

## The Chains that Bind: Statius, Harmonia's Necklace, and Elegiac Tropes

### 1. Stat. *Theb.* 2.269-73<sup>1</sup>

*Lemnius haec, ut prisca fides, Mauortia longum  
furta dolens, capto postquam nil obstat amori 270  
poena nec ultrices castigauere catenae,  
Harmoniae dotale decus sub luce iugali  
struxerat....*

The Lemnian, as the old story goes, grieving for a long time at Mars' stolen moments, since no punishment stood in the way for their captured love, nor were the avenging chains chastising, crafted a dowry gift for Harmonia on her wedding day.

### 2. Prop. 3.8.23, 33-4

*aut in amore dolere volo aut audire dolentem...  
aut tecum aut pro te mihi cum rivalibus arma  
semper erunt...*

Cf. Prop. 1.18.3, 2.8.36, 2.16.31-2, 3.8.23; [Tib] 3.16.5.

I want either to grieve in love or to hear that you are grieving...  
Let me always be at war: either with you, or with rivals for you

### 3a. Tib. 1.2.36

*...celari vult sua furta Venus.*

Venus wishes her thefts to be secret

### 3b. Tib. 1.5.7

*Parce tamen, per te furtivi foedera lecti*

Cf. Prop. 2.2.4, 4.8.34; [Tib] 3.11.7; Ov. *Am.* 3.8.3; *Ars* 1.33.

Yet spare me, by the bonds of our secret bed...

### 4. Virg. *Geo.* 4.346

*Martisque dolos et dulcia furta*

Mars' tricks and the sweet thefts

### 5. Prop. 4.7.15-6

*iamne tibi exciderunt vigilacis furta Suburae  
et mea nocturnis trita fenestra dolis?*

Have our thefts in wakeful Subura already slipped your mind, and my windowsill worn down by our nocturnal tricks?

### 6a. Ov. *Ars* 2.563

*insano Veneris turbatus amore*

...struck with insane love for Venus

### 6b. Ov. *Ars* 2.564

*De duce terribili factus amator erat*

From a fierce general he was made a lover

### 6c. Ov. *Ars* 2.567-70

*A, quotiens lasciva pedes risisse mariti  
dicitur, et duras igne vel arte manus!  
Marte palam simul est Vulcanum imitata, decebat,  
multaque cum forma gratia mixta fuit.*

Cf. Ov. *Am.* 2.2.11-14, 33-34.

Ah, how often the flirt is said to laugh at her husband's lame foot, and his hands rough from fire or craft. She openly imitated Vulcan in those moments, to Mars, and it was a good look for her—pleasant form mixed with grace.

<sup>1</sup> Text of Statius: Hill 1996 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed); Propertius: Heyworth 2007; Tibullus: Juster and Maltby 2012; Virgil: Mynors 1990; Ovid *Ars*: Kenney 1994; *Heroides*: Showerman 1977. Translations my own.

**7. Stat. Theb. 2.270-1** (repeated from 1)

*...capto postquam nil obstat amori  
poena nec ultrices castigauere catena,*

Since no punishment stood in the way for their captured love, nor were the avenging chains chastising...

**8a. Stat. Theb. 2.266-7**

*dirum...monile / Harmoniae*

The cursed necklace of Harmonia

**8b. Stat. Theb. 2.272-3**

*Harmoniae dotale decus sub luce iugali  
struxerat...*

[Vulcan] crafted a dowry gift for Harmonia on her wedding day

**9. Prop. 2.1.78**

*huic misero fatum dura puella fuit.*

A harsh girl was the death of this miserable man.

**10. Prop. 4.3.49**

*omnis amor magnus, sed rapto coniuge maior*

Ever a mighty power, love is mightier still when one's spouse has been taken away.

**11a. Stat. Theb. 4.200-6**

*Non haec apta mihi nitidis ornatibus, inquit 200  
tempora, nec miserae placeant insignia formae  
te sine...*

"It is not right for me to wear shining ornaments," she said, "during these times, nor that decorations please my body, miserable without you..."

*Scilicet (infandum!), cum tu claudare minanti  
casside ferratusque sones, ego divitis aurum 205  
Harmoniae dotale geram? ...*

"What (unspeakable!), when you are closed up in a threatening helmet and, armed, you resound with clatter, shall I wear the wedding gold of splendid Harmonia?"

**11b. Ov. Her. 13.37-40**

*Scilicet ipsa geram saturatas murice lanas,  
bella sub Iliacis moenibus ille geret?  
ipsa comas pectar, galea caput ille premetur?  
ipsa novas vestes, dura vir arma feret? 40*

"What, am I to wear wool soaked in purple dye, while he wages war beneath the Trojan walls? Am I to comb my hair, while his head is pressed by a helmet? Do I wear new clothes, while my husband wears hard armor?"

**11c. Prop. 4.3.51-2**

*nam mihi quo Poenis nunc purpura fulgeat ostris  
crystallusque meas ornet aquosa manus?*

"For what reason now should purple shine for me from Phoenician cloth, and shining crystal adorn my hand?"

## 12. Stat. *Theb.* 4.202-3

...sat dubium coetu solante timorem  
fallere et incultos aris adverrere crines

“It is enough to deceive my hesitant fear with  
comforting companionship, and to sweep my  
unadorned hair across the altars.”

Fearing for her partner’s safety: Ov. *Her.* 13.51-52, 123-24; Prop. 4.3.23-28, 69-70

Wishing for solitude but being comforted by others: Ov. *Her.* 13.35-6, Prop. 4.3.41-42

Prayer and sacrifices: Ov. *Her.* 13.49-50, 111-14; Prop. 4.3.17, 53-68

Attempting to trick herself into hope: Ov. *Her.* 13.107, Prop. 4.3.33-40

## 13. Stat. *Theb.* 4.196-8

...nam regum animos et pondera belli  
hac nutare videt, pariter si providus heros  
militet...

...for [Argia] saw that the spirits of the rulers  
and the balance of the war would lean in this  
direction, if the foresighted hero should fight at  
their side...

14. Eriphyle as negative *exemplum*: Prop. 2.16b.29, 3.13.57; Ov. *Ars* 3.13

## 15a. Stat. *Theb.* 2.267-8

...longa est series, sed nota malorum  
persequar, unde novis tam saeva potentia donis.

The tale is long, but I shall follow the known  
evils, from where such a cruel power came  
from this new gift.

## 15b. Stat. *Theb.* 1.7-9

longa retro series, ...  
expediam penitusque sequar...

The tale goes a long way back, were I to  
recount ...and pursue to the uttermost...

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