

The Recurring Grotesque in Ovid's *Amores*1: *Amores* 1.5.19-23:

quos umeros, quales vidi tetigique lacertos!
 forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi! 20
 quam castigato planus sub pectore uenter!
 quantum et quale latus! quam iuuenale femur!
 singula quid referam? nil non laudabile uidi

Peter Green's translations:

Smooth shoulders, delectable arms (I saw, I touched them),
 Nipples inviting caresses, the flat
 Belly outlined beneath that flawless bosom,
 Exquisite curve of a hip, firm youthful thighs.
 But why catalogue details? Nothing came short of perfection

2: *Amores* 2.13.1-2:

Dum labefactat **onus** grauidi temeraria uentris,
 in dubio uitae lassa Corinna iacet.

Corinna got pregnant– and rashly tried an abortion.
 Now she's lying in danger of her life.

3: *Amores* 2.13.19-24:

tuque laborantes utero miserata puellas
 quarum tarda latens corpora tendit **onus** 20
 lenis ades precibusque meis faue, Ilithyia:
 digna est, quam iubeas muneris esse tui.
 ipse ego tura dabo fumosis candidus aris,
 ipse feram ante tuos munera uota pedes.

[...] and your compassion
 For girls in labor is well-known.
 Ilithyia, Goddess of Childbirth, hear my entreaties, save her–
 She's worth it, truly. Just say the word,
 And I'll robe myself in white, burn incense on your smoking
 Altar, lay at your feet the gifts I vowed.

4: *Amores* 2.14.13-20:

quis Priami fregisset opes, si numen aquarum
 iusta **recusasset pondera ferre** Thetis?
 Ilia si **tumido geminos in uentre** necasset, 15
 casurus dominae conditor Urbis erat;
 si Venus Aenean **grauida** temerasset **in aluo**,
 Caesaribus tellus orba futura fuit.
 tu quoque, cum posses nasci **formosa**, perisses,
 temptasset, quod tu, si tua mater opus. 20

Who would have cracked Priam's might if the sea-goddess Thetis
 Had refused to carry her load?
 Had Ilia ripped those twins from her swollen belly
 Our City's Founder would have been lost.
 Had Venus aborted the unborn Aeneas, no Caesars today would
 Exist in the world. You too
 Would have perished, your beauty still embryonic, had your
 Mother attempted the same game.

5: *Amores* 2.14.37-42

at tenerae faciunt, sed non inpune, puellae;
 saepe, suos **utero** quae necat, ipsa perit
 ipsa perit, ferturque rogo resoluta capillos,
 et clamant 'merito' qui modo cumque uident. 40
 ista sed aetherias uanescant dicta per auras,
 et sint omnibus **pondera** nulla meis.

Yet tender young girls do this– though not with impunity: often
 The uterine murderess dies herself,
 Dies, and is carried out for cremation, hair, all disheveled,
 To cries of 'Serve her right!' from the passers-by.
 May these utterances of mine be scattered down the wind, and
 No weight attach to such ill-omened words!

6: *Amores* 2.15

Anule, formosae digitum uincture puellae,
 in quo censendum nil nisi dantis amor,
 munus eas gratum; te laeta mente receptum
 protinus articulis induat illa suis.
 tam bene conuenias quam mecum conuenit illi, 5
 et digitum iusto commodus **orbe teras**.
 felix, a domina tractaberis, anule, nostra:
 inuideo donis iam miser ipse meis.
 o utinam fieri subito mea munera possem
 artibus Aeaeae Carpathiue senis! 10
 tunc ego, cum **cupiam** dominae tetigisse papillas
 et laeuam tunicis inseruisse manum,
elabar digito quamuis **angustus et haerens**,
 inque sinum mira laxus ab arte cadam.
 idem ego, ut arcanas possim signare tabellas, 15
 neue tenax ceram siccaque gemma trahat,
 umida formosae tangam prius ora puellae;
 tantum ne signem scripta dolenda mihi.
 si dabor ut condar loculis, exire negabo
adstringens digitos **orbe** minore tuos. 20
 non ego dedecori tibi sum, mea uita, futurus,
quodue tener digitus ferre recuset onus.
me gere, cum calidis perfundes imbribus artus,
 damnaque sub gemmam perfer euntis aquae.
 sed, puto, te nuda **mea membra libidine surgent**, 25
 et peragam partes anulus ille uiri.
 irrita quid uoueo? paruam proficiscere munus;
 illa datam tecum sentiat esse **fidem**.

Ring of mine, made to encircle my pretty mistress' finger,
 Valuable only in terms of the giver's love,
 Go, and good welcome! May she receive you with pleasure
 Slip you over her knuckle there and then.
 May you fit her as well as she fits me, rub snugly
 Around her finger, precisely the right size!
 Lucky ring to be handled by my mistress! I'm developing
 A miserable jealousy of my own gift.
 But suppose I could *be* the ring, transformed in an instant by
 some famous magician's art –
 Then, when I felt like running my hand down Corinna's
 Dress, and exploring her breasts, I'd work
 Myself off her finger (tight squeeze or not) and by crafty
 Cunning drop into her cleavage. Let's say
 She was writing a private letter – *I'd* have to seal it,
 And a dry stone sticks on wax:
 She'd moisten me with her tongue. Pure bliss – provided
 I didn't have to endorse any hostile remarks
 Against myself. If she wanted to put me away in her jewel-
 Box, I'd cling tighter, refuse to budge.
 (Don't worry, my sweet, I'd never cause you discomfort or burden
 Your slender finger with an unwelcome weight.)
 Wear me whenever you take a hot shower, don't worry
 If water runs under your gem –
 Though I fancy the sight of you naked would rouse my
 Passions, leave me ring of visibly virile parts...
 Pure wishful thinking! On your way, then, little present,
 And show her you come with all my love.

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