

Sadistic smiles: pleasure and suffering in the poetry of Tibullus

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BOOK ONE**Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.1**

Vos quoque, **felicis** quondam, nunc pauperis agri 19

Quam **iuuat** inmites uentos audire cubantem, 45

Non pudet et rixas inseruisse **iuuat**, 74

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.2

Excitet, **infelix** dum requiescit amor, 4

At tu, qui **laetus rides** mala nostra, caueto, 89

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.3

no happy vocabulary

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.4

Quisquis es, **infelix** urgeat ossa lapis. 60

Cum mea ridebunt uana magisteria. 84

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.5

Et precibus **felix** utitur ille meis. 18-19

At mihi **felicem** uitam, si salua fuisses,

At **iuuet** in tota me nihil esse domo. 30

Saepe aliam tenui sed iam cum **gaudia** adirem 39

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.6

Hanc animo **gaudente** uident iuuenumque cateruae 81

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.7

no happy vocabulary

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.8

Non lapis hanc gemmaeque **iuuant**, quae frigore sola 39

Saepe etiam lacrimas fertur **risisse** dolentis 73

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.9

Rideat adsiduis uxor inulta dolis, 54

At tua tum me poena **iuuet**, Venerique merenti 81

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 1.10

Sit lacrimas mouisse satis: quater ille **beatus**, 63

BOOK TWO**Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 2.1**

Cui tulit hesterni **gaudia** nocte Venus. 12

Euentura precor. uident ut **felicibus** extis 25

Felix cui placidus leniter adflat Amor. 80

aut etiam sibi quisque palam, nam turba **iocosa** 85

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 2.2

Nec tibi gemmarum quicquid **felicibus** Indis 15

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 2.3

Felices olim, Veneri cum fertur aperte 29

At mihi **laeta** trahant Samiae conuiuia testae 47

Eheu diuitibus uideo **gaudere** puellas: 49

Mitis in umbrosa **gaudia** ualle Venus. 72

Heu miserum, laxam quid **iuuat** esse togam? 78

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 2.4.41

Quin tua tunc iuuenes spectent incendia **laeti** 41

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 2.5.82

Omine quo **felix** et satur annus erit. 82

Laurus ubi bona signa dedit, **gaudete** coloni: 83

Et faueo morbo cum **iuuat** ipse dolor. 110

Albius Tibullus, Elegiae 2.6

no happy vocabulary

vocabulary of
happiness by poem

vocabulary of happiness by order of frequency and appearance

- ***felix*** :
 - fertility and/or prosperity four times (thrice in book 2; 1.1.19, 2.1.25, 2.2.15, 2.5.82).
 - success in love affairs six instances (four in book 1; 1.2.4, 1.4.60, 1.5.18, 1.5.19, 2.1.80, 2.3.29).
- ***iuvare*** :
 - in relation to the love affair (1.45).
 - fighting with his *puella* (instead of a state enemy; 1.74).
 - as a spectator—watching his beloved serve his patron (1.5.30).
 - watching another man be denied access to a *puella* (1.9.81).
 - woman who denies access to herself cannot feel pleasure from her gifts (1.8.39).
 - the *amator* lacks pleasure in the absence of access to his *puella* (2.3.78).
 - dolor* is pleasurable when it results in poetic output (2.5.110).
- ***gaudia*** :
 - refer explicitly to sexual pleasure (1.5.39, 2.1.12, 2.3.72).
 - momentary pleasures—men watching a woman suffer (1.6.81), women enjoying wealth (2.3.49), and farmers enjoying good omens (2.5.83).
- ***rideō*** :
 - laughter attends pleasure over another's suffering.
 - directed at the *poet-amator* (2.89, 4.84).
 - directed at other men (1.8.73, 1.9.54).
- In the absence of laughter in book 2, we see one instance of ***iocosus*** (merriment) in the context a festival (2.1.87).
- ***laetus*** :
 - collocated with *rideo*, to describe those deriding the *poet-amator's* suffering (1.2.89).
 - men are *laeti* as they watch a woman's house burn (2.4.41).
 - describes a humble banquet (2.3.47).
- ***beatus*** :
 - arguments replace military battles in the life of the *amator* (1.10.63).

The good life, 1.1 (ed. Maltby 2002)

1-5: Diuitias alius fuluo sibi congerat auro
et teneat culti iugera multa soli,
quem labor assiduus uicino terreat hoste,
Marta cui somnos classica pulsa fugent:
me mea paupertas uita traducat inert

19-20:
uos quoque, **felicis** quondam, nunc pauperis agri
custodes, fertis munera uestra, Lares;

41-42: non ego diuitias patrum fructusque requiro
quos tulit antiquo condita messis auo:

57-58: non ego laudari curo, mea Delia; tecu
dum modo sim, quaeso segnis inersque uocer.

1-5: Let another man gather for himself wealth in
yellow gold and let the man, whom constant work
frightens because an enemy is next door, for whom
the blowing trumpets of Mars drive away sleep, hold
many acres of cultivated land. Let my poverty carry
me through a life of inaction.

19-20: You also, Lares, guards of once **financially
fertile**, now poor land, take your gifts.

41-42: I do not feel the loss of my father's wealth and
crops which the crop stored by my ancient ancestor
produced.

57-58: I do not care to be praised, my Delia; as long as
I am with you, I beg to be called lazy and inactive.

1.1 (ed. Maltby 2002)

43-50:

parua seges **satis** est, **satis** est requiescere lecto
si licet et solito membra leuare toro.

quam **iuuat** immites uentos audire cubantem
et dominam tenero continuisse sinu

aut gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster
securum somnos igne **iuuante** sequi.

hoc mihi contingat: sit diues iure furorem
qui maris et **tristes** ferre potest pluuias.

78: dites despiciam despiciamque famem

A small field is **enough, enough** it is to rest on a bed if it is permitted and to relieve my limbs on a familiar couch. How **pleasing** it is to listen to severe winds while sleeping and to hold my mistress in a tender embrace or, when wintry Auster has poured forth sleet, to pursue sleep safe while a fire **brings pleasure**. May this happen to me: let the man be rich by right, who can bear the fury of the sea and **sad** rains.

the rich let me/I will disdain and let me/I will disdain hunger.

The limitations of the good life

1.10 (ed. Maltby 2002)

61-68:

sit **satis** e membris tenuem rescindere uestem,

 sit **satis** ornatus dissoluisse comae,

sit lacrimas mouisse **satis**. quater ille **beatus**

 quo tenera irato flere puella potest.

sed manibus qui saeuus erit, scutumque sudemque

 is gerat et miti sit procul a Venere.

at nobis, Pax alma, ueni spicamque teneto,

 perfluat et pomis candidus ante sinus.

61-68:

Let it be **enough** to rip thin clothing from her limbs, let it be **enough** to ruin her hair style, let it be **enough** to cause tears. **Happy** four times over is the man whose tender girlfriend can cry when he grows angry. But the man who will be savage with his hands, may he carry shield and stake and be far from gentle Venus. But to us, nourishing Peace, come and hold an ear of grain, and let your shining lap flow forth fruit in abundance.

(ed. Maltby 2002)

1.1.73-76:

nunc leuis est tractanda Venus dum frangere postes
non pudet et rixas inseruisse **iuuat**.
hic ego dux milesque bonus. uos, signa tubaeque,
ite procul; cupidis uulnera ferte uiris,

1.10.61-64:

sit **satis** e membris tenuem rescindere uestem,
sit **satis** ornatus dissoluisse comae,
sit lacrimas mouisse **satis**. quater ille **beatus**
quo tenera irato flere puella potest.

2.6.53-54:

tunc tibi, lena, precor diras: **satis** anxia uiuas,
mouerit e uotis pars quotacumque deos.

Now light Venus must be practised while there is no shame in breaking doors and mixing in fights. Here I am a good leader and soldier. You, standards and trumpets, go far away; bring the wounds to greedy men.

Let it be **enough** to rip thin clothing from her limbs, let it be **enough** to ruin her hair style, let it be **enough** to cause tears. **Happy** four times over is the man whose tender girlfriend can cry when he grows angry.

Lena, then I curse you: if you live **sufficiently** troubled, some small part of my prayers will have touched the gods.

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1.5 (ed. Maltby 2002)

17-22: omnia persolui: fruitur nunc alter amore,
et precibus **felix** utitur ille meis.
at mihi **felicem** uitam, si salua fuisses,
fingebam demens, sed renuente deo:
'rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos,
area dum messes sole calente teret;

29-34: illa regat cunctos, illi sint omnia curae,
at **iuuet** in tota me nihil esse domo.
huc ueniet Messalla meus, cui dulcia poma
Delia selectis detrahat arboribus,
et tantum uenerata uirum, hunc sedula curet,
huic paret atque epulas ipsa ministra gerat.'

I have fulfilled all the vows: now another man enjoys my love and that one happily takes advantage of my prayers. But for myself, out of my mind, I was fantasizing about a happy life if she had recovered, but a god did not will it: 'I will tend the fields, and my Delia will be there as guard over the produce, while the floor will thresh the harvest under a hot sun;...

Let her rule over everyone, let her have a care for everything, I would be pleased to be a nothing in the entire house. Here my Messalla will come, for whom Delia would pick sweet fruits from choice trees, and showing deep respect to so great a man, would busily look after him, she herself would prepare dinner for him and would act as server.'

Derision, punishment and pleasure (ed. Maltby 2002)

1.6.77-82: at quae fida fuit nulli, post uicta senecta
ducit inops tremula stamina torta manu,
firmaque conductis adnectit licia telis,
tractaque de niueo uellere ducta putat.
hanc animo **gaudente** uident iuuenumque cateruae
commemorant merito tot mala ferre senem.

But she who was faithful to no man, after she is
vanquished by old age draws out twisted threads with
a shaking hand, and ties the firm cross threads to the
rented looms, and clean the flocks of wool pulled from
the snowy fleece. She the troops of young men see
with joyful mind and recall that the old woman suffers
so many ills deservedly.

2.4.39-42: at tibi quae pretio uictos excludis amantes
eripiant partas uentus et ignis opes.
quin tua tunc iuuenes spectent incendia **laeti**
nec quisquam flammae sedulus addat aquam.

But from you, who shut out your lovers who are
defeated by the price, let wind and fire rob your
acquired wealth. Then indeed let young men watch
your flames and do not let any man hurry to put water
on the fire.

2.4.23-26: aut rapiam suspensa sacris insignia fanis:
sed Venus ante alios est uiolanda mihi:
illa malum facinus suadet dominamque rapacem
dat mihi: sacrilegas sentiat illa manus.

Or I will steal honors hung on the sacred shrines: but
Venus must be violated by me before the others: she
recommends an evil crime and she gives me a greedy
mistress: let her feel my sacriligious hands.

Derision, punishment and pleasure (ed. Maltby 2002)

1.9.53-56:

at te, qui puerum donis corrumpere es ausus,
 rideat assiduis uxor inulta dolis
et, cum furtiuo iuuenem lassauerit usu,
 tecum interposita languida ueste cubet.

In 1.8.71-76:

hic Marthus quondam miseros ludebat amantes,
 nescius ultorem post caput esse deum.
saepe etiam lacrimas fertur **risisse** dolentis
 et cupidum ficta detinuisse mora.
nunc omnes odit fastus, nunc displicet illi
 quaecumque opposita est ianua dura sera.

But you, who have dared to corrupt the boy with gifts,
let your wife laugh at you with constant deceits
unpunished and, when she has worn out a young man
with secret enjoyment, let her lie with you tired with
her clothes on.

This Marthus once was toying with wretched lovers,
not aware that an avenging god was behind him.
Often he is said to have laughed even at the tears of a
sufferer and to have held up the desirer with a fake
delay. Now he hates all pride, now whatever hard
door stands in his way with a bolt, displeases him.

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