

*The IMPetuous Sea: Storm and Sea Imagery in Ovid's Tristia 1.2 and Pliny 2.17*

1. Ovid Tristia. 1.2.1-3:

*Di maris et caeli—quid enim nisi vota supersunt?—  
solvere **quassatae** parcite **membra ratis**,  
neve, **precor**, magni subscribite **Caesaris irae!**<sup>1</sup>*

O gods of sea and sky—for what but prayer is left?—break not the **frame of our shattered bark**  
and second not, **I implore**, the wrath of **mighty Caesar!**

2. Ovid Amores 1.6.3:

*quod **precor**, exiguum est—aditu fac ianua parvo*

What I entreat is slight—see that the door stand but half ajar

3. Ovid Tristia 1.2.12-16:

***Quis vetat irato numen adesse deo?**  
*Verba miser frustra non proficentia perdo.*  
*Ipsa **graves** spargunt **ora loquentis aquae***  
**Terribilisque Notus iactat mea dicta**, *precesque*  
*Ad quos mittuntur, non sinit ire deos.**

**Who forbids a divine power from being of some avail to me against the angry god?** But,  
wretch that I am, to no purpose am I wasting profitless words. My very **lips** as I speak are sprayed  
by the **heavy waves**, and **dread Notus hurls away my words** nor suffers my prayers to reach the  
gods to whom they are directed.

4. Ovid Tristia 1.2.24:

*fluctibus hic **tumidus**, nubibus ille **minax***

sea **swollen** with billows, air **athreat** with clouds;

5. Ovid Tristia 1.2.27-30:

*nam modo **purpureo uires capit** Eurus ab ortu,  
nunc Zephyrus sero uespere **missus adest**,  
nunc sicca gelidus **Boreas bacchatur** ab Arcto,  
nunc Notus **aduersa proelia fronte gerit**.*

For now Eurus **storms mightily** from the red east, now Zephyrus **comes rushing** from the realm  
of late evening, now Boreas **raves** from the dry pole-star, now Notus **battles with opposing brow**.

6. Vergil Aeneid 6.77-79:

*At, Phoebi nondum patiens, immanis in antro  
**bacchatur vates**, magnum si pectore possit*

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<sup>1</sup> *Tristia* text and translations are from A. Wheeler's edition; *Pliny* text and translations are from B. Radice's edition;  
*Aeneid* text and translations are from H. R. Fairclough's edition.

Victoria Hodges CAMWS 2020 Latin Poetry 2 3A  
Rutgers University Classics  
victoria.hodges@rutgers.edu  
*excussisse deum;*

But the **prophetess**, not yet brooking the sway of Phoebus, **storms wildly** in the cavern, if so she may shake the mighty god from her breast;

7. Ovid Tristia 1.2.107-108

*fallor, an incipiunt grauidae uanescere nubes,  
uictaque **mutati** frangitur **ira maris**?*

Am I wrong or do the heavy clouds begin to melt away and is the **frenzy of the changing sea** being conquered and subdued?

8. Pliny 2.17.1:

***Miraris** cur me Laurentinum...tanto opere **delectet**; desines **mirari***

You may wonder why my Laurentine place... is such a joy to me...you will have your answer;

9. Pliny 2.17.4-5:

*Cuius in prima parte atrium frugi, nec tamen sordidum; **deinde porticus in D litterae similitudinem circumactae**, quibus parvula sed festiva area includitur. **Egregium hae adversus tempestates receptaculum**; nam **specularibus** ac multo magis imminentibus tectis **muniuntur**.*

It opens into a hall, unpretentious but not without dignity, and **then there are two colonnades, rounded like the letter D**, which enclose a small but pleasant courtyard. **This makes a splendid retreat in bad weather, being protected by windows** and still more by the overhanging roofs.

10. Pliny 2.17.5-6:

*Est contra medias cavaedium bilare, mox triclinium satis pulchrum, quod **in litus excurrit ac si quando Africo mare impulsum est, fractis iam et novissimis fluctibus leviter adluitur**. Undique **valvas aut fenestras non minores valvis habet atque ita a lateribus a fronte quasi tria maria prospectat**; a tergo cavaedium porticum aream porticum rursus, mox atrium silvas et longinquos respicit montes.*

Opposite the middle of it is a cheerful inner hall, and then a dining-room which really is rather fine: **it runs out towards the shore, and whenever the sea is driven inland by the south-west wind it is lightly washed by the spray of the spent breakers**. It has **folding doors or windows** as large as the doors all round, so that at the front and sides it **seems to look out on to three seas**, and at the back has a view through the inner hall, the courtyard with the two colonnades, then the entrance-hall to the woods and mountains in the distance.

11. Pliny 2.17.6-7:

*Huius a laeva retractius paulo cubiculum est amplum, deinde aliud minus quod altera fenestra admittit orientem, occidentem altera retinet; **hac et subiacens mare longius quidem sed securius intuetur**.*

To the left of this and a little farther back from the sea is a large bedroom, and then another smaller one which lets in the morning sunshine with one window and holds the last rays of the evening sun with the other; **from this window too is a view of the sea beneath, this time at a safe distance**.

12. Pliny 2.17.11:

*Inde balinei cella frigidaria spatiosa et effusa, cuius in contrariis parietibus duo baptisteria velut eiecta sinuantur, abunde capacia **si mare in proximo cogites**. Adiacet unctorium, hypocauston, adiacet propnigeon balinei, mox duae cellae magis elegantes quam sumptuosae; **cohaeret calida piscina mirifica, ex qua natantes mare adspiciunt**,*

Then comes the cooling-room of the bath, which is large and spacious and has two curved baths built out of opposite walls; these are quite large enough **if you consider that the sea is so near**. Next come the oiling-room, the furnace-room, and the hot-room for the bath, and then two rest-rooms, beautifully decorated in a simple style, **leading to the heated swimming-bath which is much admired and from which swimmers can see the sea**.

13. Pliny 2.17.14-15:

*Gestatio buxo aut rore marino, ubi deficit buxus, ambitur; nam buxus, qua parte defenditur tectis, abunde viret; aperto caelo apertoque vento et quamquam longinqua aspergine maris inarescit.*

All round the drive runs a hedge of box, or rosemary to fill any gaps, for box will flourish extensively where it is sheltered by the buildings, but dries up if exposed in the open to the wind and salt spray even at a distance.

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Victoria Hodges CAMWS 2020 Latin Poetry 2 3A

Rutgers University Classics

victoria.hodges@rutgers.edu

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