus, -olus, and -ullus, that denote smallness] to express a variety of feelings such as affection, delicacy, humor, or mockery.

19 destinâtus, -a, -um, fixed, decided, firm, steadfast.
Catullus, Stop Being a Fool!

Catullus, hopelessly in love, exhorts himself to pull out of the love affair. Memories of happy moments and of the girl, however, weaken his resolve.

Miser Catulle, désinâs ineptire,
et quod vidès perisse perditum dûcâs.
Fulsère quondam candidi tibi sólès,
cum ventitâbas quô puella dûcèbat
5 amâta nóbis quantum amâbitur nûlla;
ibi illa multa cum iocôsa fièbant,
quae tû volèbas nec puella nolèbat,
fulsère vêrè candidî tibi sólès.
Nunc iam illa nôn volt: tû quoque impotêns nôli,
nec quae fugit sectâre, nec miser vive,
sed obstinâtâ mente perfer, obdûrâ.
Valê, puella. Iam Catullus obdûrat,
nec té requiret nec rogâbit invitam.
At tû dolèbis, cum rogâberis nûlla.
10 Scelesta, vae tê, quae tibi manet vita?
Quis nunc tê adîbit? Cui vidèberis bella?
Quem nunc amâbis? Cuius esse dicêris?
Quem bâsiâbis? Cui labella mordèbis?
At tû, Catulle, dêstinâtus obdûrâ.

1. Divide the poem into different sections according to the use of key transitional words (e.g., quondam). What is the mood of each section and what causes the shifts in mood? What role does time play in these sections?
2. It is commonly accepted that poets project different aspects of themselves onto the real or imaginary characters of their poems. A poet may, for instance, adopt the identity of a wise traveler, homeless youth, or loving parent. This adopted identity is called persona (Latin for “mask”). What persona does Catullus assume for himself in this poem? Why does he address himself in the 3rd person?
4. Lines 3 and 8 act as a frame for the memory of an earlier time. How can you interpret the words candidî . . . sólès metaphorically (metaphor is an implied comparison between two objects)? What difference does the substitution of vêrè (8) for quondam (3) make in the meaning of the repeated line?
5. This poem presents a classic confrontation between the will and the emotions (sparked by memories of happier days). Which side seems stronger? What weakens the poet’s resolve to end the affair? Support your answer by reference to the poem.
6. Reread the poem and note words or phrases that are repeated. What is significant about the repeated words? Why would repetition be such a major part of this poem? Find examples of words with a double l. What pattern do they form?
7. Why are limping iambics an appropriate meter for this poem?