



Translation: Catharina Imperialis Pallavicina
including "De Aranea in lauro"

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Original Text:

Arcadum Carmina: Pars Prior. Rome: Antonius de Rubeis, 1721, pp. 68-69.

https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/OuNfAAAcAAJ?hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjuiMvopvjsAhWBKs0KHZ2jD3IQ7_IDMAx6BAGQEAU

CATHARINA IMPERIALIS PALLAVICINA
Januensis Marchionissa Mombarutii

INTER ARCADES

ARSINDA POLIADES

De Aranea in lauro.

ELEGIA.

Pensilis argutâ desudat aranea lauro,
 Visceribus nectens eruta fila suis.
Ac veluti gestet manuumque, pedumque coronam,
 Desuper intextas itque, reditque vias.
Sed, dum Phæbeas super astitit inscia frondes, line 5
 Nil profecturum se ligat inter opus.
Stamine ab intexto surgit novus orbis, & orbis,
 Et quæque est radiis orbita plena suis;
Atque adeò tensis, adeò subtilibus: ipsos
 In morem ut credas prætereuntis acus. line 10
Et iam surgit opus: medio stat aranea centro,
 Ingeniï judex fiat ut ipsa sui.
Ite triumphales circum mea tempora lauri
 Penè ait; apta sibi talia dona putans.
Bombices cedant; dat sibila serica vestis line 15
 Excussa ut dominum rideat illa rudem.
Ast, quæ de nostro textura est parta labore,
 Circumdat lauros, auree Phæbe, tuas.
Vix ea: cum doctum mirata, Lycoris, Amyntam,
 Laurea de arboribus vellereserta parat. line 20
Atque huc accedens ubi pandit aranea telas,
 Disjecit casses, Bellua nigra, tuos.
Quin te disjectam, & latebras tellure petentem
 Irato attrivit territa Nymppha pede.
Vanum opus exsufflat, ridensque coronat Amyntam; line 25
 Ignarum & vatem non sinit esse suum
Sit quale hoc sertum, qualis sit dextra Lycoris,
 Vultu, inquit, capias tu satis ipse meo!
Dextra etenim puras effecit Apollinis umbras,
 Nec passa est mediis bestiolam in foliis. line 30
Ergo sacer vates tollas de versibus, oro,
 Quidquid apud Lauros textit inanis Amor.

Scansion:

Elisions: lines 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23 (occurs between disjectam and &), 24, 25, 26 (occurs between ignarum and &), 28, 29, 30 (2 elisions)

No hiatus

Vocabulary and Grammar Notes:

1 pensilis - related to pendeo, pendere, to hang

3 manuumque, pedumque coronam - objective genitive

6 profecturum - the web will not last

7-8 stamine ab intexto... /radius... plena suis - a weaving metaphor

13 Ite triumphales circum mea tempora lauri - cf. Ovid *Amores* 2.12: "Ite triumphales circum mea tempora laurus."

14 pene = paene

15 bombix/bombyx - silk

16 excussa - It is not grammatically clear whether the sibila or serica vestis have been excussa here.

17 ast = at

19 vix - The spider has just finished her work when the poem transitions to a scene with Lycoris and Amyntas.

Lycoris, Amyntas - Characters who appear in Vergil's *Eclogues*. Amyntas is a shepherd who wins a poetry contest. Lycoris is the dying Gallus' lover. Both appear later in Humanist poetry with some frequency.

22 *casses, bellua nigra, tuos* - chiasmus which creates a word picture of the spider within her web

Enondatio

Aranea pensilis lauro arguta desudat,

Nectens fila eruta visceribus suis.

Ac veluti gestet coronam manuumque pedumque,

Desuper intextas vias, itque reditque

Sed, dum inscia astitit super Phaebeas frondes,

se ligat inter opus profecturum nihil

Novus orbis et orbis surgit ab intexto stamine

Et quaeque orbita est plena radiis suis;

Atque adeo tensis, adeo subtilibus ut credas

In morem acus ipsos praetereuntes.

Et iam opus surgit: aranea stat medio centro,

Ut ipsa fiat iudex ingenii sui

Ite triumphales lauri circum mea tempora

Pene ait; putans talia dona apta sibi.

Bombices cedant; vestis serica dat sibila

Ut illa excussa rideat rudem dominum.

At, textura quae est parta de nostro labore,

Circumdat tuas lauros, auree Phaebe.

Vix ea: cum Lycoris mirata parat Amyntam doctum,

Parat vellereserta laurea de arboribus

Atque aranea accedens huc ubi pandit telas,

Bellua nigra, disjecit tuos casses.

Quin te disjectam, et petentem latebras tellure

Territa Nympha attrivit irato pedi.

Vanum opus exsufflat, ridensque coronat Amyntam;

Non sinit et suum vatem ignarum esse

“Quale sit hoc sertum, qualis dextra lycoris sit,”

Inquit “tu ipse satis capias vultu meo!”

Etenim (nympha) effecit puras umbras Apollinis dextra (manu)

Nec passa est bestioliā in mediis foliis.

Ergo oro sacer vates tollas de versibus,

Quidquid inanis Amor texit apud Lauros

Literal translation:

The spider, hanging from the rustling laurel, exerts herself,
 Weaving the threads cast forth from her innards.
And as if she wears a crown from her hands and feet,
 From above the woven roads, she goes and returns
But, while she stood above the Phoebian fronds unaware,
 She binds herself in her work which will become nothing.
A new ring and (another) ring rises from the woven warp
 And each ring is full with its own shuttles
And so stretched and fine that you would believe
 Them passing in the manner of a needle.
And now the work rises: the spider stands in the very center,
 So that she might be the judge of her own skill.
“Go around my temples, triumphal laurel,”
 She nearly says, thinking such gifts fitting for her.
Let the silkworms yield; the silk clothing gives a whistling
 Shaken out so that she laughs at the unskilled master.
But, the web which has been born from our labor
 surrounds your laurels, golden Phoebus.
Hardly this: when Lycoris, having wondered at learned Amyntas,
 prepares to pluck laurel wreaths from the trees.
And coming to the place where the spider spreads her web,
 Destroyed your snares, black beast.
Rather, you, thrown down and seeking the darkness in the earth,
 the terrified Nymph with her angry foot rubbed out.
The empty work blows away, and smiling she crowns Amyntas;
 She does not allow her poet to be unaware of
“What sort this wreath, what favorable Lycoris might be,”
 She says, “You yourself may know enough from my face!”
In fact, she brought about the pure shadows of Apollo with her right hand,
 Nor did she endure a little beast in the middle of the leaves.
Therefore, sacred poet, I beg, may you lift from your verses
 Whatever empty Love wove among the laurels.

Literary translation (by Flora Gu):

Dangling rustling the spider works hard from her laurel.
 Weaving the threads elicited from her flesh.
And, as if her feet and fingers crown'd in a wreath,
 To and fro she struts the woven roads.
Innocently though above the Phoebean foliage stood,
 She binds herself to a work nought to become.
A new hoop and another arises from th' entwin'd warp,
 And each and every wheel full of its spokes—
So stretch'd and fine these spokes be, as you could
 Imagine, in the manner of a needle passing.
And now the work arises: the spider at the very centre
 Stands, so as to be the judge of her own temper.
“Proceed 'round my temples, ye triumphant laurels,”
 She nearly declares, thinking such gifts befit her,
“Let the silkworms yield; the silk clothes giveth a hiss,
 So that she th' outcast may deride th' unskill'd master.
But the web, which hath been born from our labour,
 Spreadeth your laurels 'bout, golden Phoebus.”
Ere such utterance cast, Lycoris, wonder'd at learn'd Amyntas
 And preparing to pluck laurel wreaths from the trees,
Comes to where the spider spreads her web,
 And, aye, she destroy'd your snares, Black beast.
Why not: the terrifi'd Nymph with her violent foot grinded
 You, destroy'd and seeking a shelter in the earth.
The vain work exhales, and smiling she crowns Amyntas;
 Yet she does not leave her poet unaware
“How fair this wreath is. How blessed Lycoris be,”
 Says she, “you alone shall know't well from my face!”
Indeed, she brought about pure shades with Apollo's right hand,
 Nor was a little beast amid the leaves allow'd.
Therefore, sacred poet, I beg, may you lift from your verses
 Whatever vain Love woven within the Laurels.

Lesson Plan Ideas

Interpretations: impermanence, vanity

Discussion: What are the implications if the poem is an extended metaphor of the spider as the poet? Amyntas is also a poet. How does this affect your interpretation of the spider as poet? There are a lot of words for sounds and poetic words (e.g., *arguta*, *inanis Amor*). How can these be used to help interpret the moral aim of the poem? It is also interesting to note that Amyntas, a poet, is silent in this poem.

Connect to Vergil's *Eclogues* (Amyntas and Lycoris), Ovid's *Amores* (2.12)

Lesson plan idea for newer students--grammar focus: verbs/adjectives/participles (active and passive)/subjunctive uses (via French group)