

He lo'ed her weel and wadna rest  
Till nigh his heart he fand his nest,  
Like bairn that seeks its minnie's breast  
And winna steer.

And oot and in he'd flit and flee,  
And chirp and cheep fu' cantillie,  
Nae ither mistress wad he dree  
But only Jeanie.

And noo the darksome gate he's ta'en  
The gate that's traiveled back by nane:  
Foul fa' ye, Death! Ye aye are fain  
To wale the bonnie.

Puir feckless bird, ye little ween  
The dule and wae ye've brocht my Jean,  
The saut tear blin's her bonnie een  
A' red wi' greetin'.

Here is a poem addressed to Lesbia herself—it is one of a pair, and I must apologise for a rhyme pilfered from Tennyson, and a slight departure from Catullus in the middle of it. In this poem the kissing is to be done exclusively by her, in the pendant by himself. Whether in such cases it is more blessed to give or to receive, I leave you to determine.

Let us, my Lesbia, live and love,  
Nor value grave folks' talk above  
One penny. Suns may set and rise,  
And set and rise, but once our eyes  
Have bid good-bye to life's short light  
We sleep through one long endless night.

A thousand kisses, then a hundred!  
Nor, when as many more I've plundered,  
Bid that the lovers' lips be sundered.

But then the kisses cease to count,  
Lest we should learn their true amount,  
And ill from some green eye should come  
From envy at our kisses' sum.

It will be seen that so far all is peace and joy and love, but it was not to remain so. I will not weary you with any attempt to trace the processes of dissension and reconciliation. Catullus found out, and he was not the first neither will he be the last to find out, that it is possible to love and hate the same person at once—how, he knew not, but still possible and painful. Reconciliation came, but we do not know how long it lasted before the final rupture followed. Here is a poem apparently written very near the end:

Thou saidst of yore, Catullus was thy love,  
Nor could my Lesbia let me go for Jove;  
I loved thee then scarce as a mistress, nay,  
More as his sons and sons-in-law one may.  
But now I know thee; and, though worse I pine,  
Less honour and less reverence are thine.  
How comes it so? such wrongs a lover fill  
With fiercer passion but revolt his will.

The expression in line four is most remarkable not merely for its oddness in itself but for its being a unique example of unselfishness in the amatory poetry of Rome.

Things went from bad to worse and Catullus was quite disillusioned, and there rings through his poetry the note of love turned to hatred, almost of injured innocence. He never reached the frank brutality of Propertius—*Falsa tua istius mulier fiducia formae*—but his habitual directness does not fail him. Some of the poems of renunciation can hardly be quoted, but one of them may thus be rendered:

Comrades of Catullus, sworn of yore  
Him to follow, though to Ind he guide,  
Where the eastern waters lash the shore  
Far and wide;

Though to northern tribes, soft Araby,  
Scythia, Parthian wielders of the bow,  
Or where Nile's seven outlets stain the sea  
He shall go;

Though 'mid Alps he thread the grim defile,  
To great Caesar's battle-fields he wend,  
Gallic Rhine and Britain's horrid isle,  
The world's end;

Furius and Aurelius, sworn to fare  
Wheresoe'er the gods direct the gale,  
To my mistress I would have you bear  
Words of bale:

Say with all those lovers fare she well,  
All the scores she holds in one embrace,  
Loving none; but all one tale can tell  
Of disgrace.

Let her not unto my love look back  
Love by her laid low, as in some field  
Lies a flower, too near the ploughshare's track,  
Crushed and killed.

On his other friendships and enmities it is not very needful to dwell, but whatever expression he gives to either, there is no lack of vivacity. Here, for example, is an invitation to Fabullus to come and dine with him:

You shall dine in style with me  
In a day or two *D. V.*

If you bring the fare, Fabullus, ample fare, I trust, and fine,  
And, of course, a lady friend,  
Mirth and laughter without end,  
And the wine.

These, Fabullus, bring all these,  
And the feast will surely please;  
For your hapless friend Catullus has a pocketful of—what?  
Spider-webs! But still you'll get  
Utter love, and better yet  
By a lot.

I've an unguent straight from Heaven  
To my lady it was given  
By the Venuses and Cupids. To your nostrils once it goes,