

METER: fourth asclepiadean. The pattern is:

(asclepiadean, two lines) -----||-----  
(pherecratean) -----  
(glyconic) -----

- 1 **Quis**: = **quī**. Take the interrogative adjective with **gracilis . . . puer**. The boy is aggressively pursuing Pyrrha (= **tē** in line 1), about whom we will hear more as the poem unfolds. **multā . . . in rosā**: "amid many a rose," "on a bed of roses." **gracilis**, -is, -e, slender.
- 2 **perfundō, perfundere** (3), **perfūdī, perfūsum**, to soak, drench. **liquidus**, -a, -um, fluid, flowing. **urgēō, urgēre** (2), **ursī**, to press, woo, embrace. **odor, odōris** (m), smell, fragrance, perfume.
- 3 **Pyrrha**, -ae (f), the woman to whom the poem is addressed. In Greek, *Pyrrha* means "redhead," from the Greek word *pyr*, "fire." **antrum**, -ī (n), cave, grotto.
- 4 **Cui . . . ?**: "For whom . . . ?" **\*flāvus**, -a, -um, yellow, golden-yellow. **religō** (1), to tie back. **coma**, -ae (f), hair.
- 5 **simplex munditiis**: "simple in your refinements." **munditia**, -ae (f), refinement, elegance. **heu**, alas. **quotiēns**, how often, how many times. **fidem**: supply **mūtātam**. Pyrrha's faithfulness (**fidem**) and the support of the gods (**deōs**) will often seem mutable and unpredictable to the boy.
- 6 **flēbit**: the subject is **puer**. **asper, aspera, asperum**, rough, harsh. The words **aspera nigris aequora ventis** (6-7) are a good example of *interlocked word order*. For the poetic device, see question 1 on Catullus 87.
- 7 **\*aequor, aequoris** (n), sea. **aequora**: object of **ēmīrābitur** (8).
- 8 **ēmīror, ēmīrārī** (1), **ēmīrātus sum**, to wonder at, be astonished at. **īnsolēns, īnsolentis**, unaccustomed (i.e., to the sight), surprised, inexperienced.
- 9 **fruor, fruī** (3), **fructus sum** (+ *abl.*), to enjoy, delight in, possess. **crēdulus**, -a, -um, trusting, gullible. **aureus**, -a, -um, golden, resplendent.
- 10 **quī . . . spērat** (11): supply **tē futūram esse** to fill out the indirect statement. **vacuus**, -a, -um, free, available. **\*amābilis**, -is, -e, lovely, lovable.
- 11 **nescius**, -a, -um (+ *gen.*), unaware of, ignorant of. **\*aura**, -ae (f), breeze.
- 12 **fallāx, fallācis**, false, deceitful, treacherous. **Miserī**: supply **sunt puerī**.
- 13 **intemptātus**, -a, -um, untried, untested. **\*niteō, nitēre** (2), to shine, glitter. **Mē**: translate in this order: **sacer pariēs tabulā vōtivā indicat mē suspendisse ūvida vestimenta deō potentī maris**. **tabula**, -ae (f), tablet. Survivors of a shipwreck would set up a tablet and hang up "wet" clothes as a dedication to Neptune.
- 14 **vōtivus**, -a, -um, votive, vowed, promised. **pariēs, parietis** (m), wall (here, of a shrine or temple). **indicō** (1), to show, proclaim. **ūvidus**, -a, -um, wet.
- 15 **suspendō, suspendere** (3), **suspendī, suspēsum**, to hang up. **suspendisse**: why is an infinitive used here, and what tense is it? **potentī . . . deō** (16): dative or ablative? How does the context help you decide?
- 16 **vestīmentum**, -ī (n), clothing, garment.

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What slender Youth bedew'd with liquid odours

Courts thee on Roses in some pleasant Cave,

Pyrrha? for whom bind'st thou

In wreaths thy golden Hair,

Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he

On Faith and changed Gods complain, and Seas

Rough with black winds and storms

Unwonted shall admire,

Who now enjoys thee credulous, all Gold;

Who always vacant, always amiable

Hopes thee; of flattering gales

Unmindful. Hapless they

To whom thou untried seem'st fair. Me in my vow'd

Picture the sacred wall declares t'have hung

My dank and dropping weeds

To the stern God of Sea.

(John Milton)

## To Pyrrha

Quis multā gracilis tē puer in rosā  
 perfūsus liquidis urget odōribus  
 grātō, Pyrrha, sub antrō?  
 Cui flāvam religās comam,

5 simplex munditiis? Heu quotiēns fidem  
 mūtātōsque deōs flēbit et aspera  
 nigris aequora ventis  
 emīrābitur insolēns,

10 quī nunc tē fruitur crēdulus aureā,  
 quī semper vacuam, semper amābilem  
 spērat, nescius aurae  
 fallācis. Miserī, quibus

intemptāta nitēs. Mē tabulā sacer  
 vōtīvā pariēs indicat ūvida  
 15 suspendisse potentī  
 vestīmenta maris deō.

1. What is happening in the first stanza? How do the order and choice of words reflect the scene?
2. Why is the boy crying in the second stanza? What discovery has he made? Discuss Horace's use of winds and water to symbolize the boy's discovery.
3. Compare the word order in the phrase *tē fruitur crēdulus aureā* (9) to that in *gracilis tē puer* (1). What reversal has taken place? Comment on the effectiveness of repetition in lines 9–10.
4. What is a "false breeze" (*aurae fallācis*, 11–12) and why would it be dangerous to a sailor and a lover? What pun might Horace be making on the words *aurae fallācis*?
5. What *persōna* (for a definition, see question 2 on Catullus 8) does Horace adopt in the final stanza? Why are allusions to the sea so prominent in this poem? What do the poet and the boys have in common?
6. What do the words *flāvam* (4), *aureā* (9), *nitēs* (13), and the name Pyrrha tell us about Pyrrha's attraction to boys? Where else in the poem does Horace use color effectively?
7. Ronald Storr spent many years collecting translations of this poem. The result: *Ad Pyrrham, a Polyglot Collection of Translations* (Oxford, 1955) with 451 versions in twenty-six languages. One version from that collection is quoted on the opposite page. How well does it succeed?