

Ovid Fasti



Ovid: Fasti

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Translator's Note:

Ovid's numerous references throughout the *Fasti* to the rising and setting of stars and constellations, further detailed in the relevant index entries, have been checked using a computer-based astronomical program (Redshift 4) set to Rome in 8AD. The Kalends, Nones, Ides, and major Festivals of each month are identified in the headings against the relevant days.

Book I

Book I:Introduction

I'll speak of divisions of time throughout the Roman year,
Their origins, and the stars that set beneath the earth and
rise.

[Germanicus](#) Caesar, accept this work, with a calm face,
And direct the voyage of my uncertain vessel:
Not scorning this slight honour, but like a god,
Receiving with favour the homage I pay you.
Here you'll revisit the sacred rites in the ancient texts,
And review by what events each day is marked.
And here you'll find the festivals of your House,
And see your [father](#)'s and your [grandfather](#)'s name:
The prizes they won, that illustrate the calendar,
That you and your brother [Drusus](#) will also win.
Let others sing Caesar's wars: I'll sing his altars,
And those days that he added to the sacred rites.
Approve my attempt to tell of your family honours,
And banish the apprehension from my heart.
Be kind to me, and you'll empower my verse:
My wit will stand or fall by your glance.
My page trembles, judged by a learned prince,
As if it were being read by Clarian [Apollo](#).
We know the eloquence of your skilful voice,
Taking up civil arms for anxious defendants:
And we know, when your efforts turn to [poetry](#),
How copiously the river of your genius flows.

If it's right and lawful, a poet, guide the poet's reins,
So beneath your auspices the whole year may be happy.
When Rome's [founder](#) established the calendar
He determined there'd be ten months in every year.
You knew more about swords than stars, [Romulus](#), surely,
Since conquering neighbours was your chief concern.
Yet there's a logic that might have possessed him,
Caesar, and that might well justify his error.
He held that the time it takes for a mother's womb
To produce a child, was sufficient for his year.
For as many months also, after her husband's funeral,
A widow maintains signs of mourning in her house.
So [Quirinus](#) in his ceremonial robes had that in view,
When he decreed his year to an unsophisticated people.
[Mars](#)' month, March, was the first, and [Venus](#)' April
second:
She was the mother of the race, and he its father.
The third month May took its name from the old
(*maiores*),
The fourth, June, from the young (*iuvenes*), the rest were
numbered.
But [Numa](#) did not neglect [Janus](#) and the ancestral shades,
And therefore added two months to the ancient ten.
Yet lest you're unaware of the laws of the various days,
Know [Dawn](#) doesn't always bring the same observances.
Those days are unlawful (*nefastus*) when the praetor's
three words
May not be spoken, lawful (*fastus*) when law may be
enacted.

But don't assume each day maintains its character throughout:

What's now a lawful day may have been unlawful at dawn:

Since once the sacrifice has been offered, all is acceptable,
And the honoured praetor is then allowed free speech.

There are those days, *comitiales*, when the people vote:
And the market days that always recur in a nine-day cycle.

The worship of [Juno](#) claims our Italy's *Kalends*,

While a larger white ewe-lamb falls to [Jupiter](#) on the *Ides*:
The *Nones* though lack a tutelary god. After all these days,
(Beware of any error!), the next day will be ill-omened.

The ill-omen derives from past events: since on those days
Rome suffered heavy losses in military defeat.

Let these words above be applied to the whole calendar,
So I'll not be forced to break my thread of narrative.

Book I: January 1: Kalends

See how [Janus](#) appears first in my song
To announce a happy year for you, [Germanicus](#).
Two-headed Janus, source of the silently gliding year,
The only god who is able to see behind him,
Be favourable to the leaders, whose labours win
Peace for the fertile earth, peace for the seas:
Be favourable to the senate and Roman people,
And with a nod unbar the shining temples.
A prosperous day dawns: favour our thoughts and speech!
Let auspicious words be said on this auspicious day.
Let our ears be free of lawsuits then, and banish
Mad disputes now: you, malicious tongues, cease
wagging!
See how the air shines with fragrant fire,
And [Cilician](#) grains crackle on lit hearths!
The flame beats brightly on the temple's gold,
And spreads a flickering light on the shrine's roof.
Spotless garments make their way to [Tarpeian](#) Heights,
And the crowd wear the colours of the festival:
Now the new rods and axes lead, new purple glows,
And the distinctive ivory chair feels fresh weight.
Heifers that grazed the grass on [Faliscan](#) plains,
Unbroken to the yoke, bow their necks to the axe.
When [Jupiter](#) watches the whole world from his hill,
Everything that he sees belongs to Rome.
Hail, day of joy, and return forever, happier still,

Worthy to be cherished by a race that rules the world.
But two-formed Janus what god shall I say you are,
Since Greece has no divinity to compare with you?
Tell me the reason, too, why you alone of all the gods
Look both at what's behind you and what's in front.
While I was musing, writing-tablets in hand,
The house seemed brighter than it was before.
Then suddenly, sacred and marvellous, Janus,
In two-headed form, showed his twin faces to my eyes.
Terrified, I felt my hair grow stiff with fear
And my heart was frozen with sudden cold.
Holding his stick in his right hand, his key in the left,
He spoke these words to me from his forward looking
face:

‘Learn, without fear, what you seek, poet who labours
Over the days, and remember my speech.
The ancients called me [Chaos](#) (since I am of the first
world):

Note the long ages past of which I shall tell.
The clear air, and the three other elements,
Fire, water, earth, were heaped together as one.
When, through the discord of its components,
The mass dissolved, and scattered to new regions,
Flame found the heights: air took a lower place,
While earth and sea sank to the furthest depth.
Then I, who was a shapeless mass, a ball,
Took on the appearance, and noble limbs of a god.
Even now, a small sign of my once confused state,
My front and back appear just the same.

Listen to the other reason for the shape you query,
So you know of it, and know of my duties too.
Whatever you see: sky, sea, clouds, earth,
All things are begun and ended by my hand.
Care of the vast world is in my hands alone,
And mine the governance of the turning pole.
When I choose to send Peace, from tranquil houses,
Freely she walks the roads, and ceaselessly:
The whole world would drown in bloodstained slaughter,
If rigid barriers failed to hold war in check.
I sit at Heaven's Gate with the gentle [Hours](#),
[Jupiter](#) himself comes and goes at my discretion.
So I'm called [Janus](#). Yet you'd smile at the names
The priest gives me, offering cake and meal sprinkled
With salt: on his sacrificial lips I'm [Patulcius](#),
And then again I'm called [Clusius](#).
So with a change of name unsophisticated antiquity
Chose to signify my changing functions.
I've explained my meaning. Now learn the reason for my
shape:
Though already you partially understand it.
Every doorway has two sides, this way and that,
One facing the crowds, and the other the [Lares](#):
And like your doorkeeper seated at the threshold,
Who watches who goes and out and who goes in,
So I the doorkeeper of the heavenly court,
Look towards both east and west at once.
You see [Hecate](#)'s faces turned in three directions,
To guard the crossroads branching several ways:

And I, lest I lose time twisting my neck around,
Am free to look both ways without moving.’
So he spoke, and promised by a look,
That he’d not begrudge it if I asked for more.
I gained courage and thanked the god fearlessly,
And spoke these few words, gazing at the ground:
‘Tell me why the new-year begins with cold,
When it would be better started in the spring?
Then all’s in flower, then time renews its youth,
And the new buds swell on the fertile vines:
The trees are covered in newly formed leaves,
And grass springs from the surface of the soil:
Birds delight the warm air with their melodies,
And the herds frisk and gambol in the fields.
Then the sun’s sweet, and brings the swallow, unseen,
To build her clay nest under the highest roof beam.
Then the land’s cultivated, renewed by the plough.
That time rightly should have been called New Year.’
I said all this, questioning: he answered briefly
And swiftly, casting his words in twin verses:
‘Midwinter’s the first of the new sun, last of the old:
[Phoebus](#) and the year have the same inception.’
Then I asked why the first day wasn’t free
Of litigation. ‘Know the cause,’ said Janus,
‘I assigned the nascent time to business affairs,
Lest by its omen the whole year should be idle.
For that reason everyone merely toys with their skills,
And does no more than give witness to their work.’
Next I said: ‘Why, while I placate other gods, Janus,

Do I bring the wine and incense first to you?’
He replied: ‘So that through me, who guard the threshold,
You can have access to whichever god you please.’
‘But, why are joyful words spoken on the Kalends,
And why do we give and receive good wishes?’
Then leaning on the staff he gripped in his right hand,
He answered: ‘Omens attend upon beginnings.’
Anxious, your ears are alert at the first word,
And the augur interprets the first bird that he sees.
When the temples and ears of the gods are open,
The tongue speaks no idle prayer, words have weight.’
Janus ended. Maintaining only a short silence
I followed his final words with my own:
‘What do the gifts of dates and dried figs mean’,
I said, ‘And the honey glistening in a snow-white jar?’
‘For the omen,’ he said, ‘so that events match the savour,
So the course of the year might be sweet as its start.’
‘I see why sweet things are given. Explain the reason
For gifts of money, so I mistake no part of your festival.’
He laughed and said: ‘How little you know of your age,
If you think that honey’s sweeter to it than gold!
I’ve hardly seen anyone, even in Saturn’s reign,
Who in his heart didn’t find money sweet.
Love of it grew with time, and is now at its height,
Since it would be hard put to increase much further.
Wealth is valued more highly now, than in those times
When people were poor, and Rome was new,
When a small hut held [Romulus](#), son of Mars,
And reeds from the river made a scanty bed.

Jupiter complete could barely stand in his low shrine,
And the lightning bolt in his right hand was of clay.
They decorated the Capitol with leaves, not gems,
And the senators grazed their sheep themselves.
There was no shame in taking one's rest on straw,
And pillowing one's head on the cut hay.
Cincinnatus left the plough to judge the people,
And the slightest use of silver plate was forbidden.
But ever since Fortune, here, has raised her head,
And Rome has brushed the heavens with her brow,
Wealth has increased, and the frantic lust for riches,
So that those who possess the most seek for more.
They seek to spend, compete to acquire what's spent,
And so their alternating vices are nourished.
Like one whose belly is swollen with dropsy
The more they drink, they thirstier they become.
Wealth is the value now: riches bring honours,
Friendship too: everywhere the poor are hidden.
And you still ask me if gold's useful in augury,
And why old money's a delight in our hands?
Once men gave bronze, now gold grants better omens,
Old money, conquered, gives way to the new.
We too delight in golden temples, however much
We approve the antique: such splendour suits a god.
We praise the past, but experience our own times:
Yet both are ways worthy of being cultivated.'
He ended his statement. But again calmly, as before,
I spoke these words to the god who holds the key.
'Indeed I've learned much: but why is there a ship's figure

On one side of the copper *as*, a twin shape on the other?
‘You might have recognised me in the double-image’,
He said, ‘if length of days had not worn the coin away.
The reason for the ship is that the god of the sickle
Wandering the globe, by ship, reached the Tuscan river.
I remember how [Saturn](#) was welcomed in this land:
Driven by [Jupiter](#) from the celestial regions.
From that day the people kept the title, Saturnian,
And the land was [Latium](#), from the god’s hiding (*latente*)
there.
But a pious posterity stamped a ship on the coin,
To commemorate the new god’s arrival.
I myself inhabited the ground on the left
Passed by sandy [Tiber](#)’s gentle waves.
Here, where Rome is now, uncut forest thrived,
And all this was pasture for scattered cattle.
My citadel was the hill the people of this age
Call by my name, dubbing it the [Janiculum](#).
I reigned then, when earth could bear the gods,
And divinities mingled in mortal places.
[Justice](#) had not yet fled from human sin,
(She was the last deity to leave the earth),
Shame without force, instead of fear, ruled the people,
And it was no effort to expound the law to the lawful.
I’d nothing to do with war: I guarded peace and doorways,
And this,’ he said, showing his key, ‘was my weapon.’
The god closed his lips. Then I opened mine,
Eliciting with my voice the voice of the god:
‘Since there are so many archways, why do you stand

Sacredly in one, here where [your](#) temple adjoins two *fora*?
Stroking the beard falling on his chest with his hand,
He at once retold the warlike acts of [Oebalian Tatius](#),
And how the treacherous keeper, [Tarpeia](#), bribed with
bracelets,
Led the silent [Sabines](#) to the heights of the citadel.
'Then,' he said, 'a steep slope, the one by which you
Now descend, led to the valleys and the *fora*.
Even now the enemy had reached the gate, from which
Saturn's envious daughter, [Juno](#), had removed the bars.
Fearing to engage in battle with so powerful a goddess,
I cunningly employed an example of my own art,
And by my power I opened the mouths of the springs,
And suddenly let loose the pent-up waters:
But first I threw sulphur into the watery channels,
So boiling liquid would close off that path to Tatius.
This action performed and the Sabines repulsed,
The place took on its secure aspect as before.
An altar to me was raised, linked to a little shrine:
Here the grain and cake is burnt in its flames'
'But why hide in peace, and open your gates in war?'
He swiftly gave me the answer that I sought:
'My unbarred gate stands open wide, so that when
The people go to war the return path's open too.'
I bar it in peacetime so peace cannot depart:
And by Caesar's will I shall be long closed.'
He spoke, and raising his eyes that looked both ways,
He surveyed whatever existed in the whole world.

There was peace, and already a cause of triumph,
[Germanicus](#),
The [Rhine](#) had yielded her waters up in submission to you.
Janus, make peace and the agents of peace eternal,
And grant the author may never abandon his work.
Now for what I've learned from the calendar itself:
The senate dedicated two temples on this day.
The island the river surrounds with divided waters,
Received [Aesculapius](#), whom [Coronis](#) bore to [Apollo](#).
[Jupiter](#) too shares it: one place holds both, and the temples
Of the mighty grandfather and the grandson are joined.

Book I: January 3

What prevents me speaking of the stars, and their rising
And setting? That was a part of what I've promised.
Happy minds that first took the trouble to consider
These things, and to climb to the celestial regions!
We can be certain that they raised their heads
Above the failings and the homes of men, alike.
Neither wine nor lust destroyed their noble natures,
Nor public business nor military service:
They were not seduced by trivial ambitions,
Illusions of bright glory, nor hunger for great wealth.
They brought the distant stars within our vision,
And subjected the heavens to their genius.
So we reach the sky: there's no need for [Ossa](#) to be piled
On [Olympus](#), or [Pelion](#)'s summit touch the highest stars.
Following these masters I too will measure out the skies,

And attribute the wheeling signs to their proper dates.
So, when the third night before the Nones has come,
And the earth is drenched, sprinkled with heavenly dew,
You'll search for the claws of the eight-footed [Crab](#) in
vain:
It will plunge headlong beneath the western waves.

Book I: January 5: Nones

Should the Nones be here, rain from dark clouds
Will be the sign, at the rising of the [Lyre](#).

Book I: January 9

Add four successive days to the Nones and [Janus](#)
Must be propitiated on the [Agonal](#) day.
The day may take its name from the girded priest
At whose blow the god's sacrifice is felled:
Always, before he stains the naked blade with hot blood,
He asks if he should (*agatne*), and won't unless
commanded.
Some believe that the day is called *Agonal* because
The sheep do not come to the altar but are driven
(*agantur*).
Others think the ancients called this festival *Agnalia*,
'Of the lambs', dropping a letter from its usual place.
Or because the victim fears the knife mirrored in the
water,
The day might be so called from the creature's agony?

It may also be that the day has a Greek name
From the games (*agones*) that were held in former times.
And in ancient speech *agonia* meant a sheep,
And this last reason in my judgement is the truth.
Though the meaning is uncertain, the king of the rites,
Must appease the gods with the mate of a woolly ewe.
It's called the victim because a victorious hand fells it:
And *hostia*, sacrifice, from hostile conquered foes.
Cornmeal, and glittering grains of pure salt,
Were once the means for men to placate the gods.
No foreign ship had yet brought liquid myrrh
Extracted from tree's bark, over the ocean waves:
Euphrates had not sent incense, nor India balm,
And the threads of yellow saffron were unknown.
The altar was happy to fume with [Sabine](#) juniper,
And the laurel burned with a loud crackling.
He was rich, whoever could add violets
To garlands woven from meadow flowers.
The knife that bares the entrails of the stricken bull,
Had no role to perform in the sacred rites.
[Ceres](#) was first to delight in the blood of the greedy sow,
Her crops avenged by the rightful death of the guilty
creature,
She learned that in spring the grain, milky with sweet
juice,
Had been uprooted by the snouts of bristling pigs.
The swine were punished: terrified by that example,
You should have spared the vine-shoots, he-goat.
Watching a goat nibbling a vine someone once

Vented their indignation in these words:
‘Gnaw the vine, goat! But when you stand at the altar
There’ll be something from it to sprinkle on your horns.’
Truth followed: [Bacchus](#), your enemy is given you
To punish, and sprinkled wine flows over its horns.
The sow suffered for her crime, and the goat for hers:
But what were you guilty of you sheep and oxen?
[Aristaeus](#) wept because he saw his bees destroyed,
And the hives they had begun left abandoned.
His azure mother, [Cyrene](#), could barely calm his grief,
But added these final words to what she said:
‘Son, cease your tears! [Proteus](#) will allay your loss,
And show you how to recover what has perished.
But lest he still deceives you by changing shape,
Entangle both his hands with strong fastenings.’
The youth approached the seer, who was fast asleep,
And bound the arms of that Old Man of the Sea.
He by his art altered his shape and transformed his face,
But soon reverted to his true form, tamed by the ropes.
Then raising his dripping head, and sea-green beard,
He said: ‘Do you ask how to recover your bees?
Kill a heifer and bury its carcass in the earth,
Buried it will produce what you ask of me.’
The shepherd obeyed: the beast’s putrid corpse
Swarmed: one life destroyed created thousands.
Death claims the sheep: wickedly, it grazed the vervain
That a pious old woman offered to the rural gods.
What creature’s safe if woolly sheep, and oxen
Broken to the plough, lay their lives on the altar?

Persia propitiates [Hyperion](#), crowned with rays,
With horses, no sluggish victims for the swift god.
Because a hind was once sacrificed to [Diana](#) the twin,
Instead of [Iphigeneia](#), a hind dies, though not for a virgin
now.

I have seen a dog's entrails offered to [Trivia](#) by [Sapaeans](#),
Whose homes border on your snows, Mount [Haemus](#).
A young ass too is sacrificed to the erect rural guardian,
[Priapus](#), the reason's shameful, but appropriate to the god.
Greece, you held a festival of ivy-berried [Bacchus](#),
That used to recur at the appointed time, every third
winter.

There too came the divinities who worshipped him as
[Lyaeus](#),

And whoever else was not averse to jesting,
The [Pans](#) and the young [Satyrs](#) prone to lust,
And the goddesses of rivers and lonely haunts.
And old [Silenus](#) came on a hollow-backed ass,
And crimson [Priapus](#) scaring the timid birds with his rod.
Finding a grove suited to sweet entertainment,
They lay down on beds of grass covered with cloths.

[Liber](#) offered wine, each had brought a garland,
A stream supplied ample water for the mixing.
There were [Naiads](#) too, some with uncombed flowing hair,
Others with their tresses artfully bound.

One attends with tunic tucked high above the knee,
Another shows her breast through her loosened robe:
One bares her shoulder: another trails her hem in the grass,
Their tender feet are not encumbered with shoes.

So some create amorous passion in the Satyrs,
Some in you, Pan, brows wreathed in pine.
You too Silenus, are on fire, insatiable lecher:
Wickedness alone prevents you growing old.
But crimson Priapus, guardian and glory of gardens,
Of them all, was captivated by [Lotis](#):
He desires, and prays, and sighs for her alone,
He signals to her, by nodding, woos her with signs.
But the lovely are disdainful, pride waits on beauty:
She laughed at him, and scorned him with a look.
It was night, and drowsy from the wine,
They lay here and there, overcome by sleep.
Tired from play, Lotis rested on the grassy earth,
Furthest away, under the maple branches.
Her lover stood, and holding his breath, stole
Furtively and silently towards her on tiptoe.
Reaching the snow-white nymph's secluded bed,
He took care lest the sound of his breath escaped.
Now he balanced on his toes on the grass nearby:
But she was still completely full of sleep.
He rejoiced, and drawing the cover from her feet,
He happily began to have his way with her.
Suddenly Silenus' ass braying raucously,
Gave an untimely bellow from its jaws.
Terrified the nymph rose, pushed Priapus away,
And, fleeing, gave the alarm to the whole grove.
But the over-expectant god with his rigid member,
Was laughed at by them all, in the moonlight.
The creator of that ruckus paid with his life,

And he's the sacrifice dear to the [Hellespontine](#) god.
You were chaste once, you birds, a rural solace,
You harmless race that haunt the woodlands,
Who build your nests, warm your eggs with your wings,
And utter sweet measures from your ready beaks,
But that is no help to you, because of your guilty tongues,
And the gods' belief that you reveal their thoughts.
Nor is that false: since the closer you are to the gods,
The truer the omens you give by voice and flight.
Though long untouched, birds were killed at last,
And the gods delighted in the informers' entrails.
So the white dove, torn from her mate,
Is often burned in the [Idalian](#) flames:
Nor did saving the [Capitol](#) benefit the goose,
Who yielded his liver on a dish to you, [Inachus](#)' daughter:
The cock is sacrificed at night to the Goddess, Night,
Because he summons the day with his waking cries,
While the bright constellation of the [Dolphin](#) rises
Over the sea, and shows his face from his native waters.

Book I: January 10

The following dawn marks the mid-point of winter.
And what remains will equal what has gone.

Book I: January 11: The Carmentalia

Quitting his couch, [Tithonus](#)' bride will witness
The high priest's rite of [Arcadian Carmentis](#).

The same light received you too, [Juturna](#), [Turnus](#)' sister,
There where the [Aqua Virgo](#) circles the [Campus](#).
Where shall I find the cause and nature of these rites?
Who will steer my vessel in mid-ocean?
Advise me, Carmentis, you who take your name from
song,
And favour my intent, lest I fail to honour you.
[Arcadia](#), that's older than the moon (if we believe it),
Takes its name from great [Arcas](#), [Callisto](#)'s son.
From there came [Evander](#), though of noble lineage on
both sides
Nobler through the blood of Carmentis, his sacred mother:
She, as soon as her spirit absorbed the heavenly fire,
Spoke true prophecies, filled with the god.
She had foretold trouble for her son and herself,
And many other things that time proved valid.
The mother's words proved only too true, when the youth
Banished with her, fled Arcady and his [Parrhasian](#) home.
While he wept, his mother said: 'Your fortune must
Be borne like a man (I beg you, check your tears).
It was fated so: it is no fault of yours that exiles you,
But a god: an offended god expelled you from the city.
You're not suffering rightful punishment, but divine
anger:
It is something in great misfortune to be free of guilt.
As each man's conscience is, so it harbours
Hope or fear in his heart, according to his actions.
Don't mourn these ills as if you were first to endure them:
Such storms have overwhelmed the mightiest people.

[Cadmus](#) endured the same, driven from the shores of Tyre,
Remaining an exile on Boeotian soil.

[Tydeus](#) endured the same, and Pagasean [Jason](#),
And others whom it would take too long to speak of.

To the brave every land is their country, as the sea
To fish, or every empty space on earth to the birds.

Wild storms never rage the whole year long,
And spring will yet come to you (believe me).’

Encouraged by his mother’s words, Evander
Sailed the waves and reached Hesperian lands.

Then, advised by wise Carmentis, he steered
His boat into a river, and stemmed the Tuscan stream.

She examined the river bank, bordered by Tarentum’s
shallows,

And the huts scattered over the desolate spaces:

And stood, as she was, with streaming hair, at the stern,
And fiercely stopped the steersman’s hand:

Then stretching out her arm to the right bank,

She stamped three times, wildly, on the pine deck:

Evander barely held her back with his hand,

Barely stopped her leaping swiftly to land.

‘Hail, you gods of the land we sought’ she cried,

‘And you the place that will give heaven new gods,

And you nymphs of the grove, and crowds of [Naiads](#)!

May the sight of you be a good omen for me and my son,

And happy be the foot that touches that shore!

Am I wrong, or will those hills raise mighty walls,

And from this earth all the earth receive its laws?

The whole world is one day promised to these hills:

Who could believe the place held such fate in store?
Soon [Trojan](#) ships will touch these shores,
And a woman, [Lavinia](#), shall cause fresh war.
[Pallas](#), dear grandson, why put on that fatal armour?
Put it on! No mean champion will avenge you.
Conquered [Troy](#) you will conquer, and rise from your fall,
Your very ruin overwhelms your enemy's houses.
Conquering flames consume [Neptune](#)'s Ilium!
Will that prevent its ashes rising higher than the world?
Soon pious [Aeneas](#) will bring the sacred Penates, and his
Sacred father here: [Vesta](#), receive the gods of Troy!
In time the same hand will guard the world and you,
And [a god](#) in person will hold the sacred rites.
The safety of the country will lie with [Augustus](#)' house:
It's decreed this family will hold the reins of empire.
So Caesar's son, Augustus, and grandson, [Tiberius](#),
Divine minds, will, despite his refusal, rule the country:
And as I myself will be hallowed at eternal altars,
So [Livia](#) shall be a new divinity, [Julia Augusta](#).'
When she had brought her tale to our own times,
Her prescient tongue halted in mid-speech.
Landing from the ships, Evander the exile stood
On Latian turf, happy for that to be his place of exile!
After a short time new houses were built,
And no Italian hill surpassed the [Palatine](#).
See, [Hercules](#) drives the Erythean cattle here:
Travelling a long track through the world:
And while he is entertained in the Tegean house,
The untended cattle wander the wide acres.

It was morning: woken from his sleep the Tyrrhene
Saw that two bulls were missing from the herd.
Seeking, he found no trace of the silently stolen beasts:
Fierce [Cacus](#) had dragged them backwards into his cave,
Cacus the infamous terror of the [Aventine](#) woods,
No slight evil to neighbours and travellers.
His aspect was grim, his body huge, with strength
To match: the monster's father was [Mulciber](#).
He housed in a vast cavern with deep recesses,
So hidden the wild creatures could barely find it.
Over the entrance hung human arms and skulls,
And the ground bristled with whitened bones.
[Jupiter](#)'s son was leaving, that part of his herd lost,
When the stolen cattle lowed loudly.
'I am recalled" he said, and following the sound,
As avenger, came through the woods to the evil cave,
Cacus had blocked the entrance with a piece of the hill:
Ten yoked oxen could scarcely have moved it.
Hercules leant with his shoulders, on which the world had
rested,
And loosened that vast bulk with the pressure.
A crash that troubled the air followed its toppling,
And the ground subsided under the falling weight.
Cacus at first fought hand to hand, and waged war,
Ferociously, with logs and boulders.
When that failed, beaten, he tried his father's tricks
And vomited roaring flames from his mouth:
You'd think [Typhoeus](#) breathed at every blast,
And sudden flares were hurled from [Etna](#)'s fires.

[Hercules](#) anticipated him, raised his triple-knotted club,
And swung it three, then four times, in his adversary's
face.

Cacus fell, vomiting smoke mingled with blood,
And beat at the ground, in dying, with his chest.
The victor offered one of the bulls to you, Jupiter,
And invited Evander and his countrymen to the feast,
And himself set up an altar, called *Maxima*, the Mightiest,
Where that part of the city takes its name from an ox.
Evander's mother did not hide that the time was near
When earth would be done with its hero, Hercules.
But the felicitous prophetess, as she lived beloved of the
gods,
Now a goddess herself, has this day of Janus' month as
hers.

Book I: January 13: Ides

On the Ides, in [Jove](#)'s temple, the chaste priest (the
[*Flamen Dialis*](#))

Offers to the flames the entrails of a gelded ram:
All the provinces were returned to our people,
And your grandfather was given the name [Augustus](#).
Read the legends on wax images in noble halls,
Such titles were never bestowed on men before.
Here Africa named her conqueror after herself:
Another witnesses to Isaurian or Cretan power tamed:
This makes glory from Numidians, that Messana,
While the next drew his fame from Numantia.

[Drusus](#) owed his death and glory to Germany –
Alas, how brief that great virtue was!
If Caesar was to take his titles from the defeated
He would need as many names as tribes on earth.
Some have earned fame from lone enemies,
Named from a [torque](#) won or a [raven](#)-companion.
[Pompey](#) the Great, your name reflects your deeds,
But he who defeated you was greater still.
No surname ranks higher than that of the [Fabii](#),
Their family was called [Greatest](#) for their services.
Yet these are human honours bestowed on all.
Augustus alone has a name that ranks with great Jove.
Sacred things are called *august* by the senators,
And so are temples duly dedicated by priestly hands.
From the same root comes the word *augury*,
And Jupiter *augments* things by his power.
May he augment our [leader](#)'s empire and his years,
And may the oak-leaf crown protect his doors.
By the god's auspices, may the father's omens
Attend the heir of so great a name, when he rules the
world.

Book I: January 15

When the third sun looks back on the past Ides,
The rites of [Carmenta](#), the [Parrhasian](#) goddess, are
repeated.
Formerly the Ausonian mothers drove in carriages
(*carpenta*)

(These I think were named after Evander's mother).
The honour was later taken from them, so every woman
Vowed not to renew their ungrateful husband's line,
And to avoid giving birth, unwisely, she expelled
Her womb's growing burden, using unpredictable force.
They say the senate reproved the wives for their coldness,
But restored the right which had been taken from them:
And they ordered two like festivals for the Tegean mother,
To promote the birth of both boys and girls.
It is not lawful to take leather into her shrine,
Lest the pure hearths are defiled by sacrifice.
If you love ancient ritual, listen to the prayers,
And you'll hear names you've never heard before.
They placate [Porrima](#) and [Postverta](#), whether sisters,
Maenalian goddess, or companions in your exile:
The one thought to sing of what happened long ago
(*porro*),
The other of what is to happen hereafter (*venturum
postmodo*).

Book I: January 16

Radiant one, the next day places you in your snow-white
shrine,
Near where lofty [Moneta](#) lifts her noble stairway:
[Concord](#), you will gaze on the Latin crowd's prosperity,
Now sacred hands have established you.
[Camillus](#), conqueror of the Etruscan people,
Vowed your ancient temple and kept his vow.

His reason was that the commoners had armed themselves,
Seceding from the nobles, and Rome feared their power.

This latest reason was a better one: revered [Leader](#),
Germany

Offered up her dishevelled tresses, at your command:
From that, you dedicated the spoils of a defeated race,
And built a shrine to the goddess that you yourself
worship.

A goddess [your mother](#) honoured by her life, and by an
altar,

She alone worthy to share great [Jupiter](#)'s couch.

Book I: January 17

When this day is over, [Phoebus](#), you will leave [Capricorn](#),
And take your course through the sign of the [Water-
Bearer](#).

Book I: January 23

Seven days from now when the sun sinks in the waves,
The [Lyre](#) will no longer shine in the heavens.

Book I: January 24

After Lyra vanishes into obscurity, the fire that gleams
At the heart of the [Lion](#) will be sunk in the sea at dawn.
I have searched the calendar three or four times,
But nowhere found the Day of Sowing:

Seeing this the Muse said: 'That day is set by the priests,
Why are you looking for moveable days in the calendar?'
Though the day of the feast's uncertain, its time is known,
When the seed has been sown and the land's productive.'
You bullocks, crowned with garlands, stand at the full
trough,
Your labour will return with the warmth of spring.
Let the farmer hang the toil-worn plough on its post:
The wintry earth dreaded its every wound.
Steward, let the soil rest when the sowing is done,
And let the men who worked the soil rest too.
Let the village keep festival: farmers, purify the village,
And offer the yearly cakes on the village hearths.
Propitiate Earth and [Ceres](#), the mothers of the crops,
With their own corn, and a pregnant sow's entrails.
Ceres and Earth fulfil a common function:
One supplies the chance to bear, the other the soil.
'Partners in toil, you who improved on ancient days
Replacing acorns with more useful foods,
Satisfy the eager farmers with full harvest,
So they reap a worthy prize from their efforts.
Grant the tender seeds perpetual fruitfulness,
Don't let new shoots be scorched by cold snows.
When we sow, let the sky be clear with calm breezes,
Sprinkle the buried seed with heavenly rain.
Forbid the birds, that prey on cultivated land,
To ruin the cornfields in destructive crowds.
You too, spare the sown seed, you ants,
So you'll win a greater prize from the harvest.

Meanwhile let no scaly mildew blight its growth,
And let no bad weather blanch its colour,
May it neither shrivel, nor be over-ripe
And ruined by its own rich exuberance.
May the fields be free of darnel that harms the eyesight,
And no barren wild oats grow on cultivated soil.
May the land yield rich interest, crops of wheat
And barley, and spelt roasted twice in the flames.’
I offer this for you, farmers, do so yourselves,
And may the two goddesses grant our prayers.
War long gripped mankind: the sword was more useful
Than the plough: the ox yielded to the warhorse:
Hoes were idle, mattocks made into javelins,
And heavy rakes were forged into helmets.
Thanks to the gods, and your house, under your feet
War has long been bound in chains.
Let the ox be yoked, seed lie beneath ploughed soil:
Peace fosters [Ceres](#), and Ceres is child of [Peace](#).

Book I: January 27

On this sixth day before the approaching Kalends,
A temple was dedicated to the [Dioscuri](#).
Brothers of the divine race founded it
For those divine brothers, by [Juturna](#)’s lakes.

Book I: January 30

My song has led to the altar of [Peace](#) itself.

This day is the second from the month's end.
Come, Peace, your graceful tresses wreathed
With laurel of [Actium](#): stay gently in this world.
While we lack enemies, or cause for triumphs:
You'll be a greater glory to our leaders than war.
May the soldier be armed to defend against arms,
And the trumpet blare only for processions.
May the world far and near fear the sons of [Aeneas](#),
And let any land that feared Rome too little, love her.
Priests, add incense to the peaceful flames,
Let a shining sacrifice fall, brow wet with wine,
And ask the gods who favour pious prayer
That the house that brings peace, may so endure.
Now the first part of my labour is complete,
And as its month ends, so does this book.

Book II

Book II: Introduction

January is done, and the year advances with my song.
As the second month runs, so let the second book.
For the first time, my verses, sail with more canvas,
Your theme, I recall, has been slight till now.
I found you ready enough servants of love,
When I toyed with poetry in my first youth,
Now I sing of sacred rites and calendar days:
Who'd have thought it would lead to this?
Here's my soldiering: I bear the weapons I can,
My right hand isn't useless for every service.
If I can't hurl the javelin with a mighty throw,
Nor sit astride a war-horse's back,
No helmet on my head, no sharp sword slung,
(Any man can be handy with those weapons)
Still I promote your titles with a dutiful heart,
[Caesar](#), and your progress towards glory.
Come, then, and cast your eye on my gift awhile,
If pacifying enemies leaves you a moment free.
The fathers of Rome called purification *februa*
Many things still indicate that meaning for the word.
The high priests ask the King and the [Flamen](#)
For woollen cloths, called *februa* in the ancient tongue.
When houses are cleansed, the roasted grain and salt,
The *lictor* receives, are called by the same name.
The same name too is given to the branch, cut from a pure

Tree, whose leaves wreath the priests' holy brows.
I've seen the priest's wife (the *Flaminica*) ask for *februa*,
And at her request she was given a branch of pine.
In short anything used to purify our bodies,
Had that title in the days of our hairy ancestors.
The month is so called, because the [Luperci](#)
Cleanse the earth with strips of purifying hide,
Or because the time is pure, having placated the dead,
When the days devoted to the departed are over.
Our ancestors believed every sin and cause of evil
Could be erased by rites of purification.
Greece set the example: she considered the guilty
Could rid themselves of sins by being purified.
[Peleus](#) cleansed [Patroclus](#), and [Acastus](#) Peleus
From the blood of [Phocus](#), by [Haemonian](#) waters.
[Medea](#), drawn through the air by bridled dragons,
Was undeservedly welcomed by trusting [Aegeus](#).
[Alcmaeon](#) said to [Achelous](#): 'Absolve my sin',
And he did absolve that son of [Amphiarus](#).
Ah! Too facile, to think the dark guilt of murder
Could be washed away by river water!
Yet (lest you err, through ignorance of their old order)
Though January is the first month, and was before,
February that follows was once last in the ancient year.
And your worship, [Terminus](#), closed the sacred rites.
The month of [Janus](#) came first, being the entrance (*janua*):
This month was last, sacred to the last rites of the dead.
Afterwards the [Decemvirs](#) are thought to have brought
together

These months that had been parted by a wide interval of time.

Book II: February 1: Kalends

At the start of the month they say that [Juno](#) the Saviour (*Sospita*),

Neighbouring the [Phrygian Mother](#), was honoured with new shrines.

If you ask where those temples, dedicated to the goddess On the Kalends, are now, they are fallen with the lapse of time.

All the rest would have similarly fallen in ruins,

But for the far-sighted concern of our sacred [Leader](#),

Under whose rule the shrines are untouched by age:

Not satisfied with mere men, he also serves the gods.

Pious one, you who build and repair the temples,

May there be mutual care between you and the gods!

May the gods grant you the length of years you grant them,

And may they stand on guard before your house!

On this day too the grove of Avernus is crowded,

Near where [Tiber](#), from afar, meets the ocean waves.

At [Numa](#)'s sanctuary, and the [Thunderer](#)'s on the [Capitol](#),

And on the summit of Jove's citadel, a sheep is sacrificed.

Often the sky, covered with cloud, rains heavily,

Or the earth is hidden under a blanket of snow.

Book II: February 2

When the next sun looses the jewelled yoke
From his bright horses, before he sinks in the western
waves,
Looking up at night towards the stars, someone will say:
'Where is the [Lyre](#), that shone brightly last night?'
And searching for the Lyre, he will see that the [Lion](#)'s
back
Has also plunged suddenly into the wide waters.

Book II: February 3

The [Dolphin](#) that you saw lately, studded with stars,
Will escape your gaze on the following night:
He was a happy go-between in love's intrigues,
Or he carried the Lesbian lyre and its master.
What land or sea does not know of [Arion](#)?
He could hold back the running waters with his singing.
Often the wolf seeking a lamb was halted by his voice,
Often the lamb stopped, in fleeing the ravening wolf.
Often hare and hounds rested in the same covert,
And the deer on the rock stood still near the lioness,
And the chattering crow perched with [Pallas](#)' owl,
Without a quarrel, and the dove united with the hawk.
They say that [Diana](#) has often stood entranced at your
music,
Tuneful Arion, as if it were played by her brother's hand.
Arion's fame had filled the cities of Sicily,

And charmed the Italian shores with the sound of his lyre:
Travelling back from there, he boarded a ship
Carrying with him the wealth won by his art.
Unhappy one, perhaps you feared the wind and waves,
But the sea, in truth, was safer for you than your ship.
Since the steersman stood there with naked blade,
And the rest of that crew of conspirators were armed.
Why draw that blade? Seaman, steer the wandering vessel:
That weapon is not appropriate in your hands.
Trembling with fear, Arion said: 'I don't plead for life,
But let me take up my lyre and play a little.'
They granted it, laughing at the delay. He took the wreath
That might have graced your tresses, [Phoebus](#):
Put on his robe, twice-stained with Tyrian purple:
And, plucked by his thumb, the strings gave out their
music,
Such a melody as the swan's mournful measures,
When the cruel shaft has transfixed its brow.
At once, he plunged, fully clothed into the waves:
The water, leaping, splashed the sky-blue stern.
Then (beyond belief) they say a dolphin
Yielded its back to the unaccustomed weight.
Sitting there, Arion gripped the lyre, and paid his fare
In song, soothing the ocean waves with his singing.
The gods see good deeds: [Jupiter](#) took the [dolphin](#)
And ordered its constellation to contain nine stars.

Book II: February 5: Nones

Now I wish for a thousand tongues, and that spirit
Of yours, [Homer](#), you who celebrated [Achilles](#),
While I sing the sacred Nones in alternating verse.
This is the greatest honour granted to the calendar.
My wit deserts me: the burden's beyond my strength,
This special day above all I am to sing.
Why did I wish, foolishly, to lay so great a task
On elegiac verse? This was a theme for the heroic stanza.
Sacred [Father of the Country](#), this title has been conferred
On you, by the senate, the people, and by us, the knights.
Events had already granted it. Tardily you received
Your true title, you'd long been Father of the World.
You have on earth the name that Jupiter owns to
In high heaven: you are father of men, he of gods.
[Romulus](#), give way: Caesar by his care makes your walls
Mighty: you made such as [Remus](#) could leap across.
[Tatius](#), and the little towns of [Cures](#) and [Caenina](#),
Knew you: under this Leader all the sun sees is Roman.
You owned a little patch of conquered land:
Caesar possesses all beneath Jupiter's heavens.
You raped married women: under [Caesar](#) they are ordered
To be chaste: you permitted the guilty your grove: he
forbids them.
Force was acceptable to you: under Caesar the laws
flourish.
You had the title Master: he bears the name of Prince.
Remus accused you, while he pardons his enemies.
Your [father](#) deified you: he deified his [father](#).
Already [Aquarius](#) shows himself to the waist,

And pours the gods flowing nectar mixed with water,
And you who shrink from the north wind, be pleased,
A softer breeze is blowing from the West.

Book II: February 9

Five days later, the [Morning Star](#) has lifted its brightness
From the ocean waves, and these are the first days of
spring.

But don't be misled: cold days are still in wait for you,
Departing winter leaves sharp traces behind.

Book II: February 11

On the third night, you will see straight away
That the Bear Keeper [Bootes](#)' feet have emerged.

[Callisto](#) was one of the [Hamadryads](#), among
The sacred band of the huntress [Diana](#).

She laid her hand on the goddess' bow, saying:
'Bear witness, bow I touch, to my virginity.'

[Cynthia](#) praised the vow: 'Keep faith with that
And you will be first among my companions.'

She'd have kept her vow, if she'd not been beautiful:
She was wary of men, but sinned with [Jupiter](#).

[Phoebe](#) had hunted many creatures through the woods,
And was returning home at noon, or shortly after.

As she reached a grove (a dense grove dark with holm-oak
With a deep fount of cool water at its centre),

She said: '[Arcadian](#) virgin, let's bathe here in the woods.'

The girl blushed at the false title of virgin.
Diana spoke to the nymphs, and they undressed.
Callisto was ashamed, and gave bashful signs of delay.
Removing her tunic, her swollen belly
Gave clear witness to the burden she carried.
The goddess spoke to her, saying: ‘Daughter of [Lycaon](#),
Oath-breaker, leave the virgin band, do not defile pure
waters.’
Ten times the moon completed her full orb,
When she, thought to be virgin, became a mother.
[Juno](#), wounded, raged, and altered the girl’s form.
What would you? [Jupiter](#) had ravished her against her
will.
And seeing in his victim a shameful animal face,
Juno said: ‘Let Jupiter enjoy her embraces now!’
She who had been loved by highest Jove,
Roamed the wild mountains as a shaggy she-bear.
The boy she conceived furtively was adolescent
When the mother met the child she had born.
She reared, wildly, and growled, as if she knew him:
Growling was his mother’s only mode of speech.
The boy, unknowing, would have pierced her with his
sharp spear,
But they were both caught up into the heavenly mansions.
They shine as neighbouring constellations: first the [Bear](#),
Then the [Bear-keeper](#) takes shape behind her back.
Still, Juno, [Saturn’s daughter](#), rages and begs grey [Tethys](#)
Never to wash the [Maenalian](#) Bear with her waters.

Book II: February 13: Ides

The altars of rustic [Faunus](#) smoke, on the Ides.
There, where the island breaks [Tiber](#)'s waters.
This was the day when three hundred and six
Of the [Fabii](#) fell to [Veientine](#) weapons.
A single family assumed the burden and defence of the
city:

Their strong right arms volunteered their swords.
Noble soldiers they marched from the one camp,
And any one of them was fitted to be the leader.
The nearest way was the right hand arch of [Carmentis](#)
[Gate](#)

Let no one go that way: it is unlucky.
Tradition says that the three hundred Fabii passed through:
The gate is free of blame, but is still unlucky.
When they had quickly reached the rushing [Cremera](#),
(It was flowing darkly with winter rain)
They pitched their camp there, and with naked swords
Broke the Etruscan ranks with their valour,
Just like Libyan lions attacking the herds
Scattered over the fields, far and wide.
The enemy fled, receiving the wounds of shame
In their backs: the earth red with Tuscan blood.
So again, and as often, they fall. When open victory
Was denied them, they set armed men in ambush.
There was a plain, bounded by hills and forests,
Where the mountain creatures could make a lair.
The enemy left a few men and a scattering of cattle

In its midst, the rest of their army hid in the thickets.
Look, as a torrent swollen by rain and snow
That the warm West wind has melted, flows
Over the cornfields and roads, not as normal,
Enclosed by the margins of its banks,
So the Fabii, widely deployed, filled the valley,
Felling whatever they saw, filled with no other fear.
Where are you rushing to, noble house? Don't trust the
enemy:
Noble simplicity, beware of treacherous blades!
Valour is destroyed by fraud: the enemy leap out
Into the open plain, and take the ground on all side.
What can a few brave men do against thousands?
What help remains for them in time of danger?
As a wild boar driven far from the deep woods
By the hounds, scatters the swift pack with roaring maw,
But is soon killed, so they do not die un-avenged,
Dealing and receiving wounds alternately.
One day sent all the Fabii to war:
All that were sent to war, one day destroyed.
Yet we might think that the gods themselves took council,
To save the seed of the [Herculean](#) house:
For a boy too young to bear weapons
Was left behind of all the Fabian house,
No doubt so that you, [Maximus](#), might be born
To save the state, one day, by your delaying.

Book II: February 14

Three constellations lie together, [Corvus](#) the Raven,
[Hydra](#), and [Crater](#), the Cup, between the two.
On the Ides they're hidden at twilight, but risen the
following night.
I'll tell why the three as so closely linked together.
It happened that [Phoebus](#) prepared a solemn feast for Jove,
(This tale of mine will not take long to tell):
'Go, my bird,' he said, 'so nothing delays the sacred rites,
And bring a little water from the running stream.'
The Raven caught up a gilded Cup in his claws,
And flew high into the air on his way.
There was a fig tree thick with unripe fruit:
The Raven tried it with his beak: but it wasn't fit to eat.
Forgetting his orders, it's said he perched by the tree,
To wait till the fruit should sweetly ripen.
When at last he'd taken his fill, he grasped a long Water-
Snake
In his black talons, and returned to his master with a lying
tale:
'This snake caused my delay, it blocked the running
water:
It prevented the stream's flow, and my errand.'
'Will you add to your fault with lies,' said Phoebus,
And cheat the god of prophecy with words?
As for you, you'll drink no cool water from the springs,
Until the ripened figs cling to the trees.'
So he spoke, and as an eternal reminder of this ancient
tale,
Snake, Bird and Cup, as constellations, gleam side by side.

Book II: February 15: The Lupercalia

This third morning after the Ides sees the naked [Luperci](#),
And the rites of two-horned [Faunus](#) enacted.
Pierian [Muses](#), tell the origin of the rites,
And where they were brought from to our Latin home.
They say the ancient [Arcadians](#) worshipped [Pan](#)
The god of cattle, he of the mountain heights.
Mount [Pholoe](#) was witness, and the [Stymphalian](#) waters,
And [Ladon](#) that runs its swift course to the sea:
The ridges of the [Nonacrine](#) grove circled with pines:
High [Tricrene](#), and the [Parrhasian](#) snows.
Pan was the god of cattle there, and the mares,
He received gifts for guarding the sheep.
[Evander](#) brought his woodland gods with him:
There where Rome stands there was merely a site.
So we worship the god, and the priest performs
The rites the [Pelasgians](#) brought in the ancient way.
Why, you ask, do the [Luperci](#) run, and since it's their
custom,
This running, why do they strip their bodies naked?
The god himself loves to run swiftly on the heights,
And he himself suddenly takes to flight.
The god himself is naked, and orders his servants naked,
Since anyway clothes were not suited to that course.
They say the [Arcadians](#) had their land before the birth
Of Jove, and their race is older than the moon.
They lived like beasts, lives spent to no purpose:
The common people were crude as yet, without arts.

They built houses from leafy branches, grass their crops,
Water, scooped in their palms, was nectar to them.
No bull panted yoked to the curved ploughshare,
No soil was under the command of the farmer.
Horses were not used, all carried their own burdens,
The sheep went about still clothed in their wool.
People lived in the open and went about nude,
Inured to heavy downpours from rain-filled winds.
To this day the naked priests recall the memory
Of old customs, and testify to those ancient ways.
But why [Faunus](#), especially, shunned clothing,
Is handed down in an old tale full of laughter.
By chance Tirynthian [Hercules](#) was walking with
[Omphale](#),
His mistress, and Faunus saw them from a high ridge.
He saw and burned. 'Mountain spirits,' he said,
'No more of your company: she will be my passion.'
As the Maeonian girl went by her fragrant hair streamed
Over her shoulders, her breast was bright with gold:
A gilded parasol protected her from warm sunlight,
One Herculean hands, indeed, held over her.
Now she came to [Bacchus](#)' grove, and [Tmolus](#)' vineyard,
While dew-wet [Hesperus](#) rode his dusky steed.
She entered a cave roofed with tufa and natural rock,
And there was a babbling stream at its entrance.
While her attendants were preparing food and wine,
She clothed Hercules in her own garments.
She gave him thin vests dyed in Gaetolian purple,
Gave him the elegant zone that had bound her waist.

The zone was too small for his belly, and he unfastened
The clasps of the vests to thrust out his great hands.
He fractured her bracelets, not made for such arms,
And his giant feet split the little shoes.
She took up his heavy club, and the lion's pelt,
And those lesser weapons lodged in their quiver.
So dressed, they feasted, and gave themselves to sleep,
Resting on separate couches set next to one another,
Because they were preparing to celebrate the rites
Of the discoverer of the vine, with purity, at dawn.
It was midnight. What will unruly love not dare?
Faunus came through the dark to the dewy cave,
And seeing the servants lost in drunken slumber,
Had hopes of their master also being fast asleep.
Entering, as a reckless lover, he roamed around,
Following his cautious outstretched hands.
He reached the couches spread as beds, by touch,
And this first omen of the future was bright.
When he felt the bristling tawny lion-skin,
However, he drew back his hand in terror,
And recoiled, frozen with fear, as a traveller, troubled,
Will draw back his foot on seeing a snake.
Then he touched the soft coverings of the next couch,
And its deceptive feel misled him.
He climbed in, and reclined on the bed's near side,
And his swollen cock was harder than horn.
But pulling up the lower hem of the tunic,
The legs there were bristling with thick coarse hair.
The Tiryinthian hero fiercely repelled another attempt,

And down fell Faunus from the heights of the couch.
At the noise, Omphale called for her servants, and light:
Torches appeared, and events became clear.
Faunus groaned from his heavy fall from the high couch,
And could barely lift his limbs from the hard ground.
Hercules laughed, as did all who saw him lying there,
And the Lydian girl laughed too, at her lover.
Betrayed by his clothing: so the god hates clothes
That trick the eye, and calls the naked to his rites.
Add Roman reasons, my Muse, to foreign ones,
And let my charger race his own dusty course.
A she-goat was sacrificed to cloven Faunus, as usual,
And a crowd had been invited to the scanty feast.
While the priests prepared the entrails, on willow spits,
The sun being then at the zenith of its course,
[Romulus](#) and [his brother](#), and a shepherd boy,
Exercised their naked bodies on the sunlit plain:
Trying the strength of their arms in sport,
With levers, javelins, or hurling heavy stones.
A shepherd shouted from the heights: 'Romulus, Remus,
Thieves are driving the bullocks off through the
wasteland.'
It would have taken too long to arm: they took opposite
Directions: and meeting them Remus re-took their prize.
Returning he drew the hissing entrails from the spits,
Saying: 'No one but the victor shall eat of these.'
As he said, so he and the [Fabii](#) did. Romulus returned,
Unsuccessful, finding the empty table and bare bones.
He laughed and grieved that Remus and the Fabii,

Should have conquered, where his own Quintilii could not.

The tale of that deed endures: they run stark naked,
And the success achieved enjoyed a lasting fame.
You might also ask why that cave is called the [Lupercal](#),
And the reason for giving the day such a name.

[Silvia](#), a [Vestal](#), had given birth to divine children,
At the time when her uncle held the throne.

He ordered the infants taken and drowned in the river:
What was he doing? One of the two was [Romulus](#).
Reluctantly his servants obeyed the sad command
(Though they wept) and took the twins to the appointed place.

It chanced that the [Albula](#), called [Tiber](#) from [Tiberinus](#)
Drowned in its waves, was swollen with winter rain:
You could see boats drifting where the *fora* are,
And there in the vale of the Circus Maximus.

When the servants arrived there (since they were
Unable to go further), one of them said:

‘How alike they are, how beautiful each of them is!

Yet of the two this one is the more vigorous.

If nobility is seen in the face, unless I’m wrong,

I suspect that there’s some god within you –

Yet if some god were the author of your being,

He’d bring you aid at such a perilous time:

Your mother would surely bring help if she could,

Who has borne and lost her children in one day:

Born together, to die together, pass together beneath

The waves!’ He finished and set them down.

Both squalled alike: you'd have thought they knew.
The servants returned with tears on their cheeks.
The hollow trough, where the boys were laid, floated
On the water, how great a fate the little ark carried!
It drifted onwards towards a shadowy wood,
And gradually settled where the depth lessened.
There was a tree: traces remain, which is now called
The [Rumina](#) fig, once [Romulus](#)' fig tree.
A she-wolf, newly delivered, (miraculously!) found the
abandoned twins,
Who would have thought the creature would not harm
them?
Far from harming them she helped them: and a wolf fed
those
Whom their kin would have allowed to perish.
She stayed, caressed the tender infants with her tail,
And licked their bodies with her tongue.
You might know they were sons of [Mars](#): without fear
They sucked her teats, and the milk not meant for them.
She gave her name to the place: and the place to the
[Luperci](#).
The nurse has a great reward for the milk she gave.
Why shouldn't they be named from the [Arcadian](#) peak?
[Lycaean](#) Faunus has temples in Arcadia.
Bride, why linger? No potent herb, or prayer
Or magic spell can make you a mother:
Be patient under the blows of a fruitful hand,
And soon your husband's father will be a grandfather.
For there was a day when harsh fate decreed

Wives rarely gave their mates gifts from their womb.
Romulus (since it was when he ruled) cried:
‘What was the use of raping the Sabine women,
If that wrong has brought war instead of strength?
It would have been better if our sons were unwed.’
A grove below the [Esquiline](#) Hill, untouched
For many years, was sacred to great [Juno](#).
When they had gathered there, husbands and wives
Bowed their knees, alike, in supplication,
And suddenly the tree tops moved and trembled,
And the goddess spoke strange words in her grove:
‘Let the sacred he-goat pierce the Italian wives’.
The crowd stood, terrified, at the troubling words.
There was an augur (his name is lost with the years,
But he had lately arrived, an exile from Tuscany),
He killed a he-goat and, at his command, the wives
Offered their backs, to be beaten by thongs from its hide.
When the moon renewed her horns in her tenth orbit,
The husband became a father, and the wife a mother.
Thanks be to [Lucina](#)! Goddess you took that name
From the grove (*lucus*), or as yours is the source of light
(*lucis*).
Gracious Lucina, spare women heavy with child, I beg
you,
And bring the ripe burden tenderly from the womb.
When this day dawns, no longer trust the winds:
The breezes are faithless at this season:
The gales are fickle, and for six days the door
Of the [Aeolian](#) cavern stands open wide.

Now nimble [Aquarius](#) of the tilted urn, is hidden:
[Pisces](#), you next receive the sky-borne horses.
They say that you and your brother (for you glitter
Together as stars) mounted two gods on your backs.
[Dione](#), once, fleeing from dreaded [Typhon](#),
When [Jupiter](#) took up arms to defend the heavens,
Came to [Euphrates](#) with the little [Cupid](#),
And sat by the brink of the waters of [Palestine](#).
Reeds and poplars grew by the banks,
And willows too gave hope of shelter there.
While she hid, the grove rustled in the wind:
She turned pale with fear, and thought enemies nearby.
So, holding the child in her lap, she cried:
'Help, you Nymphs, and aid two divine beings!'
She leapt in, without delay. Twin fishes bore her:
For which, a worthy gift, they were made stars.
And so the pious [Syrians](#) hold it wrong to serve them
At their table: their mouths are not defiled with fish.

Book II: February 17

The next day is not notable, but the third is [Quirinus](#),
(He was [Romulus](#) before), who is so called
Either because a spear was *curis* among the ancient
[Sabines](#),
(By his spear that warlike god won his place among the
stars),
Or because the [Quirites](#) gave their name to their king,
Or because he united the city of [Cures](#) to Rome.

For when the father, lord of weapons, saw the new walls
And the many wars waged with Romulus' hands,
He said: 'Jupiter, Roman power possesses strength:
It doesn't need the services of my people.
Return the son to his father. Though one is dead,
The one who remains is enough for himself and [Remus](#).
You said to me: "There'll be one you'll raise
To the azure sky." Let Jupiter keep his word.'
Jupiter nodded his agreement. Both the poles trembled
At his nod, and Atlas shifted the weight of the sky.
There's a place the ancients called the She-goat's Marsh:
You chanced to be judging the people there, Romulus.
The sun vanished, and rising clouds obscured the sky,
And a heavy shower of torrential rain fell.
Then it thundered. Then the sky was split by lightning:
All fled, and the king rose to the stars behind his father's
horses.
There was mourning, senators were falsely charged with
murder,
And perhaps that belief might have stuck in people's
minds,
But Julius [Proculus](#) was travelling from [Alba Longa](#),
With the moon shining, and having no need of a torch,
When suddenly the hedge to his left moved and shook:
So that he drew back a step, his hair bristling.
It seemed to him that Romulus, handsome, more than
human,
And finely dressed, stood there, in the centre of the road,
Saying: 'Prevent the Quirites from mourning me,

And profaning my divinity by their tears:
Let the pious crowds bring incense and propitiate
The new god Quirinus, and cultivate their father's art of
war.'
So he commanded and vanished into thin air:
Proculus gathered the people and reported the command.
Temples were built for the god, the hill named for him,
And on certain days the ancestral rites are re-enacted.
Learn too why this day is called the [Feast of Fools](#).
The reason for it is trivial but fitting.
The earth of old was farmed by ignorant men:
Fierce wars weakened their powerful bodies.
There was more glory in the sword than the plough:
And the neglected farm brought its owner little return.
Yet the ancients sowed corn, corn they reaped,
Offering the first fruits of the corn harvest to [Ceres](#).
Taught by practice they parched it in the flames,
And incurred many losses through their own mistakes.
Sometimes they'd sweep up burnt ash and not corn,
Sometimes the flames took their huts themselves:
The oven was made a goddess, [Fornax](#): the farmers
Pleased with her, prayed she'd regulate the grain's heat.
Now the [Curio Maximus](#), in a set form of words, declares
The shifting date of the [Fornacalia](#), the [Feast of Ovens](#):
And round the Forum hang many tablets,
On which every ward displays its particular sign.
Foolish people don't know which is their ward,
So they hold the feast on the last possible day.

Book II: February 21: The Feralia

And the grave must be honoured. Appease your fathers'
Spirits, and bring little gifts to the tombs you built.
Their shades ask little, piety they prefer to costly
Offerings: no greedy deities haunt the [Stygian](#) depths.
A tile wreathed round with garlands offered is enough,
A scattering of meal, and a few grains of salt,
And bread soaked in wine, and loose violets:
Set them on a brick left in the middle of the path.
Not that I veto larger gifts, but these please the shades:
Add prayers and proper words to the fixed fires.
This custom was brought to your lands, just [Latinus](#),
By [Aeneas](#), a fitting promoter of piety.
He brought solemn gifts to his father's spirit:
From him the people learned the pious rites.
But once, waging a long war with fierce weapons,
They neglected the [Parentalia](#), Festival of the Dead.
It did not go unpunished: they say from that ominous day
Rome grew hot from funeral fires near the City.
I scarcely believe it, but they say that ancestral spirits
Came moaning from their tombs in the still of night,
And misshapen spirits, a bodiless throng, howled
Through the City streets, and through the broad fields.
Afterwards neglected honour was paid to the tombs,
And there was an end to the portents, and the funerals.
But while these rites are enacted, girls, don't marry:
Let the marriage torches wait for purer days.
And virgin, who to your mother seem ripe for love,

Don't let the curved spear comb your tresses.
[Hymen](#), hide your torches, and carry them far
From these dark fires! The gloomy tomb owns other
torches.

And hide the gods, closing those revealing temple doors,
Let the altars be free of incense, the hearths without fire.
Now ghostly spirits and the entombed dead wander,
Now the shadow feeds on the nourishment that's offered.
But it only lasts till there are no more days in the month
Than the feet (eleven) that my metres possess.

This day they call the [Feralia](#) because they bear (*ferunt*)
Offerings to the dead: the last day to propitiate the shades.
See, an old woman sitting amongst the girls performs the
rites

Of [Tacita](#), the Silent (though she herself is not silent),
With three fingers, she sets three lumps of incense
Under the sill, where the little mouse makes its secret
path:

Then she fastens enchanted threads together with dark
lead,

And turns seven black beans over and over in her mouth,
And bakes the head of a sprat in the fire, mouth sewn up
With pitch, pierced right through with a bronze needle.

She drops wine on it too, and she or her friends
Drink the wine that's left, though she gets most.

On leaving she says: 'We have sealed up hostile mouths
And unfriendly tongues': and the old woman exits drunk.

You'll ask at once, who is the goddess [Muta](#)?:
Hear of what I've learned from the old men.

[Jupiter](#), overcome with intense love for [Juturna](#),
Suffered many things a god ought not to bear.
Now she would hide in the woods among the hazels,
Now she would dive into her sister waters.
The god called the nymphs who lived in [Latium](#),
And spoke these words in the midst of their throng:
‘Your sister is an enemy to herself, and shuns a union
With the supreme god that would benefit her.
Take counsel for both: for what would delight me greatly
Would be a great advantage to your sister.
When she flees, stop her by the riverbank,
Lest she plunges her body into the waters.’
He spoke: all the nymphs of the [Tiber](#) agreed,
Those too who haunt your spaces, divine [Ilia](#).
There was a naiad, named [Lara](#): but her old name
Was the first syllable twice-repeated, given her
To mark her failing. [Almo](#), the river-god often said:
‘Daughter, hold your tongue,’ but she still did not.
As soon as she reached the pools of her sister [Juturna](#),
She said: ‘Flee these banks’, and spoke Jupiter’s words.
She even went to [Juno](#), and showing pity for married
women
Said: ‘Your husband loves the naiad Juturna.’
Jupiter was angered, and tearing that tongue from her
mouth
That she had used so immoderately, called [Mercury](#) to
him:
‘Lead her to the shadows: that place is fitting for the
silent.

She shall be a nymph, but of the infernal marshes.’
Jove’s order was obeyed. On the way they reached a
grove:

Then it was they say that she pleased the god who led her.
He prepared to force her, with a glance instead of words
She pleaded, trying to speak from her mute lips.
Heavy with child, she bore twins who guard the
crossroads,
The [Lares](#), who keep watch forever over the City.

Book II: February 22

The next day has its name, *Caristia*, from our dear (*cari*)
kin,

When a throng of relations gathers to the family gods.

It’s surely pleasant to turn our faces to the living,

Once away from our relatives who have perished,

And after so many lost, to see those of our blood

Who remain, and count the degrees of kinship.

Let the innocent come: let the impious brother be far,

Far from here, and the mother harsh to her children,

He whose father’s too long-lived, who weighs his

mother’s years,

The cruel mother-in-law who crushes the daughter-in-law
she hates.

Be absent [Tantalides](#), [Atreus](#), [Thyestes](#): and [Medea](#),

[Jason](#)’s wife:

[Ino](#) who gave parched seeds to the farmers:

And [Procne](#), her sister, [Philomela](#), and [Tereus](#) cruel to both,
And whoever has gathered wealth by wickedness.
Virtuous ones, burn incense to the gods of the family,
(Gentle [Concord](#) is said to be there on this day above all)
And offer food, so the robed [Lares](#) may feed from the dish
Granted to them as a mark of esteem, that pleases them.
Then when moist night invites us to calm slumber,
Fill the wine-cup full, for the prayer, and say:
'Health, health to you, worthy [Caesar](#), Father of the
Country!'
And let there be pleasant speech at the pouring of wine.

Book II: February 23: The Terminalia

When night has passed, let the god be celebrated
With customary honour, who separates the fields with his
sign.
[Terminus](#), whether a stone or a stump buried in the earth,
You have been a god since ancient times.
You are crowned from either side by two landowners,
Who bring two garlands and two cakes in offering.
An altar's made: here the farmer's wife herself
Brings coals from the warm hearth on a broken pot.
The old man cuts wood and piles the logs with skill,
And works at setting branches in the solid earth.
Then he nurses the first flames with dry bark,
While a boy stands by and holds the wide basket.
When he's thrown grain three times into the fire

The little daughter offers the sliced honeycombs.
Others carry wine: part of each is offered to the flames:
The crowd, dressed in white, watch silently.
Terminus, at the boundary, is sprinkled with lamb's blood,
And doesn't grumble when a sucking pig is granted him.
Neighbours gather sincerely, and hold a feast,
And sing your praises, sacred Terminus:
'You set bounds to peoples, cities, great kingdoms:
Without you every field would be disputed.
You curry no favour: you aren't bribed with gold,
Guarding the land entrusted to you in good faith.
If you'd once marked the bounds of [Thyrean](#) lands,
Three hundred men would not have died,
Nor [Othryades](#)' name be seen on the pile of weapons.
O how he made his fatherland bleed!
What happened when the new [Capitol](#) was built?
The whole throng of gods yielded to [Jupiter](#) and made
room:
But as the ancients tell, [Terminus](#) remained in the shrine
Where he was found, and shares the temple with great
Jupiter.
Even now there's a small hole in the temple roof,
So he can see nothing above him but stars.
Since then, Terminus, you've not been free to wander:
Stay there, in the place where you've been put,
And yield not an inch to your neighbour's prayers,
Lest you seem to set men above Jupiter:
And whether they beat you with rakes, or ploughshares,
Call out: "This is your field, and that is his!"

There's a track that takes people to the [Laurentine](#) fields,
The kingdom once sought by [Aeneas](#), the [Trojan](#) leader:
The sixth milestone from the City, there, bears witness
To the sacrifice of a sheep's entrails to you, Terminus.
The lands of other races have fixed boundaries:
The extent of the City of Rome and the world is one.

Book II: February 24: The Regifugium

Now I have to tell of the [Flight of the King](#):
The sixth day from the end of the month has that name.
[Tarquin](#) the Proud held the last kingship of the Roman
people,
A man of injustice, but powerful in might.
He had taken cities, and overthrown others,
And made [Gabii](#) his, by base trickery.
For the youngest of his three sons, Sextus, clearly a child
Of Tarquin, entered the midst of his enemies in the still of
night.
They drew their swords: he said: 'Don't kill the unarmed!
That's what my brother, and father, Tarquin, desire,
He who lacerated my back with a cruel scourge.'
So he could make his plea, he had suffered a beating.
There was a moon: seeing a youth they sheathed their
swords
And saw the scars on his back when he drew back his
robe.
They even wept, and begged to fight with them in the war:
The cunning youth complied with the unwary men.

Once in place he sent a friend to ask his father
To show him the means of destroying Gabii.
Below lay a garden full of fragrant plants,
Where a gentle stream of splashing water cut the soil:
There Tarquin the Proud received his son's secret
message,
And then slashed the heads of the lilies with a stick.
When the messenger returned and spoke of the broken
flowers,
The [son](#) said: 'I understand my father's orders.'
He killed Gabii's chief citizens, without delay,
And surrendered the walls, now naked of leaders.
See, a dreadful sight, a snake appeared between the altars,
And snatched the entrails from the dead fires.
The oracle of [Phoebus](#) was consulted: it replied:
'He who first kisses his mother will win.'
Not understanding the god, each of the throng
Believing it, quickly ran to kiss his mother.
Wise [Brutus](#) pretended to be foolish, to be safe
From your snares, dread Tarquin the Proud:
Throwing himself down he kissed Mother Earth,
Though they thought he had stumbled and fallen.
Meanwhile the Roman standards ringed [Ardea](#),
And the city endured a long lingering siege.
While they were idle, and the enemy feared to fight,
They enjoyed themselves in camp: the soldiers at ease.
Young Tarquin entertained his friends with food and wine,
And among them the king's son spoke out:
'While Ardea troubles us with this sluggish war,

And stops us bearing our weapons to our fathers' gods,
How is the marriage bed served? And are we
As dear to our wives as they are to us?'
Each praised his own: in their eagerness dispute raged,
And tongues and hearts grew heated with much wine.
Then [Tarquinius](#) who took his famous name from Collatia
Rose, and said: 'Words are not needed: trust in deeds!
Night still remains: take horse and head for the City!'
The words pleased them: the horses were bridled,
And carried off their masters. They first sought
The royal palace: there was no guard at the door.
See, they found the king's daughters-in-law, garlands
Round their necks, keeping vigil over the wine.
From there they swiftly sought [Lucretia](#),
Before whose couch were baskets of soft wool.
By a scant light her servants were spinning their yarn,
Amongst them the lady spoke with a quiet voice:
'The cloak our hands have made (hurry now, girls, hurry!)
Must be sent to the master straight away.
What news is there? Since you hear more of things:
How much more of the war do they say is left to run?
Perverse Ardea, after this you'll be conquered and fall,
You resist your betters, who force our husbands' absence.
If only they return! But mine is thoughtless,
And rushes everywhere with his drawn sword.
I faint, I die, as often as the image of my warrior
Comes to mind, and chills my heart with cold.'
She ended in tears, letting fall the stretched yarn,
And buried her face in her lap.

It became her: becoming, were her modest tears,
And her face was a worthy equal to her heart.
Her husband cried out: 'Fear not, I come!' She revived,
And hung, a sweet burden, on her husband's neck.
Meanwhile the royal youth, Sextus, caught furious fire,
And raged about, captured by blind love.
Her form please him, her white skin and yellow hair,
And added to that her grace, owing nothing to art:
Her voice and speech pleased him, her incorruptibility,
And the less his hope, the more he desired her.
Now the bird had sung that heralds the dawn,
When the young men took their way back to camp.
Meanwhile the image of the absent one captivated
His stunned senses. In memory, she pleased more and
more.
'She sat so, was dressed so, so spun her yarn,
So her hair spilled loose about her neck,
That was her look: those were her words,
That was her colour, her form, her lovely face.'
As the flood subsides after a great gale,
But the waves heave from the dying wind,
So though the presence of that pleasing form was absent,
Love remained, which its presence had given form.
He burned, and driven by the goad of sinful love,
He plotted force and deceit to an innocent bed.
He said: 'The issue is doubtful: we'll dare extremes!
Let her beware! God and fate favour the bold.
By daring we took Gabii as well.' So saying,
He strapped on his sword, and mounted his horse.

Collatia's bronze gate received the young man
As the sun was preparing to hide its face.
An enemy entered Collatinus's home, as a friend:
He was welcomed courteously: he was of their blood.
How her mind was deceived! Unknowingly,
The wretched woman prepared a meal for her foe.
The meal was done: the hour demanded rest:
It was night, and the whole house was without light:
He rose, and drew his sword from his gilded scabbard,
And, chaste wife, he entered your bedroom.
As he touched the bed, the king's son said:
'Lucretia I have a blade, and I, a Tarquin, speak!'
She said nothing: she'd no voice or powers of speech
Nor any capability for thought in her whole mind.
But she trembled like a little lamb, caught straying
From the fold, brought low by a wolf's attack.
What could she do? Fight? In battle a woman loses.
Cry out? But the sword in his right hand restrained her.
Fly? His hands pressed down hard on her breast,
A breast that had never been touched by a stranger's hand.
The hostile lover pursues her with prayers, bribes, threats,
But prayers and bribes and threats cannot sway her.
He said: 'My accusation will rob you of your life:
The adulterer will bear false witness to adultery:
I'll kill a slave, they'll say you were caught with him.'
Overcome by fear for her reputation, the girl was
conquered.
Why, rejoice, victor? This victory will destroy you.
Alas, how a single night cost you your kingdom!

Now day had dawned: she sat with hair unbound,
Like a mother who must go to her son's funeral.
She called her aged father and her loyal husband
From the camp, and both came without delay.
Seeing her condition, they asked why she mourned,
Whose rites she prepared, what ill had befallen her?
She was silent for a long time, and hid her face in her robe
Out of shame: her tears flowed in a running stream.
Her father here, her husband there comforted her tears
And begged her to tell, wept, and trembled in blind fear.
Three times she tried to speak, three times desisted,
And a fourth time, gaining courage, still couldn't raise her
eyes.
She said: 'Must I owe this to a Tarquin too? Must I speak,
Speak, poor wretch, my shame from my own mouth?'
What she could, she told. The end she suppressed:
She wept, and a blush spread over a wife's cheeks.
Her husband and her father forgave her being forced:
She said: 'I deny myself the forgiveness that you grant.'
Then she stabbed herself with a blade she had hidden,
And, all bloodied, fell at her father's feet.
Even then she took care in dying so that she fell
With decency, that was her care even in falling.
See, the husband and father throw themselves on her body,
Regardless of appearances, grieve for their mutual loss.
[Brutus](#) approached, and at last, with spirit, belied his
name,
Snatching the weapon from the dying body,
Holding the blade dripping with noble blood,

Fearlessly he uttered these menacing words:
'I swear by this chaste blood, so courageous,
And by your spirit that will be a divinity to me,
I will be revenged on Tarquin the Proud and his lost
brood.

I have concealed my virtue for too long.'
At these words, lying there, she moved her sightless eyes,
And seemed to witness the speech by a stirring of her hair.
They carried her to her funeral, a woman with a man's
courage,

And tears and indignation followed after her.
The gaping wound was seen. Brutus, with a shout,
Gathered the [Quirites](#), and told of the king's evil act.
Tarquin the Proud and his children fled, a consul took up
the rule

For the year: That day was the last day of kingship.
Am I wrong, or has the swallow come, herald of the
Spring:

Does she not fear lest winter should turn back, return
again?

Often, [Procne](#), you'll complain that you've been too swift,
And your husband, [Tereus](#), rejoice in the cold you feel.

Book II: February 27: The Equirria

Now two nights of the second month remain,
And Mars urges on his chariot's swift horses.
The day has retained the name [Equirria](#),
From the horse races the god views on his [Fields](#).

Rightly you're here, [Gradivus](#), Marching God: your
season
Demands its place, the month marked by your name is
near.

Book II: February 28

We've reached harbour: the book ends with the month:
Now, from here, my vessel can sail through other waters.

Book III

Book III: Introduction

Come [Mars](#), God of War, lay aside your shield and spear:
A moment, from your helmet, free your shining hair.
What has a poet to do with Mars, you might ask?
The month I sing of takes its name from you.
You see, yourself, fierce wars waged by [Minerva](#):
Is she less free to practice the noble arts for that?
Take time to set aside you lance and follow [Pallas](#)'
Example: and find something to do while unarmed.
You were unarmed then, as well, when the Roman
Priestess captivated you, so you could seed this City.
[Silvia](#), the [Vestal](#), (why not begin with her?)
Sought water at dawn to wash sacred things.
When she came to where the path ran gently down
The sloping bank, she set down the earthenware jar
From her head. Weary, she sat on the ground and opened
Her dress to the breeze, and composed her ruffled hair.
While she sat there, the shadowy willows, melodious
birds,
And the soft murmur of the water made her sleepy.
Sweet slumber slyly stole across her conquered eyes,
And her languid hand fell, from supporting her chin.
Mars saw her, seeing her desired her, desiring her
Possessed her, by divine power hiding his theft.
She lost sleep, lay there heavily: and already,
Rome's founder had his being in her womb,.

Languidly she rose, not knowing why she rose,
And leaning against a tree spoke these words:
'I beg that what I saw in vision in my sleep
Might be happy and good. Or was it too real for sleep?
I thought I was tending the Trojan flame, and the woollen
band
Slipped from my hair, and fell down, in front of the sacred
fire.
From it, strange sight, at once, two palm trees sprang:
One of the trees was taller than the other,
And covered all the world with its heavy branches,
Touching the topmost stars with its crown.
See, my uncle, [Amulius](#), wielding an axe against the trees,
The thought terrified me, and my heart shuddered with
fear.
A woodpecker, bird of [Mars](#), and a she-wolf defended
The twin trunks: by their help both palm-trees were
saved.'

She spoke, and weakly lifted the brimming pitcher:
She had filled it while she told of her vision.
Meanwhile [Remus](#) and [Quirinus](#) were growing,
And her belly swelled with the divine burden.
When only two signs remained for the shining god
To travel before the complete year had run its course,
Silvia became a mother. They say the images of [Vesta](#)
Covered their eyes with their virgin hands:
The altar of the goddess certainly trembled when her
priestess
Gave birth, and the fearful flame sank to its own ashes.

When Amulius, knew of this, a man scornful of justice,
(Since he overcame his own brother and took his power)
He ordered the twins drowned in the river. The water
shrank

From the crime: and the boys were left there on dry land.
Who doesn't know that the children were fed on milk
From a wild creature, and a woodpecker often brought
them food?

Now should I forget you, [Larentia](#), nurse of such a nation,
Nor, poor [Faustulus](#), the help that you gave.

I'll honour you when I speak of the Larentalia,
And the month approved of by the guardian spirits.

The children of Mars were eighteen years old,
And fresh beards grew below their yellow hair:

These brothers, the sons of [Ilia](#), gave judgement
When asked, to all farmers and masters of herds.

They often returned pleased with the blood of robbers
They'd spilt: driving the stolen cattle back to their fields.

Hearing their origin, their spirits rose at their father's
divinity,

And they were ashamed to be known only among a few
huts.

[Amulius](#) fell, struck through by [Romulus](#)' sword
And the kingdom was returned to their old grandfather.

Walls were built, which it would have been better
For [Remus](#) not to leap, small though they were.

Now what was once woodland and the haunt of cattle,
Was a City, and the founder of the eternal City said:

'Arbiter of War, from whose blood I am thought to spring,

(And to confirm that belief I shall give many proofs),
I name the first month of the Roman year after you:
The [first month](#) shall be called by my father's name.'
The promise was kept: he called the month after his father.
This piety is said to have pleased the god.
And earlier, [Mars](#) was worshipped above all the gods:
A warlike people gave him their enthusiasm.
[Athens](#) worshipped [Pallas](#): Minoan [Crete](#), [Diana](#):
Hypsipyle's island of [Lemnos](#) worshipped [Vulcan](#):
[Juno](#) was worshipped by [Sparta](#) and [Pelops](#)' [Mycenae](#),
Pine-crowned [Faunus](#) by [Maenalian Arcadia](#):
Mars, who directs the sword, was revered by [Latium](#):
Arms gave a fierce people possessions and glory.
If you have time examine various calendars.
And you'll find a month there named after Mars.
It was third in the Alban, fifth in the Faliscan calendar,
Sixth among your people, Hernican lands.
The position's the same in the Arician and Alban,
And Tusculum's whose walls Telegonus made.
It's fifth among the Laurentes, tenth for the tough
Aequians,
First after the third the folk of Cures place it,
And the Pelignian soldiers agree with their Sabine
Ancestors: both make him the god of the fourth month.
In order to take precedence over all these, at least,
Romulus gave the first month to the father of his race.
Nor did the ancients have as many Kalends as us:
Their year was shorter than ours by two months.
Greece, defeated had not yet transmitted her arts

To the conquerors, her people eloquent but not brave.
He knew the arts of Rome, then, who fought well:
He was fluent, who could hurl the javelin, then.
Who knew the [Hyades](#) or [Pleiades](#), the daughters
Of [Atlas](#), or that there were two poles in the sky:
Knew that there are two [Bears](#), the [Sidonians](#) steering
By [Cynosura](#), the Greek sailor noting [Helice](#):
That the signs [Apollo](#), the Sun, travels in a whole year,
His sister [Diana](#)'s Moon-horses cross in a month?
The stars then ran their course, freely, unobserved
Each year: yet everyone held them to be gods.
They couldn't touch the heaven's gliding Standards,
Only their own, and it was a great crime to lose them.
Theirs were of straw: But the straw won a reverence
As great as you see the eagles share today.
A long pole carried the hanging bundles (*maniplos*),
From which the private soldier takes his name
(*maniplaris*).
So, untaught and lacking in science, each five-year lustre
That they calculated was short by two whole months.
A year was when the moon returned to full for the tenth
time:
And that was a number that was held in high honour:
Because it's the number of fingers we usually count with,
Or because a woman produces in ten months,
Or because the numerals ascend from one to ten,
And from that point we begin a fresh interval.
So Romulus divided the hundred Senators into ten groups,
And instituted ten companies of men with spears,

And as many front-rank and javelin men,
And also those who officially merited horses.
He even divided the tribes the same way, the Titienses,
The Ramnes, as they are called, and the Luceres.
And so he reserved the same number for his year,
It's the time for which the sad widow mourns her man.
If you doubt that the Kalends of March began the year,
You can refer to the following evidence.
The priest's laurel branch that remained all year,
Was removed then, and fresh leaves honoured.
Then the king's door is green with [Phoebus](#)' bough,
Set there, and at your doors too, ancient wards.
And the withered laurel is taken from the Trojan hearth,
So [Vesta](#) may be brightly dressed with new leaves.
Also, it's said, a new fire is lit at her secret shrine,
And the rekindled flame acquires new strength.
And to me it's no less a sign that past years began so,
That in this month worship of [Anna](#) Perenna begins.
Then too it's recorded public offices commenced,
Until the time of your wars, faithless [Carthaginian](#).
Lastly [Quintilis](#) is the fifth (*quintus*) month from March,
And begins those that take their names from numerals.
[Numa](#) Pompilius, led to Rome from the lands of olives,
Was the first to realise the year lacked two months,
Learning it from [Pythagoras](#) of Samos, who believed
We could be reborn, or was taught it by his own [Egeria](#).
But the calendar was still erratic down to the time
When [Caesar](#) took it, and many other things, in hand.
That god, the founder of a mighty house, did not

Regard the matter as beneath his attention,
And wished to have prescience of those heavens
Promised him, not be an unknown god entering a strange
house.

He is said to have drawn up an exact table
Of the periods in which the sun returns to its previous
signs.

He added sixty-five days to three hundred,
And then added a fifth part of a whole day.
That's the measure of the year: one day
The sum of the five part-days is added to each lustre.

Book III: March 1: Kalends

'If it's right for the secret promptings of the gods
To be heard by poets, as it's rumoured they may,
Tell me, [Gradivus](#), Marching God, why women keep
Your feast, you who are apt to be served by men.'
So I spoke. And [Mars](#) answered, laying aside his helmet,
But keeping his throwing spear in his right hand:
Now am I, a god used to warfare, invoked
In pursuit of peace, and I'm carried into new camps,
And I don't dislike it: I like to take on this function,
Lest [Minerva](#) think that she alone can do so.
Have what you seek, labouring poet of Latin days,
And inscribe my words in your memory.
[Rome](#) was little, if you wish to trace its first beginnings,
But still in that little, there was hope of all this.
The walls already stood, too cramped for its future people,

But then thought too large for its populace.
If you ask where my son's palace was,
See there, that house made of straw and reeds.
He snatched the gifts of peaceful sleep on straw,
Yet from that same low bed he rose to the stars.
Already the Roman's name extended beyond his city,
Though he possessed neither wife nor father-in-law.
Wealthy neighbours rejected poor sons-in-law,
And hardly thought I was the origin of the race.
It harmed the Romans that they lived in cattle-byres,
Grazed sheep, and owned a few acres of poor soil.
Birds and beasts each mate with their own kind,
And even a snake has another with which to breed:
Rights of intermarriage are granted to distant peoples:
Yet none wished to marry with the Romans.
I sympathised, Romulus, and gave you your father's spirit:
"Forget prayers," I said, "Arms will grant what you seek."
He prepared a feast for the god, [Consus](#). Consus will tell
you
The rest of what happened that day when you sing his
rites.
[Cures](#) was angered, and all who endured that same wrong:
Then a father fist waged war on his sons-in-law.
The ravished women were now almost mothers,
And the war between the kinfolk lingered on,
When the wives gathered to the call in Juno's temple:
Among them, my daughter-in-law dared to speak:
"Oh, all you ravished women (we have that in common)
We can no longer delay our duties to our kin.

The battle prepares, but choose which side you will pray
for:

Your husbands on this side, your fathers are on that.
The question is whether you choose to be widows or
fatherless:

I will give you dutiful and bold advice.”

She gave counsel: they obeyed and loosened their hair,
And clothed their bodies in gloomy funeral dress.

The ranks already stood to arms, preparing to die,
The trumpets were about to sound the battle signal,
When the ravished women stood between husband and
father,

Holding their infants, dear pledges of love, to their breasts.
When, with streaming hair, they reached the centre of the
field,

They knelt on the ground, their grandchildren, as if they
understood,

With sweet cries, stretching out their little arms to their
grandfathers:

Those who could, called to their grandfather, seen for the
first time,

And those who could barely speak yet, were encouraged
to try.

The arms and passions of the warriors fall: dropping their
swords

Fathers and sons-in-law grasp each other's hands,
They embrace the women, praising them, and the
grandfather

Bears his grandchild on his shield: a sweeter use for it.

Hence the Sabine mothers acquired the duty, no light one,
To celebrate the first day, my Kalends.
Either because they ended that war, by their tears,
In boldly facing the naked blades,
Or because [Ilia](#) happily became a mother through me,
Mothers justly observe the rites on my day.
Then winter, coated in frost, at last withdraws,
And the snows vanish, melted by warm suns:
Leaves, once lost to the cold, appear on the trees,
And the moist bud swells in the tender shoot:
And fertile grasses, long concealed, find out
Hidden paths to lift themselves to the air.
Now the field's fruitful, now's the time for cattle breeding,
Now the bird on the bough prepares a nest and home:
It's right that Roman mothers observe that fruitful season,
Since in childbirth they both struggle and pray.
Add that, where the Roman king kept watch,
On the hill that now has the name of [Esquiline](#),
A temple was founded, as I recall, on this day,
By the Roman women in honour of [Juno](#).
But why do I linger, and burden your thoughts with
reasons?
The answer you seek is plainly before your eyes.
My mother, Juno, loves brides: crowds of mothers
worship me:
Such a virtuous reason above all befits her and me.'
Bring the goddess flowers: the goddess loves flowering
plants:
Garland your heads with fresh flowers, and say:

‘You, Lucina, have given us the light of life’: and say:
‘You hear the prayer of women in childbirth.’
But let her who is with child, free her hair in prayer,
So the goddess may gently free her womb.
Now who will tell me why the [Salii](#) carry Mars’
Celestial weapons, and sing of [Mamurius](#).
Teach me, nymph, who serves [Diana](#)’s [lake](#) and grove:
Nymph, [Egeria](#), wife to [Numa](#), speak of your actions.
There is a lake in the vale of Aricia, ringed by dense
woods,
And sacred to religion from ancient times.
Here [Hippolytus](#) hides, who was torn to pieces
By his horses, and so no horse may enter the grove.
The long hedge is covered with hanging threads,
And many tablets witness the goddess’ s merit.
Often a woman whose prayer is answered, brow wreathed
With garlands, carries lighted torches from the City.
One with strong hands and swift feet rules there,
And each is later killed, as he himself killed before.
A pebble-filled stream flows down with fitful murmurs:
Often I’ve drunk there, but in little draughts.
[Egeria](#), goddess dear to the [Camena](#)e, supplies the water:
She who was wife and counsellor to Numa.
The [Quirites](#) were too prompt to take up arms,
And [Numa](#) quietened them with justice, and fear of the
gods.
So laws were made, that the stronger might not take all,
And traditional rights were properly observed.
They left off being savages, justice superseded arms,

And citizens were ashamed to fight each other:
Those who had once been violent were transformed, on
seeing
An altar, offering wine and salted meal on the warm
hearths.
See, the father of the gods scatters red lightning through
The clouds, and clears the sky with showers of rain:
The forked flames never fell thicker:
The king was fearful, the people filled with terror.
The goddess said: 'Don't be so afraid! Lightning
Can be placated, and fierce Jupiter's anger averted.
[Picus](#) and [Faunus](#), each a deity native to Roman soil,
Can teach you the rites of expiation. But they won't
Teach them unless compelled: so catch and bind them.'
And she revealed the arts by which they could be caught.
There was a grove, dark with holm-oaks, below the
[Aventine](#),
At sight of which you would say: 'There's a god within.'
The centre was grassy, and covered with green moss,
And a perennial stream of water trickled from the rock.
Faunus and Picus used to drink there alone.
Numa approached and sacrificed a sheep to the spring,
And set out cups filled with fragrant wine.
Then he hid with his people inside the cave.
The woodland spirits came to their usual spring,
And quenched their dry throats with draughts of wine.
Sleep succeeded wine: Numa emerged from the icy cave
And clasped the sleepers' hands in tight shackles.
When sleep vanished, they fought and tried to burst

Their bonds, which grew tighter the more they struggled.
Then Numa spoke: ‘Gods of the sacred groves, if you
accept
My thoughts were free of wickedness, forgive my actions:
And show me how the lightning may be averted.’
So Numa: and, shaking his horns, so Faunus replied:
‘You seek great things, that it’s not right for you to know
Through our admission: our powers have their limits.
We are rural gods who rule in the high mountains:
Jupiter has control of his own weapons.
You could never draw him from heaven by yourself,
But you may be able, by making use of our aid.’
[Faunus](#) spoke these words: Picus too agreed,
‘But remove our shackles,’ Picus added:
‘Jupiter will arrive here, drawn by powerful art.
Cloudy [Styx](#) will be witness to my promise.’
It’s wrong for men to know what the gods enacted when
loosed
From the snare, or what spells they spoke, or by what art
They drew Jupiter from his realm above. My song will
sing
Of lawful things, such as a poet may speak with pious lips.
The drew you (*eliciunt*) from the sky, Jupiter, and later
Generations now worship you, by the name of [Elicius](#).
It’s true that the crowns of the [Aventine](#) woods trembled,
And the earth sank under the weight of Jove.
The king’s heart shook, the blood fled from his body,
And the bristling hair stood up stiffly on his head.
When he regained his senses, he said: ‘King and father

To the high gods, if I have touched your offerings
With pure hands, and if a pious tongue, too, asks for
What I seek, grant expiation from your lightning,
The god accepted his prayer, but hid the truth with deep
Ambiguities, and terrified him with confusing words.
'Sever a head,' said the god: the king replied; 'I will,
We'll sever an onion's, dug from my garden.'
The god added: 'Of a man': 'You'll have the hair,'
Said the king. He demanded a life, Numa replied: 'A
fish's'.
The god laughed and said: 'Expiate my lightning like this,
O man who cannot be stopped from speaking with gods.
And when [Apollo](#)'s disc is full tomorrow,
I'll give you sure pledges of empire.'
He spoke, and was carried above the quaking sky,
In loud thunder, leaving Numa worshipping him.
The king returned joyfully, and told the Quirites
What had happened: they were slow to believe his words.
'It will surely be believed,' he said, 'if the event follows
My speech: listen, all you here, to what tomorrow brings.
When Apollo's disc has lifted fully above the earth,
Jupiter will grant me sure pledges of empire.'
The left, doubtful, considering it long to wait,
But setting their hopes on the following day.
The ground was soft at dawn, with a frost of dew:
When the crowd gathered at the king's threshold.
He emerged, and sat in the midst on a maple wood throne.
Countless warriors stood around him in silence.
Phoebus had scarcely risen above the horizon:

Their anxious minds trembled with hope and fear.
The king stood, his head covered with a white cloth
Raising his hands, that the god now knew so well.
He spoke as follows: ‘The time is here for the promised
gift,
Jupiter, make true the words of your pledge.’
As he spoke, the sun’s full disc appeared,
And a loud crash came from the depths of the sky.
Three times the god thundered, and hurled his lightning,
From cloudless air, believe what I say, wonderful but true.
The sky began to split open at the zenith:
The crowd and its leader lifted their eyes.
Behold, a shield fell, trembling in the light breeze.
The sound of the crowd’s shouting reached the stars.
The king first sacrificed a heifer that had never known
The yoke, then raised the gift from the ground,
And called it *ancile*, because it was cut away (*recisum*)
All round, and there wasn’t a single angle to note.
Then, remembering the empire’s fate was involved,
He thought of a very cunning idea.
He ordered many shields cut in the same shape,
In order to confuse the eyes of any traitor.
[Mamurius](#) carried out the task: whether he was superior
In his craft or his character it would be hard to say.
Gracious Numa said to him: ‘Ask a reward for your work,
You’ll not ask in vain of one known for honesty.’
He’d already given the [Salii](#), named from their leaping
(*saltus*),
Weapons: and words to be sung to a certain tune.

Mamurius replied: 'Give me glory as my prize,
And let my name be sounded at the song's end.'
So the priests grant the reward promised for his
Ancient work, and now call out 'Mamurius'.
Girl if you'd marry, delay, however eager both are:
A little delay, at this time, is of great advantage.
Weapons excite to war, war's bad for those married:
The omens will be better when weapons are put away.
Now the girded wife of the peak-capped *Flamen Dialis*
Has to keep her hair free from the comb.

Book III: March 3

When the third night of the month initiates its rising,
One of the two fishes (*Pisces*) will have vanished.
There are two: one near to the South Wind, the other
To the North Wind: each taking a name from its wind.

Book III: March 5

When *Aurora*, *Tithonus*' bride, shall have begun
To shed dew from her saffron cheeks at the fifth dawn,
The constellation, whether you call it *Arctophylax*,
Or dull *Bootes*, will have been sinking, fleeing your sight.
But even the *Grape-Gatherer* will not yet have escaped
you:
The origin of that star-name also can be swiftly told.
It's said that hairy *Ampelus*, son of a nymph and satyr,
Was loved by *Bacchus*, among the Ismarian hills:

The god entrusted him with a vine, trailing from an elm's
Leafy boughs, and the vine takes its name from the boy's.
While on a branch rashly picking the shining grapes.
He fell: but [Liber](#) raised the fallen youth to the stars.

Book III: March 6

When the sixth sun climbs [Olympus](#)' slopes from ocean,
And takes his way through the sky behind winged horses,
All you who worship at the shrine of chaste [Vesta](#),
Give thanks to her, and offer incense on the Trojan hearth.
To the countless titles [Caesar](#) chose to earn,
The honour of the [High Priesthood](#) was added.
Caesar's eternal godhead protects the eternal fire,
You may see the pledges of empire conjoined.
Gods of ancient [Troy](#), worthiest prize for that [Aeneas](#)
Who carried you, your burden saving him from the enemy,
A priest of Aeneas' line touches your divine kindred:
Vesta in turn guard the life of your kin!
You fires, burn on, nursed by his sacred hand:
Live undying, our leader, and your flames, I pray.

Book III: March 7: Nones

The Nones of March are free of meetings, because it's
thought
The temple of [Veiovis](#) was consecrated today before the
two groves.
When [Romulus](#) ringed his grove with a high stone wall,

He said: 'Whoever takes refuge here, they will be safe.'
O from how tenuous a beginning the Romans sprang!
How little that crowd of old are to be envied!
But so the strange name won't confuse you, unknowingly,
Learn who this god is, and why he is so called.
He is the young Jupiter: see his youthful face:
Then see his hand, holding no lightning bolt.
[Jove](#) carried his lightning bolts after the [Giants](#) dared
Their attempt on the heavens: at first he was unarmed.
[Ossa](#) blazed with his new fires, and [Pelion](#) higher than
Ossa,
And [Olympus](#) rooted to the solid earth.
A she-goat stands there too: they say the Cretan nymphs
Nursed the god: and she gave her milk to the infant Jove.
Now I'm called on to explain the name. Farmers call
Stunted grain *vegrandia*, and what's feeble *vesca*.
If that's the meaning, why should I not suspect
That the shrine of Veiovis is that of Little Jupiter?
Now when the stars glitter in the dark-blue sky,
Look up: you'll see the head of Gorgonian [Pegasus](#).
It's said he leapt from the fecund neck of dead [Medusa](#),
His mane drenched with her blood.
As he glided above the clouds, beneath the stars,
The sky was his earth, wings acted instead of feet,
And soon he champed indignantly on the fresh bit,
So that his light hoof created Helicon's Aonian spring.
Now he enjoys the sky, that his wings once sought,
And glitters there brightly with his fifteen stars.

Book III: March 8

As soon as night falls you will see the [Cretan Crown](#):
Through [Theseus](#)' crime [Ariadne](#) was made a goddess.
She'd already happily exchanged that faithless spouse for
[Bacchus](#),
She who'd given the ungrateful man the thread to follow.
Delighting in her wedded fate, she said: 'Why did I weep
Like a country-girl, his faithlessness has been my gain?'
Meanwhile [Bacchus](#) had conquered the straight-haired
Indians,
And returned with his riches from the Eastern world.
Among the captive girls, of outstanding beauty,
One, the daughter of a king, pleased Bacchus intensely.
His loving wife wept, and treading the curving shore
With dishevelled hair, she spoke these words:
'Behold, again, you waves, how you hear my complaint!
Behold again you sands, how you receive my tears!
I remember I used to say: "Perjured, faithless Theseus!"
He abandoned me: now Bacchus commits the same crime.
Now once more I'll cry: "Woman, never trust in man!"
My fate's repeated, only his name has changed.
O that my life had ended where it first began.
So that I'd not have existed for this moment!
Why did you save me, Liber, to die on these lonely sands?
I might have ceased grieving at that moment.
Bacchus, fickle, lighter than the leaves that wreath
Your brow, Bacchus known to me in my weeping,
How have you dared to trouble our harmonious bed

By bringing another lover before my eyes?
Alas, where is sworn faith? Where the pledges you once
gave?
Wretched me, how many times must I speak those words?
You blamed Theseus and called him a deceiver:
According to that judgement your own sin is worse.
Let no one know of this, let me burn with silent pain,
Lest they think I deserved to be cheated so!
Above all I wish it to be hid from Theseus,
So he may not joy in you as a partner in crime.
I suppose your fair lover is preferred to a dark,
May fair be the colouring of my enemies!
Yet what does that signify? She is dearer to you for that.
What are you doing? She contaminates your embrace.
Bacchus, be true, and do not prefer her to a wife's love.
I am one who would love my husband for ever.
The horns of a gleaming bull captivated my [mother](#).
Yours, me: but this is a love to be praised, hers shameful.
Let me not suffer, for loving: you yourself, Bacchus,
Never suffered for confessing your desire to me.
No wonder you make me burn: they say you were born
In fire, and were snatched from the flames by your [father](#).
I am she to whom you used to promise the heavens.
Ah me, what a reward I suffer instead of heaven!
She spoke: Liber had been listening a long while
To her complaint, since he chanced to follow closely.
He embraced her, and dried her tears with kisses,
And said: 'Together, let us seek the depths of the sky!
You'll share my name just as you've shared my bed,

Since, transmuted, you will be called [Libera](#):
And there'll be a memory of your crown beside you,
The crown [Vulcan](#) gave to [Venus](#), and she to you.'
He did as he said, and changed the nine jewels to fire:
Now the golden crown glitters with nine stars.

Book III: March 14: The Equirria

When he who, with his swift chariot, brings bright day
Has raised his disc six times, and immersed it again,
You will see horse races again on the [Campus](#),
That grassy plain that [Tiber](#)'s winding waters wash.
But if by chance it's flooded by overflowing waves,
The dusty Caelian Hill will accept the horses.

Book III: March 15: Ides

The happy feast of [Anna Perenna](#) is held on the Ides,
Not far from your banks, [Tiber](#), far flowing river.
The people come and drink there, scattered on the grass,
And every man reclines there with his girl.
Some tolerate the open sky, a few pitch tents,
And some make leafy huts out of branches,
While others set reeds up, to form rigid pillars,
And hang their outspread robes from the reeds.
But they're warmed by sun and wine, and pray
For as many years as cups, as many as they drink.
There you'll find a man who quaffs [Nestor](#)'s years,
A woman who'd age as the [Sibyl](#), in her cups.

There they sing whatever they've learnt in the theatres,
Beating time to the words with ready hands,
And setting the bowl down, dance coarsely,
The trim girl leaping about with streaming hair.
Homecoming they stagger, a sight for vulgar eyes,
And the crowd meeting them call them 'blessed'.
I fell in with the procession lately (it seems to me worth
Saying): a tipsy old woman dragging a tipsy old man.
But since errors abound as to who this goddess is,
I'm determined not to cloak her story.
Wretched [Dido](#) burned with love for [Aeneas](#),
She burned on the pyre built for her funeral:
Her ashes were gathered, and this brief couplet
Which she left, in dying, adorned her tomb:

AENEAS THE REASON, HIS THE BLADE
EMPLOYED.
DIDO BY HER OWN HAND WAS DESTROYED.

The Numidians immediately invaded the defenceless
Realm, and [Iarbas](#) the Moor captured and held the palace.
Remembering her scorn, he said: 'See, I, whom she
So many times rejected, now enjoy [Elissa](#)'s marriage bed.'
The [Tyrians](#) scattered, as each chanced to stray, as bees
Often wander confusedly, having lost their Queen.
[Anna](#), was driven from her home, weeping on leaving
Her sister's city, after first paying honour to that sister.
The loose ashes drank perfume mixed with tears,
And received an offering of her shorn hair:

Three times she said: 'Farewell!' three times lifted
And pressed the ashes to her lips, seeing her sister there.
Finding a ship, and companions for her flight, she glided
Away, looking back at the city, her sister's sweet work.
There's a fertile island, [Melite](#), near barren Cosyra,
Lashed by the waves of the Libyan sea. Trusting in
The king's former hospitality, she headed there,
[Battus](#) was king there, and was a wealthy host.
When he had learned the fates of the two sisters,
He said: 'This land, however small, is yours.'
He would have been hospitable to the end,
Except that he feared [Pygmalion](#)'s great power.
The corn had been taken to be threshed a third time,
And a third time the new wine poured into empty vats.
The sun had twice circled the zodiac, and a third year
Was passing, when Anna had to find a fresh place of exile.
Her brother came seeking war. The king hated weapons,
And said: 'We are peaceable, flee for your own safety!'
She fled at his command, gave her ship to the wind and
waves:
Her brother was crueller than any ocean.
There's a little field by the fish-filled streams
Of stony [Crathis](#): the local people call it Camere.
There she sailed, and when she was no further away
Than the distance reached by nine slingshots,
The sails first fell and then flapped in the light breeze.
'Attack the water with oars!' cried the captain.
And while they made ready to reef the sails,
The swift South Wind struck the curved stern,

And despite the captain's efforts swept them
Into the open sea: the land was lost to sight.
The waves attacked them, and the ocean heaved
From the depths, and the hull gulped the foaming waters.
Skill is defeated by the wind, the steersman no longer
Guides the helm, but he too turns to prayer for aid.
The Phoenician exile is thrown high on swollen waves,
And hides her weeping eyes in her robe:
Then for a first time she called her sister Dido happy,
And whoever, anywhere, might be treading dry land.
A great gust drove the ship to the Laurentine shore,
And, foundering, it perished, when all had landed.
Meanwhile pious [Aeneas](#) had gained [Latinus](#)' realm
And his [daughter](#) too, and had merged both peoples.
While he was walking barefoot along the shore
That had been his dower, accompanied only by [Achates](#),
He saw Anna wandering, not believing it was her:
'Why should she be here in the fields of Latium?'
Aeneas said to himself: 'It's Anna!' shouted Achates:
At the sound of her name she raised her face.
Alas, what should she do? Flee? Wish for the ground
To swallow her? Her wretched sister's fate was before her
eyes.
The [Cytherean](#) hero felt her fear, and spoke to her,
(He still wept, moved by your memory, Elissa):
'Anna, I swear, by this land that you once knew
A happier fate had granted me, and by the gods
My companions, who have lately found a home here,
That all of them often rebuked me for my delay.

Yet I did not fear her dying, that fear was absent.
Ah me! Her courage was beyond belief.
Don't re-tell it: I saw shameful wounds on her body
When I dared to visit the houses of [Tartarus](#).
But you shall enjoy the comforts of my kingdom,
Whether your will or a god brings you to our shores.
I owe you much, and owe Elissa not a little:
You are welcome for your own and your sister's sake.'
She accepted his words (no other hope was left)
And told him of her own wanderings.
When she entered the palace, dressed in Tyrian style,
Aeneas spoke (the rest of the throng were silent):
'Lavinia, my wife, I have a pious reason for entrusting
This lady to you: shipwrecked, I lived at her expense.
She's of Tyrian birth: her kingdom's on the Libyan shore:
I beg you to love her, as your dear sister.'
Lavinia promised all, but hid a fancied wrong
Within her silent heart, and concealed her fears:
And though she saw many gifts given away openly,
She suspected many more were sent secretly.
She hadn't yet decided what to do: she hated
With fury, prepared a plan, and wished to die avenged.
It was night: it seemed her sister Dido stood
Before her bed, her straggling hair stained with her blood,
Crying: 'Flee, don't hesitate, flee this gloomy house!'
At the words a gust slammed the creaking door.
Anna leapt up, then jumped from a low window
To the ground: fear itself had made her daring.
With terror driving her, clothed in her loose vest,

She runs like a frightened doe that hears the wolves.
It's thought that horned [Numicius](#) swept her away
In his swollen flood, and hid her among his pools.
Meanwhile, shouting, they searched for the Sidonian lady
Through the fields: traces and tracks were visible:
Reaching the banks, they found her footprints there.
The knowing river stemmed his silent waters.
She herself appeared, saying: 'I'm a nymph of the calm
Numicius: hid in perennial waters, Anna Perenna's my
name.'
Quickly they set out a feast in the fields they'd roamed,
And celebrated their deeds and the day, with copious
wine.
Some think she's the Moon, because she measures out
The year (*annus*): others, [Themis](#), or the [Inachian](#) heifer.
Anna, you'll find some to say you're a nymph, daughter
Of [Azan](#), and gave Jupiter his first nourishment.
I'll relate another tale that's come to my ears,
And it's not so far away from the truth.
The Plebs of old, not yet protected by Tribunes,
Fled, and gathered on the Sacred Mount:
The food supplies they'd brought with them failed,
Also the stores of bread fit for human consumption.
There was a certain Anna from suburban [Bovillae](#),
A poor woman, old, but very industrious.
With her grey hair bound up in a light cap,
She used to make coarse cakes with a trembling hand,
And distribute them, still warm, among the people,
Each morning: this supply of hers pleased them all.

When peace was made at home, they set up a statue
To Perenna, because she'd helped supply their needs.
Now it's left for me to tell why the girls sing coarse songs:
Since they gather together to sing certain infamous things.
Anna had lately been made a goddess: [Gradivus](#) came to
her
And taking her aside, spoke these words:
You honour my month: I've joined my season to yours:
I've great hopes you can do me a service.
Armed, I'm captivated by armed [Minerva](#),
I burn, and have nursed the wound for many a day.
Help us, alike in our pursuits, to become one:
The part suits you well, courteous old lady.'
He spoke. She tricked the god with empty promises.
And led him on, in foolish hope, with false delays.
Often, when he pressed her, she said: 'I've done as you
asked,
She's won, she's yielded at last to your prayers.'
The lover believed her and prepared the marriage-
chamber.
They led Anna there, a new bride, her face veiled.
About to kiss her, Mars suddenly saw it was Anna:
Shame and anger alternating stirred the hoodwinked god.
The new goddess laughed at her dear Minerva's lover.
Nothing indeed has ever pleased Venus more.
So now they tell old jokes, and coarse songs are sung,
And they delight in how the great god was cheated.
I was about to neglect those daggers that pierced
Our [leader](#), when Vesta spoke from her pure hearth:

Don't hesitate to recall them: he was my [priest](#),
And those sacrilegious hands sought me with their blades.
I snatched him away, and left a naked semblance:
What died by the steel, was Caesar's shadow.'
Raised to the heavens he found Jupiter's halls,
And his is the temple in the mighty Forum.
But all the daring criminals who in defiance
Of the gods, defiled the high priest's head,
Have fallen in merited death. Philippi is witness,
And those whose scattered bones whiten its earth.
This work, this duty, was Augustus' first task,
Avenging his father by the just use of arms.

Book III: March 16

When the next dawn has revived the tender grass,
[Scorpio](#)'s pincers will be visible.

Book III: March 17: The Liberalia

There's a popular festival of [Bacchus](#), on the third day
After the Ides: Bacchus, favour the poet who sings your
feast.
I'll not speak about [Semele](#): you'd have been born
defenceless,
If it hadn't been that [Jupiter](#) brought her his lightning too.
Nor will I tell how the mother's labour was fulfilled
In a father's body, so you might duly be born their son.
It would take long to tell of the conquered Sithonians,

And the Scythians, and the races of incense-bearing India.
I'll be silent about you too, [Pentheus](#), sad prey to your
own mother,

And you [Lycurgus](#), who killed your own son in madness.
Lo, I'd like to speak of the monstrous Tyrrhenians, who
Suddenly became dolphins, but that's not the task of this
verse.

The task of *this* verse is to set out the reasons,
Why a vine-planter sells his cakes to the crowd.
[Liber](#), before your birth the altars were without offerings,
And grass appeared on the stone-cold hearths.
They tell how you set aside the first fruits for Jupiter,
After subduing the Ganges region, and the whole of the
East.

You were the first to offer up cinnamon and incense
From conquered lands, and the roast entrails of triumphal
oxen.

Libations derive their name from their originator,
And cake (*liba*) since a part is offered on the sacred
hearth.

Honey-cakes are baked for the god, because he delights in
sweet

Substances, and they say that [Bacchus](#) discovered honey.
He was travelling from sandy [Hebrus](#), accompanied
By [Satyrs](#), (my tale contains a not-unpleasant jest)
And he'd come to Mount Rhodope, and flowering
Pangaeus:

With the cymbals clashing in his companions' hands.
Behold unknown winged things gather to the jangling,

Bees, that follow after the echoing bronze.
Liber gathered the swarm and shut it in a hollow tree,
And was rewarded with the prize of discovering honey.
Once the Satyrs, and old bald-headed [Silenus](#), had tasted
it,
They searched for the yellow combs in every tree.
The old fellow heard a swarm humming in a hollow elm,
Saw the honeycombs, but pretended otherwise:
And sitting lazily on his hollow-backed ass,
He rode it up to the elm where the trunk was hollow.
He stood and leant on the stump of a branch,
And greedily reached for the honey hidden inside.
But thousands of hornets gathered, thrusting their stings
Into his bald head, leaving their mark on his snub-nosed
face.
He fell headlong, and received a kick from the ass,
As he shouted to his friends and called for help.
The Satyrs ran up, and laughed at their father's face,
While he limped about on his damaged knee.
Bacchus himself laughed and showed him the use of mud:
Silenus took his advice, and smeared his face with clay.
Father Liber loves honey: its right to offer its discoverer
Glittering honey diffused through oven-warm cakes.
The reason why a woman presides isn't obscure:
[Bacchus](#) stirs crowds of women with his *thyrsus*.
Why an old woman, you ask? That age drinks more,
And loves the gifts of the teeming vine.
Why is she wreathed with ivy? Ivy's dearest to Bacchus:
And why that's so doesn't take long to tell.

They say that when [Juno](#) his stepmother was searching
For the boy, the nymphs of [Nysa](#) hid the cradle in ivy
leaves.

It remains for me to reveal why the *toga virilis*, the gown
Of manhood, is given to boys on your day, [Bacchus](#):

Whether it's because you seem to be ever boy or youth,
And your age is somewhere between the two:

Or because you're a father, fathers commend their sons,
Their pledges of love, to your care and divinity:

Or because you're Liber, the gown of liberty

And a more liberated life are adopted, for you:

Or is it because, in the days when the ancients tilled the
fields

More vigorously, and Senators worked their fathers' land,
And 'rods and axes' took Consuls from the curving
plough,

And it wasn't a crime to have work-worn hands,

The farmers came to the City for the games,

(Though that was an honour paid to the gods, and not

Their inclination: and the grape's discoverer held [his
games](#)

This day, while now he shares that of torch-bearing
[Ceres](#)):

And the day seemed not unfitting for granting the *toga*,

So that a crowd could celebrate the fresh novice?

Father turn your mild head here, and gentle horns,

And spread the sails of my art to a favourable breeze.

If I remember rightly, on this, and the preceding day,

Crowds go to the [Argei](#) (their own page will tell who they are).

The Kite star turns downwards near

The [Lycaonian Bear](#): on this night it's first visible.

If you wish to know who raised that falcon to heaven,

It was when [Saturn](#) had been dethroned by [Jupiter](#):

Angered, he stirred the mighty Titans to battle,

And sought whatever help the Fates could grant him.

There was a bull, a marvellous monster, born of Mother

Earth, the hind part of which was of serpent-form:

Warned by the three Fates, grim [Styx](#) had imprisoned him

In dark woods, surrounded by triple walls.

There was a prophecy that whoever burnt the entrails

Of the bull, in the flames, would defeat the eternal gods.

[Briareus](#) sacrificed it with an adamantine axe,

And was about to set the innards on the flames:

But Jupiter ordered the birds to snatch them: and the Kite

Brought them, and his service set him among the stars.

Book III: March 19: The [Quinquatrus](#)

After a one day interval, the rites of Minerva are performed,

Which take their name from the sequence of five days.

The first day is bloodless, and sword fights are unlawful,

Because [Minerva](#) was born on that very day.

The next four are celebrated with gladiatorial shows,

The warlike goddess delights in naked swords.

Pray now you boys and tender girls to Pallas:

He who can truly please Pallas, is learned.
Pleasing Pallas let girls learn to card wool,
And how to unwind the full distaff.
She shows how to draw the shuttle through the firm
Warp, and close up loose threads with the comb.
Worship her, you who remove stains from damaged
clothes,
Worship her, you who ready bronze cauldrons for fleeces.
If Pallas frowns, no one could make good shoes,
Even if he were more skilled than [Tychius](#):
And even if he were cleverer with his hands
Than [Epeus](#) once was, he'll be useless if Pallas is angry.
You too who drive away ills with Apollo's art,
Bring a few gifts of your own for the goddess:
And don't scorn her, you schoolmasters, a tribe
So often cheated of its pay: she attracts new pupils:
Nor you engravers, and painters with encaustics,
Nor you who carve the stone with a skilful hand.
She's the goddess of a thousand things: and song for sure:
If I'm worthy may she be a friend to my endeavours.
Where the Caelian Hill slopes down to the plain,
At the point where the street's almost, but not quite, level,
You can see the little shrine of [Minerva Capta](#),
Which the goddess first occupied on her birthday.
The source of the name is doubtful: we speak of
'Capital' ingenuity: the goddess is herself ingenious.
Or is it because, motherless, she leapt, with a shield
From the crown of her father's head (*caput*)?

Or because she came to us as a ‘captive’ from the conquest
Of [Falerii](#)? This, an ancient inscription claims.
Or because her law ordains ‘capital’ punishment
For receiving things stolen from that place?
By whatever logic your title’s derived, Pallas,
Shield our leaders with your *aegis* forever.

Book III: March 23: The [Tubilustria](#)

The last day of the five exhorts us to purify
The tuneful trumpets, and sacrifice to the mighty [god](#).
Now you can turn your face to the Sun and say:
‘He touched the fleece of the [Phrixian Ram](#) yesterday’.
The seeds having been parched, by a wicked [stepmother](#)’s
Guile, the corn did not sprout in the usual way.
They sent to the oracle, to find by sure prophecy,
What cure the [Delphic god](#) would prescribe for sterility.
But tarnished like the seed, the messenger brought news
That the oracle sought the death of [Helle](#) and young
Phrixus:
And when citizens, season, and Ino herself compelled
The reluctant king to obey that evil order,
Phrixus and his sister, brows covered with sacred bands,
Stood together before the altar, bemoaning their mutual
fate.
Their [mother](#) saw them, as she hovered by chance in the
air,
And, stunned, she beat her naked breasts with her hand:

Then, with the clouds as her companions, she leapt down
Into serpent-born [Thebes](#), and snatched away her children:
And so that they could flee a ram, shining and golden,
Was brought, and it carried them over the wide ocean.
They say the sister held too weakly to the left-hand horn,
And so gave her own name to the [waters](#) below.
Her brother almost died with her, trying to help her
As she fell, stretching out his hands as far as he could.
He wept at losing her, his friend in their twin danger,
Not knowing she was now wedded to a sea-green god.
Reaching the shore the [Ram](#) was raised as a constellation,
While his golden fleece was carried to the halls of Colchis.

Book III: March 26

When the [Morning Star](#) has three times heralded the dawn,
You'll find the daylight hours are equal to those of night.

Book III: March 30

When, counting from that day, the shepherd has four times
penned
The sated kids, and the grass four times whitened with
fresh dew,
[Janus](#) must be adored, and with him gentle [Concord](#),
And the [Safety of Rome](#), and the altar of [Peace](#).

Book III: March 31

The Moon rules the months: this month's span ends
With the worship of the Moon on the [Aventine Hill](#).

Book IV

Book IV: Introduction

‘Kindly mother of the twin [Cupids](#), favour me!’ I said.
She glanced back towards her poet: ‘Why do you
Need me?’ she said. ‘Surely, you sing greater themes.
Have you some old wound lingering in your heart?’
‘Goddess, ‘ I replied, ‘you know my wound.’ She laughed,
And the sky immediately cleared in her direction.
‘Hurt or whole have I ever deserted your cause?
You were always my intent and my labour.
As was fitting in my youth, innocently I played,
And now my horses sweep out a wider field:
From ancient texts I sing the days and reasons,
And the star-signs that rise and set, beneath the Earth.
I’ve reached the fourth month, where you’re most
honoured,
And you know, [Venus](#), both month and poet are yours.’
The goddess, moved, touching my brow lightly
With [Cytherean](#) myrtle, said: ‘Finish what you’ve begun.’
I was inspired, and suddenly knew the origins of days:
Sail, my boat, while you can, while the breezes blow.
If there’s any part of the calendar that might stir you,
[Caesar](#), in April you’ll find what should interest you.
This month you inherit from a mighty lineage,
Yours by adoption into a noble house.
When [Romulus](#) established the length of the year,
He recognised this, and commemorated your sires:

And as he granted first place among months to fierce
[Mars](#),
Being the immediate cause of his own existence,
So he granted the second month to [Venus](#),
Tracing his descent from her through many generations:
Searching for the roots of his race, unwinding the rolls
Of the centuries, he came at last to his divine kin.
He couldn't be ignorant that [Electra](#) daughter of [Atlas](#)
Bore [Dardanus](#), that Electra had slept with [Jove](#).
From Dardanus came [Ericthonius](#), and from him [Tros](#):
He in turn produced [Assaracus](#), and Assaracus [Capys](#).
Next was [Anchises](#), with whom Venus
Didn't disdain to share the name of parent.
From them came [Aeneas](#), whose piety was seen, carrying
Holy things, and a father as holy, on his shoulders,
through the fire.
Now at last we come to the fortunate name of [Iulus](#),
Through whom the Julian house claims Teucrian
ancestors.
[Postumus](#) was his, called [Silvius](#) among the Latin
Race, being born in the depth of the woods.
He was your father, [Latinus](#). [Alba](#) followed Latinus:
[Epytus](#) was next to take your titles Alba.
Epytus gave his son [Capys](#) a Trojan name,
And the same was your grandfather [Calpetus](#).
When [Tiberinus](#) ruled his father's kingdom after him,
It's said he drowned in a deep pool of the [Tuscan river](#).
But before that he saw the birth of a son [Agrippa](#),
And a grandson [Remulus](#), who was struck by lightning.

[Aventinus](#) followed them, from whom the place and [the hill](#)

Took their name. After him the realm passed to [Proca](#).
He was succeeded by [Numitor](#), brother to harsh [Amulius](#).

[Ilia](#) and [Lausus](#) were then the children of Numitor.

Lausus fell to his uncle's sword: Ilia pleased [Mars](#),

And bore you [Quirinus](#), and your brother [Remus](#).

You always claimed your parents were Mars and Venus,
And deserved to be believed when you said so:

And you granted successive months to your race's gods,
So your descendants might not be in ignorance of the
truth.

But I think the month of [Venus](#) took its title

From the Greek: she was named after the sea-foam.

Nor is it any wonder it was called by a Greek name,
Since the land of Italy was Greater Greece.

[Evander](#) had reached here with ships full of his people:

[Alcides](#) had arrived, both Greek by race.

(A club-bearing guest fed his cattle on [Aventine](#) grass,

And one of the great gods drank from the [Albula](#)):

[Ulysses](#), the Neritian leader, also arrived: witness

The [Laestrygones](#), and the shore that bears [Circe](#)'s name.

[Telegonus](#)'s walls were already standing, and the walls

Of damp [Tibur](#), constructed by Greek hands.

[Halaesus](#) had come, spurred by the fate of the [Atrides](#),

Halaesus from whom the [Faliscan](#) country derives its
name.

Add to this, [Antenor](#), who advised the Trojans to make
peace,

And [Diomedes](#), the Oenid, son-in-law to Apulian [Daunus](#).
[Aeneas](#) arrived later, after Antenor, bringing his gods
To our country, out of the flames of Ilium.
He had a comrade, [Solymus](#), from Phrygian [Ida](#),
From whom the walls of [Sulmo](#) take their name,
Cool Sulmo, [my](#) native place, [Germanicus](#).
Ah me, how far that place is from Scythia's soil!
And I, so distant – but Muse, quell your complaints!
Holy themes set to a gloomy lyre are not for you.
Where does envy not reach? Venus, there are some
Who'd grudge you your month, and snatch it away.
They say Spring was named from the open (*apertum*)
season,
Because Spring opens (*aperit*) everything and the sharp
Frost-bound cold vanishes, and fertile soil's revealed,
Though kind [Venus](#) sets her hand there and claims it.
She rules the whole world too, and truly deserves to:
She owns a realm not inferior to any god's,
Commands earth and heaven, and her native ocean,
And maintains all beings from her source.
She created the gods (too numerous to mention):
She gave the crops and trees their first roots:
She brought the crude minds of men together,
And taught them each to associate with a partner.
What but sweet pleasure creates all the race of birds?
Cattle wouldn't mate, if gentle love were absent.
The wild ram butts the males with his horn,
But won't hurt the brow of his beloved ewe.
The bull, that the woods and pastures fear,

Puts off his fierceness and follows the heifer.
The same force preserves whatever lives in the deep,
And fills the waters with innumerable fish.
That force first stripped man of his wild apparel:
From it he learned refinement and elegance.
It's said a banished lover first serenaded
His mistress by night, at her closed door,
And eloquence then was the winning of a reluctant maid,
And everyone pleaded his or her own cause.
A thousand arts are furthered by the goddess: and the wish
To delight has revealed many things that were hidden.
Who dares to steal her honour of naming the second
month?
Let such madness be far from my thoughts.
Besides, though she's powerful everywhere, her temples
Crowded, doesn't she hold most sway in our City?
[Venus](#), Roman, carried weapons to defend your Troy,
And groaned at the spear wound in her gentle hand:
And she defeated two goddesses, by a [Trojan](#) judgement,
(Ah! If only they hadn't remembered her victory!)
And she was called the bride of [Assaracus](#)'s son,
So that mighty Caesar would have Julian ancestors.
No season is more fitting for Venus than Spring:
In spring the earth gleams: in spring the ground's soft,
Now the grass pokes its tips through the broken soil,
Now the vine bursts in buds through the swollen bark.
And lovely Venus deserves the lovely season,
And is joined again to her darling Mars:
In Spring she tells the curving ships to sail, over

Her native seas, and fear the winter's threat no longer.

Book IV: April 1: Kalends

Perform the rites of the goddess, Roman brides and mothers,

And you who must not wear the headbands and long robes.

Remove the golden necklaces from her marble neck,
Remove her riches: the goddess must be cleansed,
complete.

Return the gold necklaces to her neck, once it's dry:
Now she's given fresh flowers, and new-sprung roses.
She commands you too to bathe, under the green myrtle,
And there's a particular reason for her command (learn,
now!).

Naked, on the shore, she was drying her dripping hair:
The [Satyrs](#), that wanton crowd, spied the goddess.
She sensed it, and hid her body with a screen of myrtle:
Doing so, she was safe: she commands that you do so too.
Learn now why you offer incense to [Fortuna Virilis](#),
In that place that steams with heated water.

All women remove their clothes on entering,
And every blemish on their bodies is seen:
Virile Fortune undertakes to hide those from the men,
And she does this at the behest of a little incense.
Don't begrudge her poppies, crushed in creamy milk
And in flowing honey, squeezed from the comb:
When Venus was first led to her eager spouse,

She drank so: and from that moment was a bride.
Please her with words of supplication: beauty,
Virtue, and good repute are in her keeping.
In our forefather's time Rome lapsed from chastity:
And the ancients consulted the [old woman](#) of Cumae.
She ordered a temple built to Venus: when it was done
[Venus](#) took the name of Heart-Changer (*Verticordia*).
Loveliest One, always look with a benign gaze
On the sons of [Aeneas](#), and guard their many wives.
As I speak, [Scorpio](#), the tip of whose raised tail
Strikes fear, plunges down into the green waves.

Book IV: April 2

When the night is past, and the sky is just beginning
To redden, and the birds, wet with dew, are singing,
And the traveller who's been awake all night, puts down
His half-burnt torch, and the farmer's off to his usual
labours,
The [Pleiades](#) will start to lighten their [father](#)'s shoulders,
They who are said to be seven, but usually are six:
Because it's true that six lay in the loving clasp of gods
(Since they say that [Asterope](#) slept with [Mars](#):
[Alcyone](#), and you, lovely [Celaeno](#), with [Neptune](#):
[Maia](#), [Electra](#), and [Taygete](#) with [Jupiter](#)),
While the seventh, [Merope](#), married you, [Sisyphus](#), a
mortal,
And repents of it, and, alone of the sisters, hides from
shame:

Or because [Electra](#) couldn't bear to watch Troy's destruction,
And so her face now is covered by her hands.

Book IV: April 4 The Megalesian Festival of Cybele

Let the sky turn three times on its axis,
Let the Sun three times yoke and loose his horses,
And the Berecyntian flute will begin sounding
Its curved horn, it will be the [Idaeon Mother](#)'s feast.
Eunuchs will march, and sound the hollow drums,
And cymbal will clash with cymbal, in ringing tones:
Seated on the soft necks of her servants, she'll be carried
With howling, through the midst of the City streets.
The stage is set: the games are calling. Watch, then,
Quirites, and let those legal wars in the *fora* cease.
I'd like to ask many things, but I'm made fearful
By shrill clash of bronze, and curved flute's dreadful
drone.

'Lend me someone to ask, goddess.' Cybele spying her
learned Granddaughters, the [Muses](#), ordered them to take
care of me.

'Nurslings of Helicon, mindful of her orders, reveal
Why the Great Goddess delights in continual din.'
So I spoke. And [Erato](#) replied (it fell to her to speak about
Venus' month, because her name derives from tender
love):

'Saturn was granted this prophecy: "Noblest of kings,
You'll be ousted by your own son's sceptre."

The god, fearful, devoured his children as soon as
Born, and then retained them deep in his guts.
Often [Rhea](#) (Cybele) complained, at being so often
pregnant,
Yet never a mother, and grieved at her own fruitfulness.
Then Jupiter was born (ancient testimony is credited
By most: so please don't disturb the accepted belief):
A stone, concealed in clothing, went down Saturn's throat,
So the great progenitor was deceived by the fates.
Now steep Ida echoed to a jingling music,
So the child might cry from its infant mouth, in safety.
Some beat shields with sticks, others empty helmets:
That was the [Curetes](#)' and the [Corybantes](#)' task.
The thing was hidden, and the ancient deed's still acted
out:
The goddess's servants strike the bronze and sounding
skins.
They beat cymbals for helmets, drums instead of shields:
The flute plays, as long ago, in the Phrygian mode.'
The goddess ceased. I began: 'Why do fierce lions
Yield untamed necks to the curving yoke for her?'
I ceased. The goddess began: 'It's thought their ferocity
Was first tamed by her: the testament to it's her chariot.'
'But why is her head weighed down by a turreted crown?
Is it because she granted towers to the first cities?'
She nodded. I said 'Where did this urge to cut off
Their members come from?' As I ended, the Muse spoke:
'In the woods, a Phrygian boy, [Attis](#), of handsome face,
Won the tower-bearing goddess with his chaste passion.

She desired him to serve her, and protect her temple,
And said: "Wish, you might be a boy for ever."
He promised to be true, and said: "If I'm lying
May the love I fail in be my last love."
He did fail, and in meeting the nymph [Sagaritis](#),
Abandoned what he was: the goddess, angered, avenged it.
She destroyed the Naiad, by wounding a tree,
Since the tree contained the Naiad's fate.
Attis was maddened, and thinking his chamber's roof
Was falling, fled for the summit of Mount [Dindymus](#).
Now he cried: "Remove the torches", now he cried:
"Take the whips away": often swearing he saw the [Furies](#).
He tore at his body too with a sharp stone,
And dragged his long hair in the filthy dust,
Shouting: "I deserved this! I pay the due penalty
In blood! Ah! Let the parts that harmed me, perish!
Let them perish!" cutting away the burden of his groin,
And suddenly bereft of every mark of manhood.
His madness set a precedent, and his unmanly servants
Toss their hair, and cut off their members as if worthless.'
So the Aonian [Muse](#), eloquently answering the question
I'd asked her, regarding the causes of their madness.
'Guide of my work, I beg you, teach me also, where She
Was brought from. Was she always resident in our City?
'The Mother Goddess always loved Dindymus, Cybele,
And Ida, with its pleasant streams, and the Trojan realm:
And when Aeneas brought Troy to Italian fields, the
goddess
Almost followed those ships that carried the sacred relics.

But she felt that fate didn't require her powers in [Latium](#),
So she stayed behind in her long-accustomed place.
Later, when Rome was more than five centuries old,
And had lifted its head above the conquered world,
The priest consulted the fateful words of [Euboean](#)
prophecy:
They say that what he found there was as follows:
'The Mother's absent: Roman, I command you: seek the
Mother.
When she arrives, she must be received in chaste hands.'
The dark oracle's ambiguity set the senators puzzling
As to who that parent might be, and where to seek her.
[Apollo](#) was consulted, and replied: 'Fetch the Mother
Of all the Gods, who you'll find there on Mount Ida.'
Noblemen were sent. [Attalus](#) at that time held
The Phrygian sceptre: he refused the Italian lords.
Marvellous to tell, the earth shook with long murmurs,
And the goddess, from her shrine, spoke as follows:
'I myself wished them to seek me: don't delay: send me,
Willingly. Rome is a worthy place for all divinities.'
Quaking with fear at her words, Attalus, said: 'Go,
You'll still be ours: Rome claims Phrygian ancestry.'
Immediately countless axes felled the pine-trees
Those trees pious [Aeneas](#) employed for his flight:
A thousand hands work, and the heavenly Mother
Soon has a hollow ship, painted in fiery colours.
She's carried in perfect safety over her son's waves,
And reaches the long strait named for [Phrixus' sister](#),
Passes fierce [Rhoetum](#) and the [Sigean](#) shore,

And [Tenedos](#) and [Eetion](#)'s ancient kingdom.
Leaving [Lesbos](#) behind she then steered for the [Cyclades](#),
And the waves that break on [Euboea](#)'s Carystian shoals.
She passed the Icarian Sea, as well, where [Icarus](#) shed
His melting wings, giving his name to a vast tract of
water.
Then leaving Crete to larboard, and the [Pelopian](#) waves
To starboard, she headed for [Cythera](#), sacred to Venus.
From there to the [Sicilian Sea](#), where [Brontes](#), [Steropes](#)
And [Aemonides](#) forge their red-hot iron,
Then, skirting African waters, she saw the Sardinian
Realm behind to larboard, and reached our Italy.
She'd arrived at the mouth (*ostia*) where the [Tiber](#) divides
To meet the deep, and flows with a wider sweep:
All the Knights, grave Senators, and commoners,
Came to meet her at the mouth of the Tuscan river.
With them walked mothers, daughters, and brides,
And all those virgins who tend the sacred fires.
The men wearied their arms hauling hard on the ropes:
The foreign vessel barely made way against the stream.
For a long time there'd been a drought: the grass was dry
And scorched: the boat stuck fast in the muddy shallows.
Every man, hauling, laboured beyond his strength,
And encouraged their toiling hands with his cries.
Yet the ship lodged there, like an island fixed in mid-
ocean:
And astonished at the portent, men stood and quaked.
[Claudia Quinta](#) traced her descent from noble [Clausus](#),
And her beauty was in no way unequal to her nobility:

She was chaste, but not believed so: hostile rumour
Had wounded her, false charges were levelled at her:
Her elegance, promenading around in various hairstyles,
And her ready tongue, with stiff old men, counted against
her.

Conscious of virtue, she laughed at the rumoured lies,
But we're always ready to credit others with faults.
Now, when she'd stepped from the line of chaste women,
Taking pure river water in her hands, she wetted her head
Three times, three times lifted her palms to the sky,
(Everyone watching her thought she'd lost her mind)
Then, kneeling, fixed her eyes on the goddess's statue,
And, with loosened hair, uttered these words:

“ Kind and fruitful Mother of the Gods, accept
A suppliant's prayers, on this one condition:
They deny I'm chaste: let me be guilty if you condemn
me:

Convicted by a goddess I'll pay for it with my life.
But if I'm free of guilt, grant a pledge of my innocence
By your action: and, chaste, give way to my chaste
hands.”

She spoke: then gave a slight pull at the rope,
(A wonder, but the sacred drama attests what I say):
The goddess stirred, followed, and, following, approved
her:

Witness the sound of jubilation carried to the stars.
They came to a bend in the river (called of old
The Halls of [Tiber](#)): there the stream turns left, ascending.
Night fell: they tied the rope to an oak stump,

And, having eaten, settled to a tranquil sleep.
Dawn rose: they loosed the rope from the oak stump,
After first laying a fire and offering incense,
And crowned the stern, and sacrificed a heifer
Free of blemish, that had never known yoke or bull.
There's a place where smooth-flowing [Almo](#) joins the
Tiber,
And the lesser flow loses its name in the greater:
There, a white-headed priest in purple robes
Washed the Lady, and sacred relics, in Almo's water.
The attendants howled, and the mad flutes blew,
And soft hands beat at the bull's-hide drums.
Claudia walked in front with a joyful face,
Her chastity proven by the goddess's testimony:
The goddess herself, sitting in a cart, entered the Capene
Gate:
Fresh flowers were scattered over the yoked oxen.
[Nasica](#) received her. The name of her temple's founder is
lost:
[Augustus](#) has re-dedicated it, and, before him, [Metellus](#).'
Here Erato ceased. There was a pause for me to ask more:
I said: 'Why does the goddess collect money in small
coins?'
She said: 'The people gave coppers, with which Metellus
Built her shrine, so now there's a tradition of giving
them.'
I asked why people entertain each other at feasts,
And invite others to banquets, more than at other times.

She said: 'It's because the Berecynthian goddess by good luck

Changed her house, and they try for the same luck, by their visits.'

I was about to ask why the [Megalesia](#) are the first games Of the City's year, when the goddess (anticipating) said: 'She gave birth to the gods. They yielded to their mother, And she was given the honour of precedence.'

Why then do we call those who castrate themselves, [Galli](#), When the Gallic country's so far from Phrygia?'

'Between green Cybele and high Celaenae,' she said, 'Runs a river of maddening water, called the [Gallus](#).

Whoever drinks of it, is crazed: keep far away, all you Who desire a sound mind: who drinks of it is crazed.'

'They consider it no shame to set a dish of salad On the Lady's table. What's the reason?' I asked.

She replied: 'It's said the ancients lived on milk, And on herbs that the earth produced of itself.

Now they mix cream cheese with pounded herbs, So the ancient goddess might know the ancient food.'

Book IV: April 5: Nones

When the stars have vanished, and the Moon unyokes Her snowy horses, and the next [dawn](#) shines in the sky, He'll speak true who says: 'On this day long ago The temple of [Public Fortune](#) was dedicated on the [Quirinal](#).'

Book IV: April 6

It was the third day of the games (I recall), and a certain
Elderly man, who was sitting next to me at the show, said:
'This was the day when [Julius Caesar](#) crushed proud
[Juba](#)'s treacherous army, on the shores of Libya.
Caesar was my leader, under whom I'm proud
To have been a tribune: he ordered me so to serve.
I won this seat in war, and you in peace
Because of your role among the [Decemvirs](#).'
We were about to speak again when a sudden shower
Parted us: [Libra](#) balanced there shed heavenly waters.

Book IV: April 9

But before the last day completes the spectacle,
[Orion](#) with his sword will have sunk in the sea.

Book IV: April 10

When the next dawn gazes on victorious Rome,
And the fleeing stars have given way to the [Sun](#),
The Circus will be thronged with a procession of many
gods,
And horses swift as the wind will compete for the
winner's prize.

Book IV: April 12: The Games of Ceres

Next, the Games of [Ceres](#), there's no need to say why:
Obvious: the bounteous promise and gifts of the goddess.
The bread of primitive humans was made of plants,
That the earth produced without being asked:
They sometimes plucked wild grasses from the turf,
Sometimes tender leaves from the treetops made a meal.
Later the acorn was known: its discovery was fine,
Since the sturdy oak offered a rich horde.
Ceres was first to summon men to a better diet,
Replacing their acorns with more nourishing food.
She forced bulls to bow their necks to the yoke:
So the deep-ploughed soil first saw the light.
Copper was prized then, iron was still hidden:
Ah! If only it could have been hidden forever.
Ceres delights in peace: pray, you farmers,
Pray for endless peace and a peace-loving leader.
Honour the goddess with wheat, and dancing salt grains,
And grains of incense offered on the ancient hearths,
And if there's no incense, burn your resinous torches:
Ceres is pleased with little, if it's pure in kind.
You girded attendants lift those knives from the ox:
Let the ox plough, while you sacrifice the lazy sow,
It's not fitting for an axe to strike a neck that's yoked:
Let the ox live, and toil through the stubborn soil.
Now, this part requires me to tell of a virgin's rape:
You'll recognise much you know, but part is new.
The [Trinacrian](#) land took its name from its shape:
It runs out in three rocky capes to the vast ocean.
It's a place dear to Ceres. She owns, there, many cities,

Among them fertile [Enna](#), with its well-ploughed soul.
Cool [Arethusa](#) gathered together the mothers of the gods:
And the yellow-haired goddess came to the sacred feast.
Her daughter, [Persephone](#), attended by girls, as ever,
Wandered barefoot through Enna's meadows.
In a shadow-filled valley there's a place,
Wet by the copious spray from a high fall.
All the colours of nature were displayed there,
And the earth was bright with hues of various flowers.
On seeing it she cried: 'Come here to me, my friends,
And each carry back, with me, a lapful of flowers.'
The foolish prize enticed their girlish spirits,
And they were too busy to feel weary.
One filled baskets woven from supple willow,
Another her lap, the next loose folds of her robe:
One picked marigolds: another loved violets,
And one nipped the poppy-heads with her nails:
Some you tempt, hyacinth: others, amaranth, you delay:
Others desire thyme, cornflowers or clover.
Many a rose was taken, and flowers without name:
Proserpine herself plucked fragile crocuses and white
lilies.
Intent on gathering them, she gradually strayed,
And none of her friends chanced to follow their lady.
[Dis](#), her uncle saw her, and swiftly carried her off,
And bore her on shadowy horses to his realm.
She called out: 'Oh, dearest Mother, I'm being
Carried away!' and tore at the breast of her robe:
Meanwhile a path opened for Dis, since his horses

Can scarcely endure the unaccustomed daylight.
When her crowd of friends had gathered their flowers,
They shouted: 'Persephone, come for your gifts!'
But silence met their call: they filled the hills with their
cries,
And sadly beat their naked breasts with their hands.
Ceres was startled by their grief (she'd just now come
from Enna),
And cried instantly 'Ah me! Daughter, where are you?'
She rushed about, distracted, as we've heard
The Thracian [Maenads](#) run with flowing hair.
As a cow bellows, when her calf's torn from her udder,
And goes searching for her child, through the woods,
So the goddess groaned freely, and ran quickly,
As she made her way, Enna, from your plains.
There she found marks of the girlish feet, and saw
Where her familiar form had printed the ground:
Perhaps her wandering would have ended that day,
If wild pigs hadn't muddied the trail she found.
She'd already passed [Leontini](#), the river [Amenanas](#),
And your grassy banks, [Acis](#), on her way:
She'd passed [Cyane](#), the founts of slow [Anapus](#),
And you, [Gelas](#), with whirlpools to be shunned.
She'd left [Ortygia](#), [Megara](#) and the [Pantagias](#),
And the place where the sea receives [Symaethus](#)' waves,
And the caves of [Cyclopes](#), scorched by their forges,
And the place whose name's derived from a curving
sickle,
And [Himera](#), [Didyme](#), [Acragas](#) and [Tauromenium](#),

And the [Mylae](#), that rich pasture for sacred cattle.
Next she reached [Camerina](#), [Thapsus](#), and [Helorus](#)'
[Tempe](#),
And where [Eryx](#) stands, ever open to the Western winds.
She'd crossed [Pelorias](#), [Lilybaeum](#) and [Pachynum](#),
Those three projecting horns of her land.
Wherever she set foot, she filled the place with sad cries,
Like [the bird](#) mourning for her lost Itys.
Alternately she cried: 'Persephone!' and 'My daughter',
Calling and shouting both the names in turn,
But Persephone heard not Ceres, nor the daughter
Her mother, and both names by turns died away:
If she spied a shepherd or farmer at work,
Her cry was: 'Has a girl passed this way?'
Now the colours faded, and the darkness hid
Everything. Now the wakeful dogs fell silent.
High [Etna](#) stands above vast [Typhoeus](#)' mouth,
Who scorches the earth with his fiery breath:
There the goddess lit twin pine branches as torches:
And since then there are torches handed out at her rites.
There's a cave, its interior carved from sharp pumice,
A place not to be approached by man or beast:
Reaching it she yoked serpents to her chariot,
And roamed the ocean waves above the spray.
She shunned the [Syrtes](#) and Zaclaeon [Charybdis](#),
And you, hounds of [Scylla](#), wrecking monsters,
Shunned the wide Adriatic, and Corinth between two seas:
And so came to your harbour, country of Attica.
Here she sat for the first time, mournfully, on cold stone:

That stone the [Athenians](#) named the Sorrowful.
She lingered many days under the open sky,
Enduring both the moonlight and the rain.
Every place has its destiny: What's now called
Ceres' [Eleusis](#) was then old [Celeus](#)' farm.
He was bringing acorns home, and berries he'd picked
From the briars, and dry wood for the blazing hearth.
His little daughter was driving two she-goats from the hill,
While confined in his cradle was a sickly son.
'Mother!' the girl said (the goddess was moved
By that word mother) 'Why are you alone in the
wilderness?'
The old man stopped too, despite his heavy load,
And begged her to shelter under his insignificant roof.
She refused. She was disguised as an old woman, her hair
Covered with a cap. When he urged her she replied:
'Be happy, and always a father! My daughter's been
Stolen from me. Ah, how much better your fate than
mine!'
She spoke, and a crystal drop (though goddesses cannot
weep),
Like a tear, fell on her warm breast. Those tender hearts,
The old man and the virgin girl, wept with her:
And these were the righteous old man's words:
'Rise, and don't scorn the shelter of my humble hut,
And may the lost daughter you mourn be safe and sound.'
The goddess said: 'Lead on! You've found what could
persuade me'
And she rose from the stone and followed the old man.

Leading, he told his follower, how his son was sick
Lying there sleepless, kept awake by his illness.
About to enter the humble house, she plucked
A tender, sleep-inducing, poppy from the bare ground:
And as she picked it, they say, unthinkingly, she tasted it,
And so, unwittingly, eased her long starvation.
And because she first broke her fast at nightfall,
Her priests of the Mysteries eat once the stars appear.
When she crossed the threshold, she saw all were
grieving:
Since they'd lost hope of the child's recovery.
Greeting the mother (who was called [Metanira](#))
The goddess deigned to join her lips to the child's.
His pallor fled, his body suddenly seemed healthier:
Such power flowed out of the goddess' mouth.
There was joy in the house, in the father, mother
And daughter: those three were the whole house.
They soon set out a meal, curds in whey,
Apples, and golden honey on the comb.
Kind Ceres abstained, and gave to the boy
Poppy seeds in warm milk to make him sleep.
It was midnight: silent in peaceful slumber,
The goddess took [Triptolemus](#) on her lap,
Caressed him with her hand three times, and spoke
Three spells, not to be sounded by mortal tongue,
And she covered the boy's body with live embers
On the hearth, so the fire would purge his mortal burden.
His good, fond, foolish mother, waking from sleep,

Crying: 'What are you doing?' snatched him from the
coals,
To her the goddess said: 'Though sinless, you've sinned:
My gift's been thwarted by a mother's fear.
He will still be mortal, but first to plough,
And sow, and reap a harvest from the soil.'
Ceres spoke, and left the house, trailing mist, and crossed
To her dragons, and was carried away in her winged
chariot.
She left Sunium's exposed cape behind, and Piraeus' safe
harbour,
And all that coast that lies towards the west.
From there she crossed the Aegean, saw all the Cyclades,
Skimmed the wild Ionian, and the Icarian Sea,
And, passing through Asia's cities, sought the long
Hellespont,
And wandered her course, on high, among diverse regions.
Now she gazed at incense-gathering Arabs, now
Ethiopians,
Beneath her Libya now, now Meroe and the desert lands:
Then she saw the western rivers, Rhine, Rhone, Po,
And you, Tiber, parent of a stream full of future power.
Where, now? Too long to tell of the lands she wandered:
No place on earth remained unvisited by Ceres.
She wandered the sky too, and spoke to the constellations
Those near the chilly pole, free of the ocean waves:
'You Arcadian stars (since you can see all things,
Never plunging beneath the watery wastes)
Show this wretched mother, her daughter, Proserpine!'

She spoke, and [Helice](#) answered her in this way:
'Night's free of blame: Ask the Light about your
Stolen daughter: the Sun views, widely, things done by
day.'

The Sun, asked, said: 'To save you grief, she whom you
seek

Is married to [Jupiter](#)'s brother, and rules the third realm.'

After grieving a while, she addressed the Thunderer:

And there were deep marks of sorrow in her face:

'If you remember by whom I conceived Persephone,
Half of the care she ought to be shown is yours.

Wandering the world I've learnt only of her wrong:

While her ravisher is rewarded for his crime.

But Persephone didn't deserve a thief as husband:

It's not right to have found a son-in-law this way.

How could I have suffered more, as captive to a
conquering

[Gyges](#), than now, while you hold the sceptre of the
heavens?

Well, let him escape unpunished, I'll suffer it, un-avenged,
If he returns her, amending his old actions by the new.'

Jupiter soothed her, excusing it as an act of love,

'He's not a son-in-law who'll shames us,' he said,

'I'm no nobler than him: my kingdom's in the sky,

Another owns the waters, another the empty void.

But if your mind is really so set against alteration,

And you're determined to break firm marriage bonds,

Let's make the attempt, but only if she's kept her fast:

If not, she'll remain the wife of her infernal spouse.'

The [Messenger God](#) had his orders, and took flight for [Tartarus](#),

And, back sooner than expected, told what he'd clearly seen:

'The ravished girl,' he said 'broke her fast with three seeds
Concealed in the tough rind of a pomegranate.'

Her gloomy mother grieved, no less than if her daughter
Had just been taken, and was a long time recovering even
a little.

Then she said: 'Heaven's no place for me to be, either:
Order that I too may be received by the [Taenarian](#) vale.'
And so it would have been, if Jupiter hadn't promised,
That Persephone should spend six months each year in
heaven.

Then, at last, Ceres recovered her countenance and spirits,
And set garlands, woven from ears of corn, on her hair:
And the tardy fields delivered a copious harvest,
And the threshing-floor barely held the heaped sheaves.
White is fitting for Ceres: dress in white clothes for Ceres'
Festival: on this day no one wears dark-coloured thread.

Book IV: April 13: Ides

[Jupiter](#), titled the Victor, keeps the Ides of April:

A temple was dedicated to him on this day.

And if I'm not wrong, on this day too, [Liberty](#)

Began to occupy a hall worthy of our people.

Book IV: April 14

On the next day, you sailors, seek safe harbours:
The westerly wind will blow mixed with hail.
Be that as it may, it was on this day, a day of hail,
That a [Caesar](#), armed, clashed shields at Modena.

Book IV: April 15: The Fordicidia

When the third day after the Ides of April dawns,
You priests, offer a pregnant (*forda*) cow in sacrifice.
Forda is a cow in calf and fruitful, from *ferendo*
(carrying):
They consider *fetus* is derived from the same root.
Now the cattle are big with young, and the ground's
Pregnant with seed: a teeming victim's given to teeming
Earth.
Some are killed on Jupiter's citadel, the *Curiae* (wards)
Get thirty cows: they're drenched with plenty of sprinkled
blood.
But when the priests have torn the calves from their
mother's womb,
And thrown the slashed entrails on the smoking hearth,
The oldest [Vestal](#) burns the dead calves in the fire,
So their ashes can purge the people on the day of [Pales](#).
In [Numa](#)'s kingship the harvest failed to reward men's
efforts:
The farmers, deceived, offered their prayers in vain.
At one time that year it was dry, with cold northerlies,

The next, the fields were rank with endless rain:
Often the crop failed the farmer in its first sprouting,
And meagre wild oats overran choked soil,
And the cattle dropped their young prematurely,
And the ewes often died giving birth to lambs.
There was an ancient wood, long untouched by the axe,
Still sacred to [Pan](#), the god of [Maenalus](#):
He gave answers, to calm minds, in night silence.
Here Numa sacrificed twin ewes.
The first fell to [Faunus](#), the second to gentle Sleep:
Both the fleeces were spread on the hard soil.
Twice the king's unshorn head was sprinkled with spring
water,
Twice he pressed the beech leaves to his forehead.
He abstained from sex: no meat might be served
At table, nor could he wear a ring on any finger.
Dressed in rough clothes he lay down on fresh fleeces,
Having worshipped the god with appropriate words.
Meanwhile Night arrived, her calm brow wreathed
With poppies: bringing with her shadowy dreams.
Faunus appeared, and pressing the fleece with a hard hoof,
From the right side of the bed, he uttered these words:
'King, you must appease Earth, with the death of two
cows:
Let one heifer give two lives, in sacrifice.'
Fear banished sleep: Numa pondered the vision,
And considered the ambiguous and dark command.
His wife, [Egeria](#), most dear to the grove, eased his doubt,

Saying: ‘What’s needed are the innards of a pregnant cow,’

The innards of a pregnant cow were offered: the year proved

More fruitful, and earth and cattle bore their increase.

Book IV: April 16

[Cytherea](#) once commanded the day to pass more quickly,

And hurried on the Sun’s galloping horses,

So this next day young [Augustus](#) might receive

The title of Emperor sooner for his victory in war.

Book IV: April 17

And when you see the fourth dawn after the Ides,

The [Hyades](#) will set in the sea at night.

Book IV: April 19: The [Cerialia](#)

When the third dawn from the vanishing of the Hyades

Breaks, the horses will be in their stalls in the Circus.

So I must explain why foxes are loosed then,

Carrying torches fastened to scorched backs.

The land round [Carseoli](#)’s cold, not suited for growing

Olives, but the soil there’s appropriate for corn.

I passed it on the way to my native [Pelignian](#) country,

A small region, yet always supplied by constant streams.

There I entered, as usual, the house of my former host:

Phoebus had already unyoked his weary horses.
My host used to tell me of many things, including this,
As a preparation for my present work:
'In that plain,' he said (pointing at the plain),
A thrifty peasant woman and her sturdy husband had a
small
Plot, he tilled the land himself, whether it needed
ploughing,
Or required the curving sickle or the hoe.
They would sweep the cottage, set on timber piles,
She'd set eggs to hatch under the mother hen's feathers,
Or collect green mallows or gather white mushrooms,
Or warm the humble hearth with welcome fire,
And still worked her hands assiduously at the loom,
To provision them against the threat of winter cold.
She had a son: he was a playful child,
Who was already twelve years old.
In a valley, he caught, in the depths of a willow copse,
A vixen, who'd stolen many birds from the yard.
He wrapped his captive in straw and hay, and set fire
To it all: she fled the hands that were out to burn her:
In fleeing she set the crops, that covered the fields, ablaze:
And a breeze lent strength to the devouring flames.
The thing's forgotten, but a relic remains: since now
There's a certain law of Carseoli, that bans foxes:
And they burn a fox at the [Cerialia](#) to punish the species,
Destroyed in the same way as it destroyed the crops.

Book IV: April 20

Next dawn when [Memnon](#)'s saffron-robed mother,
With her rosy horses, comes to view the wide lands,
The sun leaves the Ram, [Aries](#), leader of the woolly flock,
Betrayed of [Helle](#), and meets a nobler victim on leaving.
Whether it's [Jupiter](#) the [Bull](#), or [Io](#) the Heifer's hard to
tell:

The front of the creature appears: the rest's concealed.
But whether the sign's a bull or whether it's a heifer,
It enjoys that reward for its love, against [Juno](#)'s wishes.

Book IV: April 21: The Parilia

The night has gone: dawn breaks. I'm called upon to sing
Of the [Parilia](#), and not in vain if kindly [Pales](#) aids me.
Kindly Pales, if I respect your festival,
Then aid me as I sing of pastoral rites.
Indeed, I've often brought ashes of a calf, and stalks
Of beans, in chaste purification, in my full hands:
Indeed, I've leapt the threefold line of flames,
And the wet laurel's sprinkled me with dew.
The goddess, moved, blesses the work: my ship
Sets sail: may favourable winds fill my sails.
Go, people: bring fumigants from the Virgin's altar:
[Vesta](#) will grant them, Vesta's gift will purify.
The fumigants are horse blood and calf's ashes,
And thirdly the stripped stalks of stringy beans.
Shepherd, purify your sated sheep at twilight:

First sprinkle the ground with water, and sweep it,
And decorate the sheepfold with leaves and branches,
And hide the festive door with a trailing garland.
Make dark smoke with pure burning sulphur,
And let the sheep bleat, in contact with the smoke.
Burn male-olive wood, and pine, and juniper fronds,
And let scorched laurel crackle in the hearth.
Let a basket of millet keep the millet cakes company:
The rural goddess particularly loves that food.
Add meats, and a pail of her milk, and when the meat
Is cut, offer the warm milk, pray to sylvan Pales,
Saying: 'Protect the cattle and masters alike:
And drive everything harmful from my stalls.
If I've fed sheep on sacred ground, sat under a sacred tree,
While they've unwittingly browsed the grass on graves:
If I've entered a forbidden grove, or the nymphs
And [the god](#), half-goat, have fled at sight of me:
If my knife has pruned the copse of a shady bough,
To fill a basket of leaves for a sick ewe:
Forgive me. Don't count it against me, if I've sheltered
My flock, while it hailed, in some rustic shrine,
Don't harm me for troubling the pools. Nymphs,
Forgive, if trampling hooves have muddied your waters.
Goddess, placate the springs, and placate their divinities
On our behalf, and the gods too, scattered in every grove.
Let us not gaze on [Dryads](#), or on [Diana](#) bathing,
Nor on [Faunus](#), as he lies in the fields at noon.
Drive off disease: let men and beasts be healthy,
And healthy the vigilant pack of wakeful dogs.

May I drive back as many sheep as dawn revealed,
Nor sigh returning with fleeces snatched from the wolves.
Avert dire famine: let leaves and grass be abundant,
And water to wash the body, water to drink.
May I press full udders, may my cheeses bring me money,
May the wicker sieve strain my liquid whey.
And let the ram be lusty, his mate conceive and bear,
And may there be many a lamb in my fold.
And let the wool prove soft, not scratch the girls,
Let it everywhere be kind to gentle hands.
Let my prayer be granted, and every year we'll make
Huge cakes for Pales, Mistress of the shepherds.'
Please the goddess in this way: four times, facing east,
Say these words, and wash your hands with fresh dew.
Then set a wooden dish, to be your mixing bowl,
And drink the creamy milk and the purple must:
Then leap, with nimble feet and straining thighs
Over the crackling heaps of burning straw.
I've set forth the custom: I must still tell of its origin:
But many explanations cause me doubt, and hold me back.
Greedy fire devours all things, and melts away the dross
From metals: the same method cleans shepherd and
sheep?
Or is it because all things are formed
Of two opposing powers, fire and water,
And our ancestors joined these elements, and thought fit
To touch their bodies with fire and sprinkled water?
Or did they think the two so powerful, because they
contain

The source of life: denied to the exile, it makes the new bride?

I can scarce believe it, but some consider it refers
To [Phaethon](#), and to [Deucalion](#)'s flood.

Some say, too, that once when shepherds struck
Stones together, a spark suddenly leapt out:

The first died, but the second set fire to straw:

Is that the basis for the fires of the Parilia?

Or is the custom due rather to [Aeneas](#)' piety,

To whom the fire gave safe passage, in defeat?

Or is this nearer the truth, that when [Rome](#) was founded,
They were commanded to move the [Lares](#) to their new
homes,

And changing homes the farmers set fire to the houses,

And to the cottages, they were about to abandon,

They and their cattle leaping through the flames,

As happens even now on Rome's birthday?

That subject itself is matter for a poet. We have come
To the City's founding. Great [Quirinus](#), witness your
deeds!

[Amulius](#) had already been punished, and all

The shepherd folk were subject to the twins,

Who agreed to gather the men together to build walls:

The question was as to which of them should do it.

Romulus said: 'There's no need to fight about it:

Great faith is placed in birds, let's judge by birds.'

That seemed fine. One tried the rocks of the wooded

[Palatine](#),

The other climbed at dawn to the [Aventine](#)'s summit.

Remus saw six birds, Romulus twelve in a row.
They stuck to the pact, and Romulus was granted the City.
A day was chosen for him to mark out the walls with a
plough.

The festival of Pales was near: the work was started then.
They trenched to the solid rock, threw fruits of the harvest
Into its depths, with soil from the ground nearby.

The ditch was filled with earth, and topped by an altar,
And a fire was duly kindled on the new-made hearth.
Then, bearing down on the plough handle, he marked the
walls:

The yoke was borne by a white cow and a snowy ox.
So spoke the king: 'Be with me, as I found my City,
[Jupiter](#), Father [Mavors](#), and Mother [Vesta](#):

And all you gods, whom piety summons, take note.
Let my work be done beneath your auspices.
May it last long, and rule a conquered world,
All subject, from the rising to the setting day.'

Jupiter added his omen to Romulus' prayer, with thunder
On the left, and his lightning flashed leftward in the sky.
Delighted by this, the citizens laid foundations,
And the new walls were quickly raised.

The work was overseen by [Celer](#), whom Romulus named,
Saying: 'Celer, make it your care to see no one crosses
Walls or trench that we've ploughed: kill whoever dares.'
[Remus](#), unknowingly, began to mock the low walls,
saying: 'Will the people be safe behind these?'
He leapt them, there and then. Celer struck the rash man

With his shovel: Remus sank, bloodied, to the stony ground.
When the king heard, he smothered his rising tears,
And kept the grief locked in his heart.
He wouldn't weep in public, but set an example of fortitude,
Saying: 'So dies the enemy who shall cross my walls.'
But he granted him funeral honours, and couldn't
Hold back his tears, and the love he tried to hide was obvious.
When they set down the bier, he gave it a last kiss,
And said: 'Farewell, my brother, taken against my will!'
And he anointed the body for burning. [Faustulus](#), and
[Acca](#)
Her hair loosened in mourning, did as he did.
Then the as yet unnamed Quirites wept for the youth:
And finally the pyre, wet by their tears, was lit.
A City arose, destined (who'd have believed it then?)
To plant its victorious foot upon all the lands.
Rule all, and be ever subject to mighty Caesar,
And may you often own to many of that name:
And as long as you stand, sublime, in a conquered world,
May all others fail to reach your shoulders.

Book IV: April 23: The Vinalia

I've spoken of Pales' festival, I'll speak of the [Vinalia](#):
There's only a single day between the two.
You prostitutes, celebrate the divine power of [Venus](#):

Venus suits those who earn by your profession.
Offer incense and pray for beauty and men's favour,
Pray to be charming, and blessed with witty words,
Give the Mistress myrtle, and the mint she loves,
And sheaves of rushes, wound in clustered roses.
Now's the time to crowd her temple near the [Colline](#) Gate,
One that takes its name from a [Sicilian](#) hill:
When [Claudius](#) took [Arethusian Syracuse](#) by force,
And captured that hill of [Eryx](#), too, in the war,
[Venus](#) moved to Rome, according to the long-lived [Sibyl](#)'s
Prophecy, preferring to be worshipped in her children's
City.
Why then, you ask, is the *Vinalia Venus*' festival?
And why does this day belong to Jupiter?
There was a war to decide whether [Turnus](#) or [Aeneas](#)
Should be Latin [Amata](#)'s son-in-law: Turnus begged help
From Etruscan [Mezentius](#), a famous and proud fighter,
Mighty on horseback and mightier still on foot:
Turnus and the Rutuli tried to win him to their side.
The Tuscan leader replied to their suit:
'My courage costs me not a little: witness my wounds,
And my weapons that have often been dyed with blood.
If you seek my help you must divide with me
The next wine from your vats, no great prize.
No delay is needed: yours is to give, mine to conquer.
How Aeneas will wish you'd refused me!'
The Rutulians agreed. Mezentius donned his armour,
And so did Aeneas, and addressed Jove:

‘The enemy’s pledged his vine-crop to the Tyrrhenian king:

Jupiter, you shall have the wine from the Latin vines!’

The nobler prayer succeeded: huge Mezentius died,

And struck the ground, heart filled with indignation.

Autumn came, dyed with the trodden grapes:

The wine, justly owed to Jupiter, was paid.

So the day is called the Vinalia: [Jupiter](#) claims it,

And loves to be present at his feast.

Book IV: April 25: The [Robigalia](#)

When six days of April remain,

The Spring season will be half-over,

And you’ll look for [Helle](#)’s [Ram](#) in vain:

The rains will be your sign, when the [Dog](#)’s mentioned.

On this day, returning to Rome from [Nomentum](#),

A white-robed throng blocked my road.

A priest was going to the grove of old Mildew ([Robigo](#)),

To offer the entrails of a dog and a sheep to the flames.

I went with him, so as not to be ignorant of the rite:

Your priest, Quirinus, pronounced these words:

‘Scaly Mildew, spare the blades of corn,

And let their tender tips quiver above the soil.

Let the crops grow, nurtured by favourable stars,

Until they’re ready for the sickle.

Your power’s not slight: the corn you blight

The grieving farmer gives up for lost.

Wind and showers don’t harm the wheat as much,

Nor gleaming frost that bleaches the yellow corn,
As when the sun heats the moist stalks:
Then, dreadful goddess, is the time of your wrath.
Spare us, I pray, take your blighted hands from the
harvest,
And don't harm the crop: it's enough that you can harm.
Grip harsh iron rather than the tender wheat,
Destroy whatever can destroy others first.
Better to gnaw at swords and harmful spears:
They're not needed: the world's at peace.
Let the rural wealth gleam now, rakes, sturdy hoes,
And curved ploughshare: let rust stain weapons:
And whoever tries to draw his sword from its sheath,
Let him feel it wedded there by long disuse.
Don't you hurt the corn, and may the farmer's
Prayer to you always be fulfilled by your absence.'
He spoke: to his right there was a soft towel,
And a cup of wine and an incense casket.
He offered the incense and wine on the hearth,
Sheep's entrails, and (I saw him) the foul guts of a vile
dog.
Then the priest said: 'You ask why we offer an odd
sacrifice
In these rites' (I had asked) 'then learn the reason.
There's a Dog they call Icarian, and when it rises
The dry earth is parched, and the crops ripen prematurely.
This dog is set on the altar to signify the starry one,
And the only reason for it is because of the name.'

Book IV: April 28: The [Floralia](#)

When [Aurora](#)'s left [Tithonus](#), kin to Phrygian [Assaracus](#),
And raised her light three times in the vast heavens,
A goddess comes framed in a thousand varied garlands
Of flowers: and the stage has freer license for mirth.
The rites of [Flora](#) also stretch to the Kalends of May:
Then I'll speak again, now a greater task is needed.
[Vesta](#), bear the day onwards! Vesta's been received,
At her kinsman's threshold: so the Senators justly decreed.
[Phoebus](#) takes part of the space there: a further part
remains
For Vesta, and the third part that's left, [Caesar](#) occupies.
Long live the laurels of the Palatine: long live that house
Decked with branches of oak: one place holds three
eternal gods.

Book V

Book V: Introduction

You ask where I think the name of May comes from?
Its origin's not totally clear to me.
As a traveller stands unsure which way to go,
Seeing the paths fan out in all directions,
So I'm not sure which to accept, since it's possible
To give different reasons: plenty itself confuses.
You who haunt the founts of [Aganippian Hippocrene](#),
Those beloved prints of the [Medusaeon horse](#), explain!
The goddesses are in conflict. [Polyhymnia](#) begins,
While the others silently consider her speech.
'After the first Chaos, as soon as the three primary forms
Were given to the world, all things were newly re-
configured:
Earth sank under its own weight, and drew down the seas,
But lightness lifted the sky to the highest regions:
And the sun and stars, not held back by their weight,
And you, you horses of the moon, sprang high.
But Earth for a long time wouldn't yield to Sky,
Nor the other lights to the Sun: honours were equal.
One of the common crowd of gods, would often dare
To sit on the throne that you, [Saturn](#), owned,
None of the new gods took [Ocean](#)'s side,
And [Themis](#) was relegated to the lowest place,
Until Honour, and proper Reverence, she
Of the calm look, were united in a lawful bed.

From them [Majesty](#) was born, she considers them
Her parents, she who was noble from her day of birth.
She took her seat, at once, high in the midst of [Olympus](#),
Conspicuous, golden, in her purple folds.
Modesty and Fear sat with her: you could see
All the gods modelling their expression on hers.
At once, respect for honour entered their minds:
The worthy had their reward, none thought of self.
This state of things lasted for years in heaven,
Till the elder god was banished by fate from the citadel.
Earth bore the [Giants](#), a fierce brood of savage monsters,
Who dared to venture against [Jupiter](#)'s halls:
She gave them a thousands hands, serpents for legs,
And said: "Take up arms against the mighty gods."
They set to piling mountains to the highest stars,
And to troubling mighty Jupiter with war:
He hurled lightning bolts from the heavenly citadel,
And overturned the weighty mass on its creators.
These divine weapons protected Majesty well,
She survived, and has been worshipped ever since:
So she attends on Jove, Jove's truest guardian,
And allows him to hold the sceptre without force.
She came to earth as well: [Romulus](#) and [Numa](#)
Both worshipped her, and so did others in later ages.
She maintains fathers and mothers in due honour,
She keeps company with virgins and young boys,
She burnishes the *lictor*'s rods, axes, and ivory chair,
She rides high in triumph behind the garlanded horses.'
Polyhymnia finished speaking: [Clio](#), and [Thalia](#)

Mistress of the curved lyre, approved her words.
[Urania](#) continued: all the rest were silent,
And hers was the only voice that could be heard.
‘Once great reverence was shown to white hair,
And wrinkled age was valued at its true worth.
The young waged work of war, and spirited battle,
Holding to their posts for the sake of the gods:
Age, inferior in strength, and unfit for arms,
Often did the country a service by its counsel.
The Senate was only open to men of mature age,
And Senators bear a name meaning ripe in years.
The elders made laws for the people, and specific
Rules governed the age when office might be sought:
Old men walked with the young, without their indignation,
And on the inside, if they only had one companion.
Who dared then to talk shamefully in an older man’s
Presence? Old age granted rights of censorship.
[Romulus](#) knew this, and chose the City Fathers
From select spirits: making them the rulers of the City.
So I deduce that the elders (*maiores*) gave their own title
To the month of [May](#): and looked after their own interests.
[Numitor](#) too may have said: “[Romulus](#), grant this month
To the old men” and his grandson may have yielded.
The following month, June, named for young men
(*iuvenes*),
Gives no slight proof of the honour intended.’
Then Calliope herself, first of that choir, her hair
Unkempt and wreathed with ivy, began to speak:
‘[Tethys](#), the Titaness, was married long ago to [Ocean](#),

He who encircles the outspread earth with flowing water.
The story is that their daughter [Pleione](#) was united
To sky-bearing [Atlas](#), and bore him the [Pleiades](#).
Among them, [Maia](#)'s said to have surpassed her sisters
In beauty, and to have slept with mighty [Jove](#).
She bore [Mercury](#), who cuts the air on winged feet,
On the cypress-clothed ridge of Mount [Cyllene](#).
The [Arcadians](#), and swift [Ladon](#), and vast [Maenalus](#),
A land thought older than the moon, rightly worship him.
[Evander](#), in exile from Arcadia, came to the Latin fields,
And brought his gods with him, aboard ship.
Where Rome, the capital of the world, now stands
There were trees, grass, a few sheep, the odd cottage.
When they arrived, his prophetic mother said:
“Halt here! This rural spot will be the place of Empire.”
The Arcadian hero obeyed his mother, the prophetess,
And stayed, though a stranger in a foreign land.
He taught the people many rites, but, above all, those
Of twin-horned [Faunus](#), and [Mercury](#) the wing-footed god.
Faunus half-goat, you're worshipped by the girded
[Luperci](#),
When their strips of hide purify the crowded streets.
But you, [Mercury](#), patron of thieves, inventor
Of the curved lyre, gave your mother's name to this
month.
Nor was this your first act of piety: you're thought
To have given the lyre seven strings, the [Pleiads](#)' number.'
Calliope too ended: and her sisters voiced their praise.
And so? All three were equally convincing.

May the Muses' favour attend me equally,
And let me never praise one more than the rest.

Book V: May 1: Kalends

Let the work start with Jove. The star of her who tended
[Jove](#)'s cradle is visible on the night of the first:
The rainy sign of [Olenian Capella](#), the 'she-goat', rises:
Placed in the sky for the gift of milk to him.
[Amalthea](#), the naiad, famous on Cretan [Ida](#),
Hid Jupiter amongst the woods, they say.
She owned a she-goat noted among the Dictaeon flocks,
With lofty horns curved over its back,
The beautiful mother of two kids,
With udders such as Jove's nurse should have.
It gave milk to the god, but broke a horn
On a tree, and was shorn of half its charm.
The nymph lifted the horn, then wrapped it
In fresh herbs, and carried it to Jove, full of fruit.
When he'd gained the heavens, occupied his father's
throne,
And none was greater than unconquered Jove,
He made his nurse a star, and her [horn of plenty](#)
That still keeps its mistress' name, stars as well.
The Kalends of May saw an altar dedicated
To the Guardian [Lares](#), with small statues of the gods.
[Curius](#) vowed them: but time destroys many things,
And the long ages wear away the stone.
The reason for their epithet of Guardian,

Is that they keep safe watch over everything.
They support us, and protect the City walls,
And they're propitious, and bring us aid.
A dog, carved from the same stone, used to stand
At their feet: why did it stand there with the Lares?
Both guard the house: both are loyal to their master:
Crossroads are dear to the god, and to dogs.
Both the Lar and [Diana](#)'s pack chase away thieves:
And the Lares are watchful, and so are dogs.
I looked for statues of the twin gods,
But they'd fallen with the weight of years:
The City has a thousand Lares, and Spirits
Of the [Leader](#), who gave them to the people,
And each district worships the three divinities.
Why say this here, when the month of August
Rightfully owns that subject of my verse?
For the moment the [Good Goddess](#) is my theme.
There's a natural height that gives its name to a place:
They call it The Rock: it's the bulk of the [Aventine](#).
[Remus](#) waited there in vain, when you, the birds
Of the Palatine, granted first omens to his [brother](#).
There the Senate founded a temple, hostile
To the sight of men, on the gently sloping ridge.
It was dedicated by an heiress of the ancient [Clausi](#),
Who'd never given her virgin body to a man:
[Livia](#) restored it, so she could imitate her husband
And follow his lead in everything.

Book V: May 2

When [Hyperion](#)'s [daughter](#) puts the stars to flight,
Raising her light, behind her horses of dawn,
A cold north-westerly will smooth the wheat-tips,
White sails will put out from Calabrian waters.
And when shadowy twilight leads on the night,
No part of the whole herd of [Hyades](#) is unknown.
The radiant head of [Taurus](#) glitters with seven flames,
That Greek sailors named the Hyades, from 'rain' (*hyein*):
Some think they nursed [Bacchus](#), others believe
They're the granddaughters of [Tethys](#) and old [Ocean](#).
[Atlas](#) was not yet standing there, his shoulders weighed
By Olympus, when [Hyas](#), known for his beauty, was born:
[Aethra](#), of Ocean's lineage, gave birth to him
And the nymphs at full term, but Hyas was born first.
When the down was new on his cheeks, he scared away
The frightened deer, in terror, and a hare was a good prize.
But when his courage had grown with his years, he dared
To close with wild boar and shaggy lionesses,
And while seeking the lair of a pregnant lioness, and her
cubs,
He himself was the bloodstained victim of that Libyan
beast.
His mother and his saddened sisters wept for Hyas,
And Atlas, soon doomed to bow his neck beneath the pole,
But the sisters' love was greater than either parent's:
It won them the heavens: Hyas gave them his name.
'Mother of the flowers, approach, so we can honour you

With joyful games! Last month I deferred the task.
You begin in April, and pass into May's span:
One claims you fleeing, the other as it comes on.
Since the boundaries of the months are yours,
And defer to you, either's fitting for your praise.
This is the month of the Circus' Games, and the victors'
palm
The audience applauds: let my song accompany the
Circus' show.
Tell me, yourself, who you are. Men's opinions err:
You'll be the best informant regarding your own name.'
So I spoke. So the goddess responded to my question,
(While she spoke, her lips breathed out vernal roses):
'I, called [Flora](#) now, was [Chloris](#): the first letter in Greek
Of my name, became corrupted in the Latin language.
I was Chloris, a nymph of those happy fields,
Where, as you've heard, fortunate men once lived.
It would be difficult to speak of my form, with modesty,
But it brought my mother a god as son-in-law.
It was spring, I wandered: [Zephyrus](#) saw me: I left.
He followed me: I fled: he was the stronger,
And [Boreas](#) had given his brother authority for rape
By daring to steal a prize from [Erechtheus](#)' house.
Yet he made amends for his violence, by granting me
The name of bride, and I've nothing to complain of in bed.
I enjoy perpetual spring: the season's always bright,
The trees have leaves: the ground is always green.
I've a fruitful garden in the fields that were my dower,
Fanned by the breeze, and watered by a flowing spring.

My husband stocked it with flowers, richly,
And said: “Goddess, be mistress of the flowers.”
I often wished to tally the colours set there,
But I couldn’t, there were too many to count.
As soon as the frosted dew is shaken from the leaves,
And the varied foliage warmed by the sun’s rays,
The [Hours](#) gather dressed in colourful clothes,
And collect my gifts in slender baskets.
The [Graces](#), straight away, draw near, and twine
Wreaths and garlands to bind their heavenly hair.
I was first to scatter fresh seeds among countless peoples,
Till then the earth had been a single colour.
I was first to create the hyacinth, from [Spartan](#) blood,
And a lament remains written on its petals.
You too, [Narcissus](#), were known among the gardens,
Unhappy that you were not other, and yet were other.
Why tell of [Crocus](#), or [Attis](#), or [Adonis](#), son of Cinyras,
From whose wounds beauty springs, through me?
[Mars](#) too, if you’re unaware, was brought to birth
By my arts: I pray unknowing Jupiter never knows it.
Sacred [Juno](#) grieved that [Jupiter](#) didn’t need
Her help, when motherless [Minerva](#) was born.
She went to Ocean to complain of her husband’s deeds:
Tired by the effort she rested at my door.
Catching sight of her, I said: “Why are you here,
[Saturnia](#)?”
She explained what place she sought, and added
The reason. I consoled her with words of friendship:
She said: “My cares can’t be lightened by words.”

If Jove can be a father without needing a wife,
And contains both functions in a single person,
Why should I despair of becoming a mother with no
Husband, and, chaste, give birth though untouched by
man?

I'll try all the drugs in the whole wide world,
And search the seas, and shores of Tartarus."

Her voice flew on: but my face showed doubt.

She said: "Nymph, it seems you have some power."

Three times I wanted to promise help, three times my
tongue

Was tied: mighty Jupiter's anger was cause for fear.

She said: "Help me, I beg you, I'll conceal the fact,
And I'll call on the powers of the Stygian flood as
witness."

"A flower, sent to me from the fields of Olenus,
Will grant what you seek," I replied, "unique, in all my
garden.

He who gave it to me said: 'Touch a barren heifer with
this,

And she'll be a mother too.' I did, and she was, instantly."

With that, I nipped the clinging flower with my thumb,
Touched Juno, and as I touched her breast she conceived.

Pregnant now, she travelled to Thrace and the northern
shores

Of Propontis: her wish was granted, and Mars was born.

Mindful of his birth that he owed to me, he said:

"You too must have a place in Romulus' City."

Perhaps you think I only rule over tender garlands.

But my power also commands the farmers' fields.
 If the crops have flourished, the threshing-floor is full:
 If the vines have flourished, there'll be wine:
 If the olive trees have flourished, the year will be bright,
 And the fruit will prosper at the proper time.
 If the flower's damaged, the beans and vetch die,
 And your imported lentils, Nile, die too.
 Wine too, laboriously stored in the vast cellars,
 Froths, and clouds the wine jars' surface with mist.
 Honey's my gift: I call the winged ones who make
 Honey, to the violets, clover and pale thyme.
 I carry out similar functions, when spirits
 Run riot, and bodies themselves flourish.'
 I admired her, in silence, while she spoke. But she said:
 'You may learn the answer to any of your questions.'
 'Goddess', I replied: 'What's the origin of the games?'
 I'd barely ended when she answered me:
 'Rich men owned cattle or tracts of land,
 Other means of wealth were then unknown,
 So the words 'rich' (*locuples*) from 'landed' (*locus
 plenus*),
 And 'money' (*pecunia*) from 'a flock' (*pecus*), but already
 Some had unlawful wealth: by custom, for ages,
 Public lands were grazed, without penalty.
 Folk had no one to defend the common rights:
 Till at last it was foolish to use private grazing.
 This licence was pointed out to the [Publicii](#),
 The plebeian *aediles*: earlier, men lacked confidence.
 The case was tried before the people: the guilty fined:

And the champions praised for their public spirit.
A large part of the fine fell to me: and the victors
Instituted new games to loud applause. Part was allocated
To make a way up the [Aventine](#)'s slope, then steep rock:
Now it's a serviceable track, called the [Publician](#) Road.'
I believed the shows were annual. She contradicted it,
And added further words to her previous speech:
'Honour touches me too: I delight in festivals and altars:
We're a greedy crowd: we divine beings.
Often, through their sins, men render the gods hostile,
And, fawning, offer a sacrifice for their crimes:
Often I've seen Jupiter, about to hurl his lightning,
Draw back his hand, when offered a gift of incense.
But if we're ignored, we avenge the injury
With heavy penalties, and our anger passes all bounds.
Remember [Meleager](#), burnt up by distant flames:
The reason, because [Diana](#)'s altar lacked its fires.
Remember [Agamemnon](#): the same goddess becalmed the
fleet:
A virgin, yet still she twice avenged her neglected hearth.
Wretched [Hippolytus](#), you wished you'd worshipped
[Venus](#),
When your terrified horses were tearing you apart.
It would take too long to tell of neglect punished by loss.
I too was once neglected by the Roman Senate.
What to do, how to show my indignation?
What punishment to exact for the harm done me?
Gloomily, I gave up my office. I ceased to protect
The countryside, cared nothing for fruitful gardens:

The lilies drooped: you could see the violets fade,
And the petals of the purple crocus languished.
Often Zephyr said: 'Don't destroy your dowry.'
But my dowry was worth nothing to me.
The olives were in blossom: wanton winds hurt them:
The wheat was ripening: hail blasted the crops:
The vines were promising: skies darkened from the south,
And the leaves were brought down by sudden rain.
I didn't wish it so: I'm not cruel in my anger,
But I neglected to drive away these ills.
The Senate convened, and voted my godhead
An annual festival, if the year proved fruitful.
I accepted their vow. The consuls [Laenas](#)
And [Postumius](#) celebrated these games of mine.
I was going to ask why there's greater
Wantonness in her games, and freer jests,
But it struck me that the goddess isn't strict,
And the gifts she brings are agents of delight.
The drinker's brow's wreathed with sewn-on garlands,
And a shower of roses hides the shining table:
The drunken guest dances, hair bound with lime-tree bark,
And unaware employs the wine's purest art:
The drunken lover sings at beauty's harsh threshold,
And soft garlands crown his perfumed hair.
Nothing serious for those with garlanded brow,
No running water's drunk, when crowned with flowers:
While your stream, [Achelous](#), was free of wine,
No one as yet cared to pluck the rose.
[Bacchus](#) loves flowers: you can see he delights

In a crown, from [Ariadne](#)'s chaplet of stars.
The comic stage suits her: she's never: believe me,
Never been counted among the tragic goddesses.
The reason the crowd of whores celebrate these games
Is not a difficult one for us to discover.
The goddess isn't gloomy, she's not high-flown,
She wants her rites to be open to the common man,
And warns us to use life's beauty while it's in bloom:
The thorn is spurned when the rose has fallen.
Why is it, when white robes are handed out for Ceres,
Flora's neatly dressed in a host of colours?
Is it because the harvest's ripe when the ears whiten,
But flowers are of every colour and splendour?
She nods, and flowers fall as her hair flows,
As roses fall when they're scattered on a table.
There's still the lights, whose reason escaped me,
Till the goddess dispelled my ignorance like this:
'Lights are thought to be fitting for my day,
Because the fields glow with crimson flowers,
Or because flowers and flames aren't dull in colour,
And the splendour of them both attracts the eye:
Or because the licence of night suits my delights,
And this third reason's nearest to the truth.'
'There's one little thing besides, for me to ask,
If you'll allow,' I said: and she said: 'It's allowed.'
'Why then are gentle deer and shy hares
Caught in your nets, not Libyan lionesses?'
She replied that gardens not woodlands were her care,
And fields where no wild creatures were allowed.

All was ended: and she vanished into thin air: yet
Her fragrance lingered: you'd have known it was a
goddess.

Scatter your gifts, I beg you, over my breast,
So Ovid's song may flower forever.

Book V: May 3

In less than four nights, [Chiron](#), the semi-human
Joined to the body of a tawny horse, reveals his stars.
[Pelion](#) is a mountain facing south in Haemonian Thessaly:
The summit's green with pines, the rest is oak.
Chiron, Philyra's son, lived there. An ancient rocky cave
Remains, inhabited once, they say, by that honest old one.
He's thought to have exercised those hands, that one day
Sent [Hector](#) to his death, in playing on the lyre.
[Hercules](#) visited him, most of his labours done,
Only the last few tasks remaining for the hero.
You could have viewed Troy's twin fates, together:
One the young scion of Aeacus, the other Jove's son.
Chiron received young Hercules hospitably,
And asked him the reason for his being there.
He replied, as Chiron viewed his club and lion-skin,
saying:
'The man is worthy of these weapons, the weapons of the
man!'
Nor could Achilles, daringly, restrain his hands,
From touching that pelt shaggy with bristles.

While the old one handled the arrows, encrusted with
poison,
A shaft fell from the quiver and lodged in his left foot.
Chiron groaned, and drew its blade from his body:
Hercules, and the Thessalian youth groaned too.
Though the Centaur himself mixed herbs culled
From Pagasean hills, treating the wound with ointments,
The gnawing venom defied his remedies, and its evil
Penetrated his body, to the marrow of his bones.
The blood of the Lernean Hydra fused with
The Centaur's blood, giving no chance for aid.
[Achilles](#), drenched in tears, stood before him as before
A father, just as he would have wept for [Peleus](#) dying.
Often he caressed the feeble fingers with loving hands,
(The teacher had his reward for the character he'd
formed),
And he kissed him, often, and often, as he lay there, cried:
'Live, I beg you: don't leave me, dear father!'
The ninth day came, and you, virtuous Chiron,
Wrapped your body in those fourteen stars.

Book V: May 5

Curved [Lyra](#) would follow Centaurus, but the path's
Not clear: the third night will be the right time.

Book V: May 6

[Scorpio](#)'s mid-part will be visible in the sky

When we speak of the Nones dawning tomorrow.

Book V: May 9: The Lemuria

When [Hesperus](#), the Evening Star, has shown his lovely face

Three times, from that day, and the defeated stars fled
[Phoebus](#),

It will be the ancient sacred rites of the [Lemuria](#),

When we make offerings to the voiceless spirits.

The year was once shorter, the pious rites of purification,
februa,

Were unknown, nor were you, two-faced [Janus](#), leader of
the months:

Yet they still brought gifts owed to the ashes of the dead,
The grandson paid respects to his buried grandfather's
tomb.

It was May month, named for our ancestors (*maiores*),

And a relic of the old custom still continues.

When midnight comes, lending silence to sleep,

And all the dogs and hedgerow birds are quiet,

He who remembers ancient rites, and fears the gods,

Rises (no fetters binding his two feet)

And makes the sign with thumb and closed fingers,

Lest an insubstantial shade meets him in the silence.

After cleansing his hands in spring water,

He turns and first taking some black beans,

Throws them with averted face: saying, while throwing:

‘With these beans I throw I redeem me and mine.’

He says this nine times without looking back: the shade
Is thought to gather the beans, and follow behind, unseen.
Again he touches water, and sounds the [Temesan](#) bronze,
And asks the spirit to leave his house.

When nine times he's cried: 'Ancestral spirit, depart,'
He looks back, and believes the sacred rite's fulfilled.
Why the day's so called, and the origin of the name,
Escapes me: that's for some god to discover.

[Mercury](#), son of the [Pleiad](#), explain it to me, by your
Potent wand: you've often seen Stygian Jove's halls.
The *caduceus*-bearer came, at my prayer. Learn then,
The reason for the name: the god himself revealed it.
When [Romulus](#) had sunk his brother's spirit in the grave,
And justice was done to the over-hasty [Remus](#),

The wretched [Faustulus](#), and [Acca](#) with streaming hair,
Sprinkled the calcined bones with their tears.
Then at twilight they returned home grieving,
And flung themselves on the hard couch, just as it lay.

The bloodstained ghost of Remus seemed to stand
By the bed, speaking these words in a faint murmur:
'Behold, I who was half, the other part of your care,
See what I am, and know what I was once!

If the birds had signalled the throne was mine,
I might have been highest, ruling over the people,
Now I'm an empty phantom, gliding from the fire:
That is what remains of Remus' form!

Ah, where is [Mars](#), my father? If you once spoke
The truth, it was he who sent us the she-wolf's teats.
The rash hand of a citizen undid what the wolf saved.

O how gentle she was in comparison!
Savage [Celer](#), wounded, may you yield your cruel spirit,
And bloodstained as I am, sink beneath the earth.
My brother never wished it: his love equals mine:
He offered, at my death, all he could, his tears.
Beg him by your weeping, by your nurturing,
To signal a day of celebration in my honour.’
They stretched out their arms at this, longing to embrace
him,
But the fleeting shade escaped their clutching hands.
When the phantom fleeing dispelled their sleep,
They both told the king of his brother’s words.
Romulus, complying, called that day the [Remuria](#),
When reverence is paid our buried ancestors.
Over time the harsh consonant at the beginning
Of the name, was altered into a soft one:
And soon the silent spirits were called [Lemures](#) too:
That’s the meaning of the word, that’s its force.
And the ancients closed the temples on these days,
As you see them shut still at the season of the dead.
It’s a time when it’s not suitable for widows or virgins
To wed: she who marries then won’t live long.
And if you attend to proverbs, then, for that reason too,
People say unlucky women wed in the month of May.
Though these three festivals fall at the same time,
They are not observed on three consecutive days.

Book V: May 11

You'll be disappointed if you look for Boeotian [Orion](#),
On the middle of these three days. I must sing of those
stars.

[Jupiter](#), and his [brother](#) who rules the deep ocean,
Were journeying together, with [Mercury](#).

It was the hour when yoked oxen drag back the plough,
And the lamb kneels down to drink the full ewe's milk.
By chance, an old man, [Hyrieus](#), farmer of a tiny plot,
Saw them, as he stood in front of his meagre dwelling:
And spoke to them: 'The way's long, little of day is left,
And my threshold's welcoming to strangers.'

He stressed his words with a look, inviting them again:
They accepted his offer, hiding their divinity.

They entered the old man's cottage, black with smoke:
There was still a flicker of fire in yesterday's log.
He knelt and blew the flames higher with his breath,
And drew out broken brands, and chopped them up.
Two pots stood there: the smaller contained beans,
The other vegetables: each boiling beneath its lid.
While they waited, he poured red wine with a trembling
hand:

The god of the sea accepted the first cup, and when
He'd drained it, he said: 'Let Jupiter drink next.'
Hearing the name of Jupiter the old man grew pale.
Recovering his wits, he sacrificed the ox that ploughed
His meagre land, and roasted it in a great fire:
And he brought out wine, in smoke-streaked jars,

That he'd once stored away as a young boy.
Promptly they reclined on couches made of rushes,
And covered with linen, but still not high enough.
Now the table was bright with food, bright with wine:
The bowl was red earthenware, with cups of beech wood.
Jupiter's word was: 'If you've a wish, ask it:
All will be yours.' The old man said calmly:
'I had a dear wife, whom I knew in the flower
Of my first youth. Where is she now, you ask?
An urn contains her. I swore to her, calling
On you gods, "You'll be the only wife I'll take."
I spoke, and kept the oath. I ask for something else:
I wish to be a father, and not a husband.'
The gods agreed: All took their stand beside
The ox-hide – I'm ashamed to describe the rest –
Then they covered the soaking hide with earth:
Ten months went past and a boy was born.
Hyrieus called him Urion, because of his conception:
The first letter has now lost its ancient sound.
He grew immensely: [Latona](#) took him for a friend,
He was her protector and her servant.
Careless words excite the anger of the gods:
He said: 'There's no wild creature I can't conquer.'
[Earth](#) sent a [Scorpion](#): its purpose was to attack
The Goddess, who bore the twins, with its curved dart:
[Orion](#) opposed it. Latona set him among the shining stars,
And said: 'Take now the reward you've truly earned.'

Book V: May 12

But why are Orion and the other stars rushing to leave
The sky, and why does night contract its course?
Why does bright day, presaged by the [Morning Star](#),
Lift its radiance more swiftly from the ocean waves?
Am I wrong, or did weapons clash? I'm not: they clashed,
Mars comes, giving the sign for war as he comes.
The [Avenger](#) himself descends from the sky
To view his shrine and honours in [Augustus](#)' forum.
The god and the work are mighty: Mars
Could not be housed otherwise in his son's city.
The shrine is worthy of trophies won from Giants:
From it the Marching God initiates fell war,
When impious men attack us from the East,
Or those from the setting sun must be conquered.
The God of Arms sees the summits of the work,
And approves of unbeaten gods holding the heights.
He sees the various weapons studding the doors,
Weapons from lands conquered by his armies.
Here he views [Aeneas](#) bowed by his dear burden,
And many an ancestor of the great Julian line:
There he views [Romulus](#) carrying Acron's weapons
And famous heroes' deeds below their ranked statues.
And he sees Augustus' name on the front of the shrine,
And reading 'Caesar' there, the work seems greater still.
He had vowed it as a youth, when dutifully taking arms:
With such deeds a Prince begins his reign.
Loyal troops standing here, conspirators over there,

He stretched his hand out, and spoke these words:
‘If the death of my ‘father’ [Julius](#), priest of [Vesta](#),
Gives due cause for this war, if I avenge for both,
Come, Mars, and stain the sword with evil blood,
And lend your favour to the better side. You’ll gain
A temple, and be called the Avenger, if I win.’
So he vowed, and returned rejoicing from the rout.
Nor is he satisfied to have earned Mars that name,
But seeks the standards lost to Parthian hands,
That race protected by deserts, horses, arrows,
Inaccessible, behind their encircling rivers.
The nation’s pride had been roused by the deaths
Of the [Crassi](#), when army, leader, standards all were lost.
The Parthians kept the Roman standards, ornaments
Of war, and an enemy bore the Roman eagle.
That shame would have remained, if Italy’s power
Had not been defended by Caesar’s strong weapons.
He ended the old reproach, a generation of disgrace:
The standards were regained, and knew their own.
What use now the arrows fired from behind your backs,
Your deserts and your swift horses, you Parthians?
You carry the eagles home: offer your unstrung bows:
Now you no longer own the emblems of our shame.
Rightly the god has his temple, and title twice of Avenger,
And the honour earned has paid the avowed debt.
Quirites, celebrate solemn games in the Circus!
Though that stage scarcely seems worthy of a mighty god.

Book V: May 13

You'll catch sight of the [Pleiades](#), the whole throng together,
When there's one night still left before the Ides.
Then summer begins, as I find from reliable sources,
And spring's tepid season comes to an end.

Book V: May 14

The day before the Ides is marked by [Taurus](#) lifting
His starry muzzle. The sign's explained by a familiar tale.
[Jupiter](#), as a bull, offered his back to a Tyrian girl,
And carried horns on his deceptive forehead.
[Europa](#) grasped his hair in her right hand, her drapery
In her left, while fear itself lent her fresh grace.
The breeze filled her dress, ruffled her blonde hair:
Sidonian girl, like that, you were fit to be seen by Jove.
Often girlishly she withdrew her feet from the sea,
Fearing the touch of the leaping billows:
Often the god knowingly plunged his back in the waves,
So that she'd cling to his neck more tightly.
Reaching shore, the god was no longer a bull,
Jupiter stood there, without the horns.
The bull entered the heavens: you, Sidonian girl, Jove
Impregnated, and now a third of the world bears your
name.
Others say the sign is [Io](#), the Pharian heifer,
Turned from girl to cow, from cow to goddess.

On this day too, the [Vestals](#) throw effigies made of rushes,
In the form of men of old, from the oak bridge.
Some accuse our ancestors of a wicked crime,
Putting to death men over sixty years of age.
There's an old story, that when the land was '[Saturnia](#)',
Jove, prophetically, said something like this:
'Throw two people into the Tuscan river,
As a sacrifice to the sickle-bearing Ancient.'
Until Tirynthian [Hercules](#) came to our fields,
The sad rite was performed each year, as at [Leucas](#):
He threw Quirites of straw into the water:
And now they throw effigies in the same way.
Some think that the young men used to hurl
Feeble old men from the bridges, to steal their votes.
Tell me the truth, [Tiber](#). Your shores pre-date the City,
You should know the true origin of the rite.
Tiber, crowned in reeds, lifted his head from mid-stream,
And opened his mouth to speak these words, hoarsely:
'I saw this place when it was grassland, without walls:
Cattle were scattered grazing on either bank,
And Tiber whom the nations know and fear,
Was disregarded then, even by the cattle.
Arcadian [Evander](#) is often named to you:
A stranger, he churned my waters with his oars.
[Hercules](#) came here too, with a crowd of Greeks,
(My name was [Albula](#) then, if I remember true)
Evander, hero from Pallantium, received him warmly,
And [Cacus](#) had the punishment he deserved.
The victor left, taking the cattle, his plunder from [Erythea](#)

With him, but his friends refused to go any further.
Most of them had come from deserted Argos:
They established their hopes, and houses, on our hills.
Yet sweet love for their native land often stirred them,
And one of them, in dying, gave this brief command:
“Throw me into the Tiber, that carried by Tiber’s waves
My spiritless dust might journey to the Inachian shore.”
That funeral duty laid on him, displeased his heir:
The dead stranger was buried in Italian ground,
And a rush effigy thrown into the Tiber instead,
To return to his Greek home over the wide waters.’
Tiber spoke, entering a moist cave of natural stone,
While you, gentle waters, checked your flow.

Book V: May 15: Ides

Come, [Mercury](#), [Atlas](#)' famous grandson, you whom
A [Pleiad](#) once bore to [Jove](#), among the Arcadian hills,
Arbiter of war and peace to gods on high, and those
below:

You who make your way with winged feet: who delight
In the sounding lyre, and the gleaming wrestling:
You through whose teaching the tongue learnt eloquence:
On the Ides, the Senate founded for you, a temple facing
The Circus: since then today has been your festival.
All those who make a living trading their wares,
Offer you incense, and beg you to swell their profits.
There's [Mercury](#)'s fountain close to the Capene Gate:
It's potent, if you believe those who've tried it.
Here the merchant, cleansed, with his tunic girt,
Draws water and carries it off, in a purified jar.
With it he wets some laurel, sprinkles his goods
With damp laurel: those soon to have new owners.
And he sprinkles his hair with dripping laurel too,
And with that voice, that often deceives, utters prayers:
'Wash away all the lies of the past,' he says,
'Wash away all the perjured words of a day that's gone.
If I've called on you as witness, and falsely invoked
Jove's great power, hoping he wouldn't hear:
If I've knowingly taken the names of gods and goddesses,
In vain: let the swift southerlies steal my sinful words,
And leave the day clear for me, for further perjuries,
And let the gods above fail to notice I've uttered any.

Just grant me my profit, give me joy of the profit I've
made:
And make sure I'll have the pleasure of cheating a buyer.'
Mercury, on high, laughs aloud at such prayers,
Remembering how he himself stole [Apollo](#)'s cattle.

Book V: May 20

But, I beg you, Mercury, to respond to a better prayer,
And tell me when Phoebus enters [Gemini](#), the Twins.
He said: ‘When you see as many days remaining
In the month as the labours [Hercules](#) completed.’
‘Tell me,’ I replied, ‘the origin of the sign.’
The god explained its origin, eloquently:
‘The [Tyndarides](#), brothers, one a horseman, the other
A boxer, raped and abducted [Phoebe](#) and her sister [Hilaira](#).
[Idas](#), and [Lynceus](#), his brother, prepared to fight, and
claim
Their own, both sworn to be [Leucippus](#)’ sons-in-law.
Love urges one set of twins to demand restitution,
The other to refuse it: each fights for a common cause.
The [Oeбалids](#) could have escaped by taking flight,
But it seemed dishonourable to conquer by their speed.
There’s a spot clear of trees, a good place for a fight:
They took their stand there (its called Aphidna).
Pierced in the chest by Lynceus’ sword, a wound
He’d not expected, [Castor](#) fell to the ground.
[Pollux](#) rushed to avenge him, and with his spear
Ran Lynceus through, where neck meets shoulder.
Idas attacked him then, and was only repulsed by Jove’s
Lightning, yet without, they say, his weapon being torn
from him.
And the heights of heaven were opening for you,
Pollux, when you cried: ‘Father, hear my words:
That heaven you grant me alone, share between us:

Half will be more, then, than the whole of your gift.’
He spoke, and redeemed his brother, by their changing
Places alternately: both stars aid the storm-tossed vessel.

Book V: May 21: The Agonia

Turn back to [January](#) to learn what the [Agonia](#) are:
Though they’ve a place in the calendar here as well.

Book V: May 22

Tonight the stars of [Erigone](#)’s dog set: the origin
Of the constellation’s explained elsewhere.

Book V: May 23: The Tubilustrium

The next dawn belongs to [Vulcan](#): they call it
[Tubilustria](#): when trumpets he makes are purified.

Book V: May 24

The next date’s marked by four letters, QRCF, which,
interpreted,
Signify either the manner of the sacred rites, or the [flight
of the king](#).

Book V: May 25

I'll not neglect you either, [Fortuna Publica](#), of a powerful nation,
To whom a temple was dedicated on this following day.
When the sun's been received by [Amphitrite](#)'s rich waters,
You'll see the beak of [Jove](#)'s beloved tawny [eagle](#).

Book V: May 26, May 27

The coming dawn will hide [Bootes](#) from your sight,
And next day the constellation of [Hyas](#) will be seen.

Book VI

Book VI: Introduction

The reason for this month's name's also doubtful:
Choose the one you please from those I offer.
I sing the truth: but some will say I lied,
Believing no deity was ever seen by mortal.
There is a god in us: when he stirs we kindle:
That impulse sows the seeds of inspiration.
I've a special right to see the faces of the gods,
Being a bard, or by singing of sacred things.
There's a dense grove of trees, a place masked
From every sound, except the trickle of water.
There I considered the origin of the month
Just begun, and was thinking about its name.
Behold I saw the goddesses, but not those [Hesiod](#) saw,
That teacher of farming, following his Ascraean flock,
Nor those Priam's son, [Paris](#), judged in moist Ida's
Valleys: though one of them was there.
One of them, her own husband's sister:
[Juno](#), it was (I knew her) who stands in [Jove](#)'s temple.
I shivered, and betrayed myself by speechless pallor:
Then the goddess herself dispelled the fear she'd caused,
Saying: 'O poet, singer of the Roman year,
Who dares to tell great things in slender measures,
You've won the right to view a celestial power,
By choosing to celebrate the festivals in your verse.
But so you're not ignorant or led astray by error,

June in fact takes its name from mine.
It's something to have wed Jove, and to be Jove's sister:
I'm not sure if I'm prouder of brother or husband.
If you consider lineage, I was first to call [Saturn](#)
Father, I was the first child fate granted to him.
Rome was once named [Saturnia](#), after my father:
This was the first place he came to, exiled from heaven.
If the marriage bed counts at all, I'm called the
Thunderer's
Wife, and my shrine's joined to that of [Tarpeian](#) Jove.
If his mistress could give her name to the month of May,
Shall a similar honour be begrudged to me?
Or why am I called queen and chief of goddesses?
Why did they place a golden sceptre in my hand?
Shall days (*luces*) make up the month, and I be called
[Lucina](#) from them, yet not name a month myself?
Then I would repent of having loyally shed my anger
Against the race of [Electra](#) and the house of [Dardanus](#).
I had twin cause for anger: I grieved at [Ganymede](#)'s
abduction,
And my beauty was scorned by that judge, on Ida.
I would repent of not favouring [Carthage](#)'s walls,
Since my chariot and my weapons are there:
I would repent of having granted [Rome](#) rule of Sparta,
And of Argos, Mycenae, and ancient Samos:
And of old [Tatius](#), and the Faliscans who worship me,
Whom I allowed to fall prey to the Romans.
But let me not repent, no race is dearer to me: here
I'm worshipped: here I occupy a shrine with my dear Jove.

[Mavors](#) himself said to me: ‘I entrust these walls
To you. You’ll have power in your grandson’s city.’
His words are fulfilled: I’m worshipped at a hundred
altars,
And my month is the not the least of my honours.
Nevertheless not merely Rome does me that honour,
But the neighbouring townsmen treat me the same.
Look at the calendar of wooded Aricia,
Of the Laurentines, and my own Lanuvium:
They’ve a month of June. Look at Tiber,
And the sacred walls of the goddess at Praeneste:
You’ll read of [Juno](#)’s month. [Romulus](#) didn’t found them:
But Rome, it’s true, is the city of my grandson.’
Juno ended. I looked back: [Hebe](#), Hercules’ wife,
Stood there, with youthfulness in her look.
She said: ‘If my mother commanded me to leave heaven,
I wouldn’t stay, against my mother’s will.
And I won’t argue now about the name of the month:
I’ll persuade and act the petitioner’s role,
I’d prefer to maintain my rights by prayer alone.
Perhaps you’ll take my side yourself.
My mother occupies the golden Capitol, and shares
The summit shrine, as is right, with Jove himself.
While all my glory comes from the month’s name,
My only honour, one with which they tease me.
What harm, Roman, in your granting the name
Of a month to [Hercules](#)’ wife: posterity agreeing?
This land owes me something too, because of my great
Husband: here he drove the cattle he captured,

Here [Cacus](#), badly protected by his father's gift of fire,
Stained the Aventine earth with his blood.

But back to my point. Romulus organised the people,
Dividing them into two parts, according to age:

One was ready to give advice, the other to fight:

One decided on war, while the other waged it.

So he decreed, and divided the months likewise:

June for the young (*iuvenes*): the month before for the
old.'

She spoke. And in the heat of the moment they might have
Quarrelled, and anger disguised true affection:

But [Concord](#) came, her long hair twined with [Apollo](#)'s
laurel,

A goddess, and the dear care of our pacific leader.

When she'd told how Tatius and brave Romulus,

And their two kingdoms and people had merged,

And fathers- and sons-in-law made a common home,

She said: 'The month of June gets its name from

Their union (*iunctus*).' So three reasons were given.

Goddesses, forgive me: it's not for me to decide.

Leave me, equally. Troy was ruined by judging beauty:

Two goddesses can harm, more than one may delight.

Book VI: June 1: Kalends

[Carna](#), the first day's yours. Goddess of the hinge:

She opens the closed, by her power, closes the open.

The story of how she gained the powers she has is
obscured

By time, but you'll still learn of it from my verse.
There's an ancient grove of Alernus near the [Tiber](#):
And the priests still make sacrifices there.
A nymph was born there (men of old called her [Cranaë](#))
Who was often sought in vain by many suitors.
She used to hunt the land, chasing wild beasts with spears,
Stretching her woven nets in the hollow valleys.
She'd no quiver, yet considered herself Apollo's
Sister: nor need you, Apollo, have been ashamed of her.
If any youth spoke words of love to her,
She gave him this answer right away:
'There's too much light here, it's too shameful
In the light: if you'll lead to a darker cave, I'll follow.'
While he went in front, credulously, she no sooner reached
The bushes than she hid: and was nowhere to be found.
[Janus](#) saw her, and the sight raised his passion.
He used soft words to the hard-hearted nymph.
She told him to find a more private cave,
Followed him closely: then deserted her leader.
Foolish child! Janus can see what happens behind him:
You gain nothing: he looks back at your hiding place.
Nothing gained, as I said, you see! He caught you, hidden
Behind a rock, clasped you, worked his will, then said:
'In return for our union, the hinges belong to you:
Have them as recompense for your maidenhead.'
So saying he gave her a thorn (it was white-thorn)
With which to drive away evil from the threshold.
There are some greedy birds, not those that cheated
[Phineus](#) of his meal, though descended from that race:

Their heads are large, their eyes stick out, their beaks
Fit for tearing, their feathers are grey, their claws hooked.
They fly by night, attacking children with absent nurses,
And defiling their bodies, snatched from the cradle.
They're said to rend the flesh of infants with their beaks,
And their throats are full of the blood they drink.
They're called screech-owls, and the reason for the name
Is the horrible screeching they usually make at night.
Whether they're born as birds, or whether they're made so
By spells, old women transformed to birds by Marsian
magic,
They still entered [Proca](#)'s bedroom. Proca was fresh
Prey for the birds, a child of five days old.
They sucked at the infant's chest, with greedy tongues:
And the wretched child screamed for help.
Scared at his cry, the nurse ran to her ward,
And found his cheeks slashed by their sharp claws.
What could she do? The colour of the child's face
Was that of late leaves nipped by an early frost.
She went to Cranaë and told her: Cranaë said:
'Don't be afraid: your little ward will be safe.'
She approached the cradle: the parents wept:
'Restrain your tears,' she said, 'I'll heal him.'
Quickly she touched the doorposts, one after the other,
Three times, with arbutus leaves, three times with arbutus
Marked the threshold: sprinkled the entrance with water,
Medicinal water, while holding the entrails of a two-
month sow:
And said: 'Birds of night, spare his entrails:

A small victim's offered here for a small child.
Take a heart for a heart, I beg, flesh for flesh,
This life we give you for a dearer life.'
When she'd sacrificed, she placed the severed flesh
In the open air, and forbade those there to look at it.
A 'rod of [Janus](#)', taken from a whitethorn, was set
Where a little window shed light into the room.
After that, they say, the birds avoided the cradle,
And the boy recovered the colour he'd had before.
You ask why we eat greasy bacon-fat on the Kalends,
And why we mix beans with parched grain?
She's an ancient goddess, nourished by familiar food,
No epicure to seek out alien dainties.
In ancient times the fish still swam unharmed,
And the oysters were safe in their shells.
Italy was unaware of Ionian heath-cocks,
And the cranes that enjoy Pigmy blood:
Only the feathers of the peacock pleased,
And the nations didn't send us captive creatures.
Pigs were prized: men feasted on slaughtered swine:
The earth only yielded beans and hard grains.
They say that whoever eats these two foods together
At the Kalends, in this sixth month, will have sweet
digestion.
They also say that the shrine of [Juno Moneta](#) was founded
On the summit of the citadel, according to your vow,
[Camillus](#):
Before it was built, the house of [Manlius](#) had protected
Capitoline Jove against the Gallic weapons.

Great Gods, it would have been better, if he'd fallen,
In defence of your throne, noble Jupiter!
He lived to be executed, condemned for seeking kingship:
That was the crown long years granted him.
This same day is a festival of [Mars](#), whose temple
By the Covered Way is seen from beyond the Capene
Gate.
You too, [Tempest](#), were considered worthy of a shrine,
After our fleet was almost sunk in Corsican waters.
These human monuments are obvious. If you look
For stars too, great Jove's [eagle](#), with curved talons, rises.

Book VI: June 2

Next light summons the [Hyades](#), the horns on [Taurus](#)'
Brow, and then the earth's soaked with heavy rain.

Book VI: June 3

When two dawns are past, and Phoebus has risen twice,
And the crops have twice been wet by the dewfall,
On that day, they say, during the Tuscan War, [Bellona](#)'s
Shrine was consecrated, she who always brings Rome
success.

[Appius](#) was responsible, who, when peace was denied
[Pyrrhus](#),
Saw clearly with his mind, though deprived of sight.
A little open space looks down on the heights of the
Circus

From the temple, there's a little pillar there of no mean importance:

The custom is to hurl a spear from there to declare war,
When it's been decided to take up arms against kings and nations.

Book VI: June 4

The rest of the Circus is protected by [Hercules](#) the Guardian,
The god holds the office due to the [Sibylline](#) oracle.
The day before the Nones is when he takes up office:
If you ask about the inscription, [Sulla](#) approved the work.

Book VI: June 5: Nones

I asked whether I should assign the Nones to [Sancus](#),
Or [Fidius](#), or you Father [Semo](#): Sancus answered me:
'Whichever you assign it to, the honour's mine:
I bear all three names: so [Cures](#) willed it.'
The [Sabines](#) of old granted him a shrine accordingly,
And established it on the Quirinal Hill.

Book VI: June 6

I have [a daughter](#) (may she outlive me, I pray)
In whom I'll always be happy, while she's safe.
When I wished to give her away to my son-in-law,

I asked which times were fit for weddings, which were not:

Then it was pointed out to me that after the Ides of June
Was a good time for brides, and for bridegrooms,
While the start of the month was unsuitable for marriage:
For the holy wife of the [Flamen](#) Dialis told me:
'Till the calm Tiber carries the sweepings from the shrine
Of Ilian [Vesta](#), on its yellow waves to the sea,
I'm not allowed to comb my hair with a toothed comb,
Nor to cut my nails with anything made of iron,
Nor to touch my husband, though he's Jove's priest,
And though he was given to me by law for life.
Don't be in a hurry. Your daughter will be better wed,
When Vesta's fire gleams on purified earth.'

Book VI: June 7

On the third dawn after the Nones, it's said that [Phoebe](#) Chases away [Arcturus](#), and the [Bear](#)'s free of fear of her ward.

Then I recall, too, I've seen games, named for you
Smooth-flowing [Tiber](#), held on the turf in the [Field of Mars](#).

The day's a festival for those who tug at dripping lines,
And hide their bronze hooks under little strands of bait.

Book VI: June 8

The [Mind](#) has its own goddess too. I note a sanctuary
Was vowed to Mind, during the terror of war with you,
Perfidious [Carthage](#). You broke the peace, and astonished
By the consul's death, all feared the Moorish army.
Fear had driven out hope, when the Senate made their
vows

To Mind, and immediately she was better disposed to
them.

The day when the vows to the goddess were fulfilled
Is separated by six days from the approaching Ides.

Book VI: June 9: The Vestalia

[Vesta](#), favour me! I'll open my lips now in your service,
If I'm indeed allowed to attend your sacred rites.

I was rapt in prayer: I felt the heavenly deity,
And the happy earth shone with radiant light.
Not that I saw you, goddess (away with poets' lies!)
Nor were you to be looked on by any man:
But I knew what I'd not known, and the errors
I'd held to were corrected without instruction.
They say Rome had celebrated the [Parilia](#) forty times,
When the goddess, the Guardian of the Flame, was
received
In her shrine, the work of [Numa](#), that peace-loving king,
(None more god-fearing was ever born in Sabine lands.)
The roofs you see of bronze were roofs of straw then,
And its walls were made of wickerwork.
This meagre spot that supports the Hall of Vesta
Was then the mighty palace of unshorn Numa.
Yet the form of the temple, that remains, they say,
Is as before, and is shaped so for good reason.
Vesta's identified with Earth: in them both's unsleeping
fire:
Earth and the hearth are both symbols of home.
The Earth's a ball not resting on any support,
It's great weight hangs in the ether around it.
Its own revolutions keep its orb balanced,
It has no sharp angles to press on anything,
And it's placed in the midst of the heavens,
And isn't nearer or further from any side,
For if it weren't convex, it would be nearer somewhere,
And the universe wouldn't have Earth's weight at its
centre.

There's a globe suspended, enclosed by [Syracusan](#) art,
That's a small replica of the vast heavens,
And the Earth's equidistant from top and bottom.
Which is achieved by its spherical shape.
The form of this temple's the same: there's no angle
Projecting from it: a rotunda saves it from the rain.
You ask why the goddess is served by virgins?
I'll reveal the true reason for that as well.
They say that [Juno](#) and [Ceres](#) were born of [Ops](#)
By [Saturn](#)'s seed, [Vesta](#) was the third daughter:
The others married, both bore children they say,
The third was always unable to tolerate men.
What wonder if a virgin delights in virgin servants,
And only allows chaste hands to touch her sacred relics?
Realize that Vesta is nothing but living flame,
And you'll see that no bodies are born from her.
She's truly a virgin, who neither accepts seed
Nor yields it, and she loves virgin companions.
I foolishly thought for ages that there were statues
Of Vesta, later I learnt there were none beneath her dome:
An undying fire is concealed with the shrine,
But there's no image of [Vesta](#) or of fire.
The earth's supported by its energy: Vesta's so called
from 'depending
On energy' (*vi stando*), and that could be the reason for
her Greek name. But the hearth (*focus*) is named from its
fire that warms (*fovet*) all things:
Formerly it stood in the most important room.
I think the vestibule was so called from Vesta too:

In praying we address Vesta first, who holds first place.
It was once the custom to sit on long benches by the fire,
And believe the gods were present at the meal:
Even now in sacrificing to ancient [Vacuna](#),
They sit and stand in front of her altar hearths.
Something of ancient custom has passed to us:
A clean dish contains the food offered to Vesta.
See, loaves are hung from garlanded mules,
And flowery wreaths veil the rough millstones.
Once farmers only used to parch wheat in their ovens,
(And the [goddess of ovens](#) has her sacred rites):
The hearth baked the bread, set under the embers,
On a broken tile placed there on the heated floor.
So the baker honours the hearth, and the lady of hearths,
And the she-ass that turns the pumice millstones.
Red-faced [Priapus](#) shall I tell of your shame or pass by?
It's a brief tale but it's a merry one.
[Cybele](#), whose head is crowned with towers,
Called the eternal gods to her feast.
She invited the satyrs too, and those rural divinities,
The nymphs, and [Silenus](#) came, though no one asked him.
It's forbidden, and would take too long, to describe the
banquet
Of the gods: the whole night was spent drinking deep.
Some wandered aimlessly in Ida's shadowy vales,
Some lay, and stretched their limbs, on the soft grass.
Some played, some slept, others linked arms
And beat swift feet threefold on the grassy earth.
Vesta lay carelessly, enjoying a peaceful rest,

Her head reclining, resting on the turf.
But the red-faced keeper of gardens chased the nymphs
And goddesses, and his roving feet turned to and fro.
He saw Vesta too: it's doubtful whether he thought her
A nymph, or knew her as Vesta: he himself denied he
knew.
He had wanton hopes, and tried to approach her in secret,
And walked on tiptoe, with a pounding heart.
Old Silenus had chanced to leave the mule
He rode by the banks of a flowing stream.
The god of the long [Hellespont](#) was about to start,
When the mule let out an untimely bray.
Frightened by the raucous noise, the goddess leapt up:
The whole troop gathered, and Priapus fled through their
hands.
The people of [Lampsacus](#) sacrifice this animal to him,
singing:
'Rightly we give the innards of the witness to the flames.'
Goddess, you deck the creature with necklaces of loaves,
In remembrance: work ceases: the empty mills fall silent.
I'll explain the meaning of an altar of [Jove](#) the Baker
That stands on the Thunderer's citadel, more famous
For name than worth. The [Capitol](#) was surrounded
By fierce Gauls: the siege had already caused a famine.
Summoning the gods to his royal throne,
Jupiter said to [Mars](#): 'Begin!' and he quickly replied:
'My people's plight is surely unknown,
A grief that needs a voice of heartfelt complaint.
But if I'm to tell a sad and shameful tale in brief,

Rome lies under the feet of an Alpine enemy.
Jupiter, is this the Rome that was promised power
Over the world! Rome, the mistress of the earth?
She'd crushed the neighbouring cities, and the Etruscans:
Hope was rampant: now she's driven from her home.
We've seen old men, dressed in embroidered robes
Of triumph, murdered in their bronze-clad halls:
We've seen Ilian [Vesta](#)'s sacred pledges hurried
From their place: some clearly think of the gods.
But if they look back at the citadel you hold,
And see so many of your homes under siege,
They'll think worship of the gods is vain,
And incense from a fearful hand thrown away.
If only they'd an open field of battle! Let them arm,
And if they can't be victorious, let them die.
Now without food, and dreading a cowardly death,
They're penned on their hill, pressed by a barbarous mob.'
Then [Venus](#), and [Vesta](#), and glorious [Quirinus](#) with
auger's staff
And striped gown, pleaded on behalf of their Latium.
[Jupiter](#) replied: 'There's a common concern for those
walls.
And the Gauls will be defeated and receive punishment.
But you, Vesta, mustn't leave your place, and see to it
That the bread that's lacking be considered plentiful.
Let whatever grain is left be ground in a hollow mill,
Kneaded by hand, and then baked in a hot oven.'
He gave his orders, and Saturn's virgin daughter
Obeyed his command, as the hour reached midnight.

Now sleep had overcome the weary leaders: Jupiter
Rebuked them, and spoke his wishes from holy lips:
‘Rise, and from the heights of the citadel, throw down
Among the enemy, the last thing you’d wish to yield!’
They shook off sleep, and troubled by the strange
command,
Asked themselves what they must yield, unwillingly.
It seemed it must be bread: They threw down the gifts
Of [Ceres](#), clattering on the enemy helms and shields.
The expectation that they could be starved out vanished.
The foe was repulsed, and a bright altar raised to Jove the
Baker.

On the festival of Vesta, I happened to be returning
By the recent path that joins the [New Way](#) to the Forum.
There I saw a lady descending barefoot:
Astonished, I was silent and stopped short.
An old woman from the neighbourhood saw me: and
telling
Me to sit, spoke to me in a quavering voice, shaking her
head:
‘Here, where the forums are now, was marshy swamp:
A ditch was wet with the overflow from the river.
That lake of [Curtius](#), that supports the altars un-wet,
Is solid enough now, but was a pool of water once.
Where processions file through the [Velabrum](#) to the
Circus,
There was nothing but willow and hollow reeds:
Often some guest returning over suburban waters,
Sang out, and hurled drunken words at the boatmen.

That god, [Vertumnus](#), whose name fits many forms,
Wasn't yet so-called from damming back the river (*averso
amne*).

Here too was a thicket of bulrushes and reeds,
And a marsh un-trodden by booted feet.

The pools are gone, and the river keeps its banks,
And the ground's dry now: but the custom remains.'

So she explained it. I said: 'Farewell, good dame!
May whatever of life remains to you be sweet.'

I'd already heard the rest of the tale in boyhood,
But I won't pass over it in silence on that account.

[Ilus](#), scion of [Dardanus](#), had founded a new city
(Ilus was still rich, holding the wealth of Asia)

A sky-born image of armed [Minerva](#) was said
To have fallen on the hillside near to Troy.

(I was anxious to see it: I saw the temple and the site,
That's all that's left there: Rome has the Palladium.)

[Apollo](#) Smintheus was consulted, and gave this answer
From truthful lips, in the darkness of his shadowy grove:

'Preserve the heavenly goddess, and preserve
The City: with her goes the capital of empire.'

Ilus preserved her, closed in the heights of the citadel.
The care of it descended to his heir [Laomedon](#).

Priam failed to take like care: so Pallas wished it,
Judgement having gone against her beauty.

They say it was stolen, whether by [Diomedes](#),
Or cunning [Ulysses](#), or taken by [Aeneas](#):

The agent's unknown, but the thing's in Rome:
Vesta guards it: who sees all things by her unfailing light.

How worried the Senate was, when [Vesta](#)'s temple
Caught fire: and she was nearly buried by her own roof!
Holy fires blazed, fed by sinful fires,
Sacred and profane flames were merged.
The priestesses with streaming hair, wept in amazement:
Fear had robbed them of their bodily powers.
[Metellus](#) rushed into their midst, crying in a loud voice:
'Run and help, there's no use in weeping.
Seize fate's pledges in your virgin hands:
They won't survive by prayers, but by action.
Ah me! Do you hesitate?' he said. He saw them,
Hesitating, sinking in terror to their knees.
He took up water, and holding his hands aloft, cried:
'Forgive me, holy relics! A man enters where no man
should.
If it's wrong, let the punishment fall on me:
Let my life be the penalty, so Rome is free of harm.'
He spoke and entered. The goddess he carried away
Was saved by her priest's devotion, and she approved.
Now sacred flames you shine brightly under Caesar's rule:
The fire on the Ilian hearths is there, and will remain,
It won't be said that under him any [priestess](#) disgraced
Her office, nor that she was buried alive in the earth.
So the unchaste die, being entombed in what they
Have violated: since divine Earth and [Vesta](#) are one.
This day [Brutus](#) won his title from the Galician foe,
And stained the soil of Spain with blood.
Surely sadness is sometimes mixed with joy,
Lest festivals delight the crowd's hearts completely:

[Crassus](#), near the [Euphrates](#), lost the eagles, his army,
And his son, and at the end himself as well.
The goddess said: ‘Parthians, why exult? You’ll send
The standards back, a Caesar will avenge Crassus’ death.’

Book VI: June 10

But once the violets are stripped from the long-eared
mules,
And the rough millstones are grinding the grain again,
The sailor at the stern says: ‘We’ll see the [Dolphin](#),
When day is put to flight and night comes on.’

Book VI: June 11: The Matralia

Now you complain, Phrygian [Tithonus](#), abandoned by
your bride,
And the vigilant Morning Star leaves the Eastern waters.
Good mothers (since the [Matralia](#) is your festival),
Go, offer the Theban goddess the golden cakes she’s
owed.
Near the bridges and mighty Circus is a famous square,
One that takes its [name](#) from the statue of an ox:
There, on this day, they say, [Servius](#) with his own
Royal hands, consecrated a temple to [Mother Matruta](#).
Bacchus, whose hair is twined with clustered grapes,
If the goddess’ house is also yours, guide the poet’s work,
Regarding who the goddess is, and why she excludes
(Since she does) female servants from the threshold

Of her temple, and why she calls for toasted cakes.
[Semele](#) was burnt by [Jove](#)'s compliance: [Ino](#)
Received you as a baby, and nursed you with utmost care.
[Juno](#) swelled with rage, that Ino should raise a child
Snatched from Jove's lover: but it was her sister's son.
So [Athamas](#) was haunted by the [Furies](#), and false visions,
And little [Learchus](#) died by his father's hand.
His grieving mother committed his shade to the tomb.
And paid the honours due to the sad pyre.
Then tearing her hair in sorrow, she leapt up
And snatched you from your cradle, [Melicertes](#).
There's a narrow headland between two seas,
A single space attacked by twofold waves:
There Ino came, clutching her son in her frenzied grasp,
And threw herself, with him, from a high cliff into the sea.
[Panope](#) and her hundred sisters received them unharmed,
And gliding smoothly carried them through their realm.
They reached the mouth of densely eddying Tiber,
Before they became [Leucothea](#) and [Palaemon](#).
There was a grove: known either as [Semele](#)'s or [Stimula](#)'s:
Inhabited, they say, by Italian [Maenads](#).
Ino, asking them their nation, learned they were
Arcadians,
And that [Evander](#) was the king of the place.
Hiding her divinity, [Saturn's daughter](#) cleverly
Incited the Latian [Bacchae](#) with deceiving words:
'O too-easy-natured ones, caught by every feeling!
This stranger comes, but not as a friend, to our gathering.
She's treacherous, and would learn our sacred rites:

But she has a child on whom we can wreak punishment.’
She’d scarcely ended when the [Thyiads](#), hair streaming
Over their necks, filled the air with their howling,
Laid hands on Ino, and tried to snatch the boy.
She invoked gods with names as yet unknown to her:
‘Gods, and men, of this land, help a wretched mother!’
Her cry carried to the neighbouring [Aventine](#).
Oetaean [Hercules](#) having driven the Iberian cattle
To the riverbank, heard and hurried towards the voice.
As he arrived, the women who’d been ready for violence,
Shamefully turned their backs in cowardly flight.
‘What are you doing here,’ said Hercules (recognising
her),
‘Sister of Bacchus’ mother? Does Juno persecute you
too?’
She told him part of her tale, suppressing the rest because
of her son: Ashamed to have been goaded to crime by the
Furies.
Rumour, so swift, flew on beating wings,
And your name was on many a lip, Ino.
It’s said you entered loyal [Carmentis](#)’ home
As a guest, and assuaged your great hunger:
They say the Tegean priestess quickly made cakes
With her own hands, and baked them on the hearth.
Now cakes delight the goddess at the Matralia:
Country ways pleased her more than art’s attentions.
‘Now, O prophetess,’ she said, ‘reveal my future fate,
As far as is right. Add this, I beg, to your hospitality.’

A pause ensued. Then the prophetess assumed divine powers,
And her whole breast filled with the presence of the god:
You'd hardly have known her then, so much taller
And holier she'd become than a moment before.
'I sing good news, Ino,' she said, 'your trials are over,
Be a blessing to your people for evermore.
You'll be a sea goddess, and your son will inhabit ocean.
Take different names now, among your own waves:
Greeks will call you Leucothea, our people Matuta:
Your son will have complete command of harbours,
We'll call him [Portunus](#), Palaemon in his own tongue.
Go, and both be friends, I beg you, of our country!'
Ino nodded, and gave her promise. Their trials were over,
They changed their names: he's a god and she's a goddess.
You ask why she forbids the approach of female servants?
She hates them: by her leave I'll sing the reason for her hate.
Daughter of Cadmus, one of your maids
Was often embraced by your husband.
Faithless Athamas secretly enjoyed her: he learned
From her that you gave the farmers parched seed.
You yourself denied it, but rumour confirmed it.
That's why you hate the service of a maid.
But let no loving mother pray to her, for her child:
She herself proved an unfortunate parent.
Better command her to help another's child:
She was more use to Bacchus than her own.
They say she asked you, [Rutilius](#), 'Where are you rushing?'

As consul you'll fall to the Marsian enemy on my day.'
Her words were fulfilled, the Tolenus
Flowed purple, its waters mixed with blood.
The following year, [Didius](#), killed on the same
Day, doubled the enemy's strength.
[Fortuna](#), the same day is yours, your temple
Founded by the same king, in the same place.
And whose is that statue hidden under draped robes?
It's [Servius](#), that's for sure, but different reasons
Are given for the drapes, and I'm in doubt.
When the goddess fearfully confessed to a secret love,
Ashamed, since she's immortal, to mate with a man
(For she burned, seized with intense passion for the king,
And he was the only man she wasn't blind to),
She used to enter his palace at night by a little window:
So that the gate bears the name [Fenestella](#).
She's still ashamed, and hides the beloved features
Under cloth: the king's face being covered by a robe.
Or is it rather that, after his murder, the people
Were bewildered by their gentle leader's death,
Their grief swelling, endlessly, at the sight
Of the statue, until they hid him under robes?
I must sing at greater length of a third reason,
Though I'll still keep my team on a tight rein.
Having secured her marriage by crime, [Tullia](#)
Used to incite her husband with words like these:
'What use if we're equally matched, you by my sister's
Murder, I by your brother's, in leading a virtuous life?
Better that my husband and your wife had lived,

Than that we shrink from greater achievement.
I offer my father's life and realm as my dower:
If you're a man, go take the dower I speak of.
Crime is the mark of kingship. Kill your wife's father,
Seize the kingdom, dip our hands in my father's blood.'
Urged on by such words, though a private citizen
He usurped the high throne: the people, stunned, took up
arms.

With blood and slaughter the weak old man was defeated:

[Tarquin](#) the Proud snatched his father-in-law's sceptre.

[Servius](#) himself fell bleeding to the hard earth,

At the foot of the [Esquiline](#), site of his palace.

His daughter, driving to her father's home,

Rode through the streets, erect and haughty.

When her driver saw the king's body, he halted

In tears. She reproved him in these terms:

'Go on, or do you seek the bitter fruits of virtue?

Drive the unwilling wheels, I say, over his face.'

A certain proof of this is Evil Street, named

After her, while eternal infamy marks the deed.

Yet she still dared to visit her father's temple,

His monument: what I tell is strange but true.

There was a statue enthroned, an image of Servius:

They say it put a hand to its eyes,

And a voice was heard: 'Hide my face,

Lest it view my own wicked daughter.'

It was veiled by cloth, Fortune refused to let the robe

Be removed, and she herself spoke from her temple:

'The day when Servius' face is next revealed,

Will be a day when shame is cast aside.’
Women, beware of touching the forbidden cloth,
(It’s sufficient to utter prayers in solemn tones)
And let him who was the City’s seventh king
Keep his head covered, forever, by this veil.
The temple once burned: but the fire spared
The statue: [Mulciber](#) himself preserved his son.
For Servius’ father was [Vulcan](#), and the lovely
[Ocresia](#) of Corniculum his mother.
Once, performing sacred rites with her in the due manner,
[Tanaquil](#) ordered her to pour wine on the garlanded
hearth:
There was, or seemed to be, the form of a male organ
In the ashes: the shape was really there in fact.
The captive girl sat on the hearth, as commanded:
She conceived Servius, born of divine seed.
His father showed his paternity by touching the child’s
Head with fire, and a cap of flames glowed on his hair.
And [Livia](#), this day dedicated a magnificent shrine to you,
[Concordia](#), that she offered to her dear husband.
Learn this, you age to come: where Livia’s Colonnade
Now stands, there was once a vast palace.
A site that was like a city: it occupied a space
Larger than that of many a walled town.
It was levelled to the soil, not because of its owner’s
treason,
But because its excess was considered harmful.
Caesar countenanced the demolition of such a mass,
Destroying its great wealth to which he was heir.

That's the way to censure vice, and set an example,
When the adviser himself does as he advises.

Book VI: June 13: Ides

The next day has no features worth your noting.
On the Ides a temple was dedicated to Unconquered [Jove](#).
Now I must tell of the lesser [Quinquatrus](#).
Help my efforts, yellow-haired [Minerva](#).
'Why does the flautist wander widely through the City?
Why the masks? Why the long robes?' So I spoke,
And so [Tritonia](#), laying down her spear, answered me.
(Would I could relay the learned goddess' very words!):
'Flautists were much employed in your fathers' days,
And they were always held in high honour.
The flute was played in shrines, and at the games,
And it was played at mournful funerals too:
The effort was sweetened by reward. But a time came
That suddenly ended the practice of that pleasant art.
The *aedile* ordered there should be no more than ten
Musicians accompanying funeral processions.
The flute-players went into exile at [Tibur](#).
Once Tibur itself was a place of [exile](#)!
The hollow flute was missed in the theatre, at the altars:
No dirge accompanied the funeral bier.
There was one who had been a slave, at Tibur,
But had long been freed, worthy of any rank.
He prepared a rural banquet and invited the tuneful
Throng: they gathered to the festive table.

It was night: their minds and vision were thick with wine,
When a messenger arrived with a concocted tale,
Saying to the freedman: “Dissolve the feast, quickly!
See, here’s your old master coming with his rod.”
The guests rapidly stirred their limbs, reeling about
With strong wine, staggering on shaky legs.
But the master cried: “Away with you!” and packed
The laggards into a wagon lined with rushes.
The hour, the motion, and the wine, brought on sleep,
And the drunken crowd dreamed they were off to Tibur.
Now they re-entered Rome through the Esquiline,
And at dawn the cart stood in the middle of the Forum.
To deceive the Senate as to their class and number,
[Plautius](#) ordered their faces covered with masks:
And introduced others, wearing long garments,
So that female flautists could be added to the crew:
And their return best hidden, in case they were censured
For coming back contrary to their guilds’ orders.
The ruse succeeded, and they’re allowed their new
costume,
On the Ides, singing merry words to the ancient tunes.’
When she’d instructed me, I said: ‘It only remains
For me to learn why the day’s called the Quinquatrus.’
She replied: ‘There’s my festival of that name in March,
And that guild is one of my creations.
I first produced the music of the long flute,
By piercing boxwood with spaced holes.
The music pleased: but I saw the swollen cheeks
Of my virginal face reflected in the water.

I said: “ I don’t value my art that highly, away
My flute”: and threw it to fall on the turf by the river.
[Marsyas](#) the satyr found it, and marvelled at first
Not knowing its use: but found his breath produced a note:
And worked it now by breathing now by fingering.
He soon boasted of his skill among the nymphs:
And challenged [Phoebus](#): trounced by Phoebus he was
hanged:
And his skin was flayed from his limbs.
I’m the true creator and inventor of this music.
That’s why the guild keeps my holy days.

Book VI: June 15

The third day comes, when you, [Thyone](#) of Dodona,
Stand with the Hyades on the brow of [Agenor](#)’s [Bull](#).
It’s the day, Tiber, when you send the sweepings of
[Vesta](#)’s
Shrine down the Tuscan waters, to the sea.

Book VI: June 16

Spread your sails to the west wind, mariners, if you trust
The breeze, tomorrow it blows fair over your waters.

Book VI: June 17-18

But when the Sun, the father of the Heliades, has dipped
his rays

In the waves, and the quiet stars have circled the twin poles,
[Orion](#) will lift his mighty shoulders above the earth:
And the next night the [Dolphin](#) will be seen.
Once it saw the Volscians and Aequians fleeing
Over your plains, Mount Algidus:
And you [Tubertus](#) triumphing famously over your neighbours
Rode as victor, in a chariot drawn by snow-white horses.

Book VI: June 19

Now twelve days are left to the end of the month,
But you must add another day to that number:
The sun departs the Twins, and the [Crab](#) flames red:
[Pallas](#) begins to be worshipped on the [Aventine](#).

Book VI: June 20

Now [Laomedon](#), the wife of your son, [Tithonus](#), rises, and rising
Drives away the night, and the black hoar-frost flees the meadows.
A shrine is said to have been dedicated to [Summanus](#),
whoever
He is, when you, [Pyrrhus](#), were a terror to the Romans.

Book VI: June 21

When that day's sun has been received by [Galatea](#), in her
Father's waves, and the whole world is sunk in quiet
sleep,
The young man blasted by his grandfather's lightning,
rises,
[Ophiucus](#), stretching out his hands circled by twin snakes.
[Phaedra](#)'s passion is known: and [Theseus](#)' wrong:
When over-credulous he condemned his son.
The pious, but doomed youth, was travelling to Troezen:
When a bull parted the waters in its path.
Fear seized the startled horses: their master restrained
them
In vain, and they dragged him over crags and harsh stones.
He fell from the chariot and, limbs tangled in the reins,
[Hippolytus](#)' wounded body was carried along,
Till he gave up his spirit, to [Diana](#)'s great anger.
'There's no need for grief,' said [Aesculapius](#):
I'll restore the pious youth to life, free of wounds,
And sad fate will yield to my skill.'
Quickly he took medicines from an ivory casket,
(They had once been of aid to [Glaucus](#)' shade,
When a seer went down to cull the herbs he'd noted,
One snake having been healed by another snake),
He touched his breast three times, three times spoke
Words of healing: the youth lifted his head from the
ground.
Hippolytus hid in his own sacred grove, in the depths
Of [Diana](#)'s woods: he is [Virbius](#) of the Arician Lake.

But [Clotho](#), the Fate, and [Dis](#) both grieved: she, that a life-thread

Had been re-spun, he that his realm's rights had been curtailed.

[Jupiter](#), fearing the example set, directed his lightning
At one who employed the power of too great an art.

[Phoebus](#), you complained: but [Aesculapius](#) is a god: be reconciled

To your father Jove: he himself did for you what he forbids to others.

Book VI: June 22

Caesar, however much you rush to conquer,

I'd not have you march if the auspices are bad.

Let [Flaminius](#) and the shores of Lake Trasimene

Be your witness, the just gods often warn by means of birds.

If you ask the hour of that ancient, and reckless disaster,

It was on the tenth day from the end of the month.

Book VI: June 23

The next day's better: [Masinissa](#) defeated [Syphax](#),

And [Hasdrubal](#) fell by his own sword.

Book VI: June 24

Time slips by, and we age silently with the years,

There's no bridle to curb the flying days.
How swiftly the festival of Fors [Fortuna](#)'s arrived!
June will be over now in seven days.
Quirites, come celebrate the goddess Fors, with joy:
She has her royal show on Tiber's banks.
Hurry on foot, and others in swift boats:
It's no shame to return home tipsy.
Garlanded barges, carry your bands of youths,
Let them drink deep of the wine, mid-stream.
The people worship her, because they say the founder
Of her shrine was one of them, and rose from humble
rank,
To the throne, and her worship suits slaves, because
[Servius](#)
Was slave-born, who built the nearby shrines of the fatal
goddess.

Book VI: June 26

See, returning from the suburban shrine, a drunken
Worshipper hailing the stars with words like these:
'[Orion](#) your belt is hidden today, and perhaps will be
tomorrow,
But after that it will be visible to me.'
And if he wasn't tipsy he'd have said
The solstice will fall on that same day.

Book VI: June 27

Next day the [Lares](#) are granted a sanctuary in the place
Where endless wreaths are twined by skilful hands.
The same day owns to the temple of [Jupiter](#) the Stayer,
That [Romulus](#) founded of old in front of the [Palatine](#).

Book VI: June 29

When as many days of the month are left as there are
named [Fates](#),
A temple was dedicated to you, [Quirinus](#) of the striped
gown.

Book VI: June 30

Tomorrow the Kalends of July return:
Muses put the final touch to my work.
[Pierides](#), tell me, who placed you with [Hercules](#)
Whose stepmother [Juno](#) unwillingly conceded it?
So I spoke, and [Clio](#) replied: ‘Behold the monument
To famous [Philip](#), from whom chaste [Marcia](#) descends,
Marcia whose name derives from sacrificial [Ancus](#)
Marcus,
And whose beauty equals her nobility.
In her, form matches spirit: in her
Lineage, beauty and intellect meet.
Don’t think it shallow that I praise her form:
We praise the great goddesses in that way.
[Caesar](#)’s aunt was once married to that Philip:
O ornament, O lady worthy of that sacred house!’

So Clio sang. Her learned sisters approved:
And Hercules agreed, and sounded his lyre.

End of the Fasti

Index

Acastus

King of Iolchos in Thessaly, son of Pelias.

[Book II: Introduction](#) He absolved [Peleus](#) of blood-guilt.

Acca

Acca Larentia the wife of the shepherd [Faustulus](#), who saved the lives of the twins [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#) after they had been thrown into the [Tiber](#). She had twelve sons, and on the death of one of them Romulus took his place, and with the remaining eleven founded the college of the Arval brothers (*Fratres Arvales*).

[Book IV: April 21](#) [Book V: May 9](#) Mourns for Remus and sees his ghost.

Achates

Companion to [Aeneas](#).

[Book III: March 15](#) Meets with [Anna](#).

Achelous

A river and river god, whose waters separated Acarnania and Aetolia.

[Book II: Introduction](#) [Alcmaeon](#) purified by the waters.

[Book V: May 2](#) A synonym for pure water.

Achilles

The Greek hero of the Trojan War. The son of [Peleus](#), king of Thessaly, and the sea-goddess Thetis, (See Homer's Iliad).

[Book V: May 3 Chiron](#) was his tutor. He weeps for the dying Centaur.

Acis

Acis was, in Greek mythology, a Sicilian youth who was often considered the son of [Dionysus](#). He loved the nymph [Galatea](#) but was killed with a boulder by a jealous suitor, the [Cyclops](#) Polyphemus. Galatea turned his blood into the river Acis in eastern Sicily. See *Metamorphoses* XIII, 750

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by the river.

Acragas, Agrigentum

Agrigentum (the modern Girgenti), an ancient city on the south coast of Sicily, 2m. from the sea. It was founded (perhaps on the site of an early Sicanian settlement) by colonists from [Gela](#) about 582 B.C., and, though the latest city of importance founded by the Greeks in Sicily, soon acquired a position second to that of [Syracuse](#) alone, owing to its favorable situation for trade with Carthage and to the fertility of its territory.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Actium

The promontory in Epirus site of the famous naval battle in the bay between Octavian (later [Augustus](#) Caesar) and

Antony in 31BC. (It lies opposite the modern port of Préveza on the Gulf of Amvrakia.)

Antony was defeated by Octavians' admiral, [Agrippa](#) and the outcome led to Cleopatra's downfall.

[Book I: January 30](#) Laurels of Actium signifying peace attendant on that victory.

Adonis

The son of Myrrha by her father Cinyras, born after her transformation into a myrrh-tree. (As such he is a vegetation god born from the heart of the wood.) [Venus](#) fell in love with him. She warned him to avoid savage creatures. He ignored her warning and was killed by a wild boar that gashed his thigh. His blood became the windflower, the *anemone*.

[Book V: May 2](#) Mentioned.

Aegeus

The father of [Theseus](#), a king of Athens, and son of Pandion. He gave refuge to [Medea](#) and married her.

[Book II: Introduction](#) Married Medea.

Aemonides, Pyracmon

One of the three Cyclopes who forged [Jupiter's](#) thunderbolts.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Mentioned.

Aeneas

The [Trojan](#), son of [Venus](#) and [Anchises](#). Aeneas escaped from Troy at its fall, and travelled to [Latium](#). The Julian family claimed descent from his son Ascanius (Iulus). See Virgil's Aeneid.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book III: March 6](#) [Book IV:](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Book V: May 12](#) Aeneas brought the household gods, the Penates, from Troy, and carried his father on his shoulders from the ruins, bringing both to Italy. He also traditionally brought the [Vestal](#) fire.

[Book I: January 30](#) [Book IV: April 1](#) The 'sons' of Aeneas are the Romans.

[Book II: February 21](#) He introduced 'gifts for the dead' to Latium.

[Book II: February 23](#) He landed in [Laurentine](#) territory.

[Book III: March 15](#) Loved by [Dido](#). Gained [Latinus](#)' kingdom and his daughter [Lavinia](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) He cut pine trees with [Cybele](#)'s permission to build the ships for his flight from Phrygia.

[Book IV: April 21](#) Unscathed by the fires of burning Troy, and so perhaps a reason for the sacred fires of the [Parilia](#).

[Book IV: April 23](#) He fought [Turnus](#) for the right to marry [Lavinia](#).

[Book VI: June 9](#) He was said to have brought the Palladium, the statue of Pallas [Minerva](#), from Troy to Rome.

Aeolus

The king of the winds. His cave is on the islands of Lipari (the Aeolian Islands) that include Stromboli, off Sicily.

[Book II: February 15](#) God of the winds which he imprisons in his cave.

Aesculapius

The son of [Coronis](#) and [Apollo](#). He was saved by Apollo from his mother's body and given to [Chiron](#) the Centaur to rear. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Ophiucus near Scorpius, depicting a man entwined in the coils of a serpent, consisting of the split constellation, Serpens Cauda and Serpens Caput, which contains Barnard's star, having the greatest proper motion of any star and being the second nearest to the sun.

He saved [Rome](#) from the plague, and became a resident god. (His cult centre was Epidaurus where there was a statue of the god with a golden beard. Cicero mentions that Dionysius the Elder, Tyrant of Syracuse wrenched off the gold. ('On the Nature of the Gods, Bk III 82)

[Book I: January 1](#) His temple on an island in the Tiber.

[Book VI: June 21](#) He resurrects [Hippolytus](#). Jove later resurrected Aesculapius and set him deified among the stars.

Aethra

Daughter of [Oceanus](#) and [Tethys](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Mother of [Hyas](#) and the [Hyades](#).

Agamemnon

The king of Mycenae, son of [Atreus](#), brother of Menelaüs, husband of Clytaemnestra, father of Orestes, Iphigenia, and Electra. The leader of the Greek army in the Trojan War. See Homer's Iliad, and Aeschylus's Oresteian tragedies.

[Book V: May 2](#) An example of divine vengeance wreaked by [Diana](#), due to his sacrifice of Iphigenia.

Aganippe

One of the two springs on Mount Helicon associated with the [Muses](#). Hippocrene is the other. Ovid identifies them.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The founts of poetic inspiration.

Agenor

The father of [Europa](#).

[Book VI: June 15 Taurus](#) is here referred to.

Agonal

Sacrificial day (*Agon*) of the god.

[Book I: January 9](#) Sacred to Janus. Ovid suggests derivations of *Agon* and *Agonia*.

[Book V: May 21](#) No reason is given for this date being a sacrificial day.

Agrippa

The son of [Tiberinus](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Father of [Remulus](#).

Alba Longa, Alba

The Latin city according to legend founded by [Aeneas](#) on the Alban Hills. The town near [Rome](#) was ruled by [Numitor](#), the father of [Rhea Silvia](#). By [Mars](#) she conceived [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#). Later she was called [Ilia](#), the Trojan, from Ilium, Troy, and made the daughter of Aeneas to fit the myth of Trojan origin for the Romans.

[Book II: February 17](#) The town is mentioned.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Alba the king who succeeded [Latinus](#), father of [Epytus](#).

Albula, Tiber

An early name for the [Tiber](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) [Book V: May 14](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) [Hercules](#) drank there.

Alcides, See [Hercules](#)

An epithet of Hercules from his putative father Amphitryon's own father Alceus.

[Book I: January 11](#) Hercules.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Reached Italy.

Alcmaeon

The son of [Amphiaräus](#) and Eriphyle. He avenged his father's death, and was in turn murdered in the chain of revenge following the war of the Seven against [Thebes](#).

[Book II: Introduction](#) Purified by the waters of the [Achelous](#) from the sin of his mother's murder.

Alcyone

One of the [Pleiads](#). She slept with [Neptune](#), and bore him Anthas.

[Book IV: April 2](#) Mentioned.

Almo

A river-god. God of the Almo, a tributary of the [Tiber](#).

[Book II: February 21](#) Father of [Lara](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Its meeting with the Tiber.

Amalthea

The goat-nymph who suckled [Jupiter](#).

[Book V: May 1](#) Associated with the star [Capella](#). Her goat's-horn of plenty is the *cornucopiae*, which was supposed to produce whatever its owner wished for.

Amenanas

A river in eastern Sicily near [Leontini](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Passed by Ceres.

Ampelus

The son of a nymph and satyr, loved by [Bacchus](#).

[Book III: March 5](#) His name given to the vine, ἀμπελος.

He becomes the star [Vindemitor](#) in Virgo.

Amphiaraus

A Greek seer, one of the heroes, the Oeclides, at the Calydonian Boar Hunt. The son of Oecleus, father of [Alcmaeon](#), and husband of Eriphyle.

[Book II: Introduction](#) The father of Alcmaeon.

Amphitrite

A sea-goddess, daughter of Nereus and wife of [Neptune](#).
The Nereid whom Poseidon married, here representing the sea.

[Book V: May 25](#) The sea.

Amulius

King of [Alba](#). Uncle of Rhea [Silvia](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) Orders [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#) to be drowned. He is later killed by the young Romulus.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) [Book IV: April 21](#) Brother to [Numitor](#).

Anapus, Anapis

The river near [Syracuse](#) in Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Anchises

The son of [Capys](#), loved by [Venus](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Aeneas](#).

Ancus Marcius

King of Rome.

[Book VI: June 30](#) The [Marcian](#) clam claimed descent from him.

Anguis, Hydra Constellation

Anguis is a term used confusingly to describe the constellations Serpens and Draco also. Here it names Hydra, the Water-Snake, the largest constellation, containing the bright star, Alphard. The Hydra was the multi-headed monster killed by [Hercules](#), but here is linked to [Apollo](#).

[Book II: February 14](#) Ovid relates the associated myth. The constellation was rising at twilight at this date.

Anna Perenna

A personification of the eternal year, and a manifestation of the Great Goddess. Her feast was celebrated at the first milestone on the Flaminian Way, where there was a sacred grove.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Her worship began in March.

[Book III: March 15](#) Ovid derives her from Anna the sister of [Dido](#), Queen of Carthage, and tells the background story.

Antenor

A Trojan noble, the reputed founder of Padua (Patavium). Spared by the Greeks at Troy because he had sued for peace.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Founded Padua.

Apollo

Son of [Jupiter](#) and Latona (Leto), brother of [Diana](#) (Artemis), born on Delos (Ortygia). God of poetry, art,

medicine, prophecy, archery, herds and flocks, and of the sun.

[Book I: Introduction](#) Worshipped at Claros in Ionia, where there was a sanctuary and oracle.

[Book I: January 1](#) The father of [Aesculapius](#) by [Coronis](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) The sun god, passing through one or parts of two signs of the zodiac in a year.

[Book III: March 1](#) Called Cynthius, the sun, as Diana is Cynthia.

[Book III: March 23](#) The oracular god of prophecy.

[Book V: May 15](#) [Mercury](#) stole his cattle.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) The laurel, symbol of peace, his sacred tree.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Apollo Smintheus, or Mouse Apollo, an oracular form of the godhead.

[Book VI: June 21](#) The father of [Aesculapius](#). [Jupiter](#), Apollo's father resurrected Aesculapius from the dead.

Appius Claudius Caecus

Appius Claudius the Blind, when consul, defeated the Etruscan and Samnite alliance in 296BC. After his defeat of 280BC, [Pyrrhus](#) offered terms but Appius was carried into the Senate to demand they be refused.

[Book VI: June 3](#) Dedicated a temple to [Bellona](#) in 296BC.

Aqua Virgo

The Aqua Virgo was an aqueduct constructed by Agrippa and opened in 19BC to provide a water supply for the public baths he was building: it entered the city from the

north and ran as far as the [Campus Martis](#). The source by the Via Collatina was supposed to have been revealed by a young girl. The opening took place on the 9th June the feast-day of [Vesta](#) and the spring may have in fact been dedicated to her. Agrippa dubbed it *Augusta*, which pleased Augustus. (Cassius Dio, *The Roman History* 54.11).

[Book I: January 11](#) Site of the [Juturnalia](#).

Aquarius

The constellation of the Water-Bearer, one of the original Babylonian star configurations, and one of the four fixed signs. In Greek myth it represents [Ganymede](#), the shepherd boy carried off by Zeus, to become wine-bearer to the gods.

[Book I: January 17](#) In Ovid's day the sun moved from [Capricorn](#) into Aquarius on or about this date.

[Book II: February 5](#) The sun is more than midway through Aquarius, who is identified with [Ganymede](#) the cupbearer to the gods.

[Book II: February 15](#) At this date Aquarius rises near dawn and sets before sunset, so is hidden as the sun moves into Pisces.

Arcadians

Arcadia is a region in the centre of the Peloponnese: the archetypal rural paradise.

[Book I: January 11 Carmenta](#) was an Arcadian. Arcady taking its name from [Arcas](#) was said to be older than the Moon (See Apollonius Rhodius IV:264).

[Book II: February 11 Callisto](#), a Tegeaeon.

[Book II: February 15](#) The ancient Arcadian worship of [Pan](#). The Arcadian race older than the moon, see above. Mount [Lycaeus](#) in Arcadia, a seat of worship.

[Book III: Introduction Faunus](#) worshipped there.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The Arcadians worshipped Cyllenian [Mercury](#).

Arcas

The son of [Jupiter](#) and [Callisto](#). Set in the heavens by Jupiter as the Little Bear.

[Book I: January 11 Arcadia](#) takes its name from him according to Ovid.

Archimedes

The Greek mathematician and inventor (c287-c212BC), the greatest scientist of Classical times, born in [Syracuse](#), studied at Alexandria, and afterwards remaining in Syracuse for the rest of his life. He was reputedly killed during the Roman conquest of the city.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Ovid describes the orrery of Archimedes, which Cicero says was brought to Rome from Syracuse by its conqueror, [Marcellus](#) in 212BC.

Arctophylax, see [Bootes](#)

The Bear-Ward, a name for the constellation Bootes, near the Great Bear.

[Book III: March 5](#) Mentioned.

Arcturus

The brightest star in the constellation [Bootes](#), the Bear-ward. Ovid associates it with [Arcas](#), grandson of [Lycaon](#).
[Book VI: June 7](#) The star set at dawn in the northwest on this date, before the [Bear](#), Ursa Major.

Ardea

A city of the Rutulians, of [Latium](#). (Its site was near modern Anzio, south of Rome.) It was the centre of a cult of [Venus](#) and Cicero mentions the procession around the sacred enclosure ('On the Nature of the Gods' BkIII 46) Destroyed in the war with [Aeneas](#) according to the Metamorphoses, but rebuilt.

[Book II: February 24](#) Besieged by [Tarquin](#).

Arethusa

A nymph of Elis, and attendant of [Diana](#) pursued by Alpheus and transformed into the fountain of Syracusan Ortygia.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Invited the goddesses including [Ceres](#) to a feast.

[Book IV: April 23](#) [Syracuse](#) associated with her.

Argei

Effigies in human form, thrown into the [Tiber](#), as recorded by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (i.38.3) who puts their number at thirty, and Varro, twenty-seven. The Argei were also shrines, to that number, distributed over Rome's four quarters. Possibly a purification ritual was involved.

[Book III: March 17](#) Mentioned. A procession held this day (to the shrines?)

Ariadne

A daughter of Minos. Half-sister of the Minotaur, and sister of [Phaedra](#) who helped Theseus on Crete. She fled to Dia with [Theseus](#) and was abandoned there, but rescued by [Bacchus](#), and her crown is set among the stars as the Corona Borealis. (See Titian's painting – Bacchus and Ariadne – National Gallery, London: and Annibale Carracci's fresco – The triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne – Farnese Palace, Rome). The [Northern Crown](#), the Corona Borealis, is a constellation between Hercules and Serpens Caput, consisting of an arc of seven stars, its central jewel being the blue-white star Gemma.

[Book III: March 8](#) The Corona Borealis. Her divine name was Libera.

Aries

The constellation of the Ram, between [Taurus](#) and Andromeda. It represents the ram whose Golden Fleece was sought by [Jason](#) and the Argonauts. In ancient times it contained the point of the spring equinox (The First Point

of Aries) that has now moved into [Pisces](#) due to precession.

[Book III: March 23](#) The sun was astrologically in Aries on the 22nd. In fact it was already astronomically within Pisces. Ovid tells the story of the Golden Ram.

[Book IV: April 20](#) The sun left Aries on this date.

[Book IV: April 25](#) Aries set at twilight on this date.

Arion

The poet and singer from Methymnia on Lesbos at the end of the 7th/ beginning of 6th century BC. According to Herodotus he was the greatest kithara player of his time, as well as the inventor of the dithyrambs.

Nothing of Arion's work has survived, but there is a famous anecdote about him. His art made him very wealthy, and on a journey by sea he was attacked by the crew. He begged them to let him sing one last song before he was thrown overboard, which the bandits gladly accepted. In full costume he gave a last performance, and then jumped into the sea. His music had attracted a dolphin, though, and the friendly mammal carried him ashore. When the ship arrived he was there, and when the crew recognized him they were arrested.

[Book II: February 3](#) His story told by Ovid.

Aristaeus

Aristaeus was the son of [Apollo](#) and [Cyrene](#). His bees all died of a disease and he went to his mother for help. She sent him to [Proteus](#) who could tell him how prevent

another such disaster, if so compelled. Aristeus seized Proteus and held him, as he changed shape. Proteus eventually yielded and ordered the sacrifice of twelve animals to the gods, the corpses to be left in the place of sacrifice. Three days later Aristaeus returned to find a swarm of bees in one of the carcasses which were never troubled by disease.

(See Virgil: *Georgics* IV. 315)

[Book I: January 9](#) Wept at the destruction of his bees.

Assaracus

The son of [Tros](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Capys](#). Grandfather of [Anchises](#).

[Book IV: April 28](#) Homer makes him a distant cousin of [Tithonus](#).

Athamas

The son of [Aeolus](#), and husband of [Ino](#). The uncle of [Pentheus](#). Maddened by [Tisiphone](#) at [Juno](#)'s instigation he killed his child [Learchus](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) Haunted by the Furies, he kills his son.

Athena, see [Minerva](#)

Athenians

The descendants of Cecrops, the mythical founder of Athens.

[Book III: Introduction](#) [Book IV: April 12](#) Cecropians.

Atlas

Father of the [Hyades](#), [Pleiades](#) and Hesperides. A Titan who supported the heavens on his shoulders.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Father of [Electra](#) the Pleiad.

[Book IV: April 1](#) Father of the Pleiades.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Father of the Pleiades by [Pleione](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Father of the Hyades by [Aethra](#) daughter of [Oceanus](#).

[Book V: May 15](#) Grandfather of [Mercury](#), through his daughter [Maia](#).

Atreus

King of [Mycenae](#), the son of [Pelops](#). The father of [Agamemnon](#) and Menelaüs.

[Book II: February 22](#) Noted for his crimes.

Atrides

Descendants of [Atreus](#), including [Agamemnon](#) and Menelaus.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Agamemnon, the father of [Halaesus](#).

Attalus

Attalus I Soter (269-197BC) Ruler of Pergamum (241-197), who took the title of King after defeating the Galatians. He supported Rome against Philip V of Macedon, and made Pergamum a significant power.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Visited by Roman envoys. (Livy contradicts Ovid).

Attis

A Phrygian shepherd, loved by [Cybele](#). An incarnation of the vegetation god, the consort of the Great Goddess. He castrated himself in dedicating himself to the goddess.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Ovid gives the religious background.

[Book V: May 2](#) Violets sprang from the blood of his wounds.

Augustus Caesar

The Emperor Augustus Caesar (63BC –14AD). (The title was also granted to Tiberius). Augustus was Julius Caesar's grand-nephew, whom Julius adopted and declared as his heir, Octavius Caesar (Octavian). (The honorary title Augustus was bestowed by the Senate 13th Jan 27BC). He married Scribonia and then Livia. He exiled [Ovid](#) to the Black Sea region in 8AD for 'a poem and a mistake' (*carmen et error*). The poem probably the *Ars Amatoria*, the mistake probably something to do with the notorious Julias' set (the younger Julia, Augustus's granddaughter, was banished as was the Elder Julia his daughter), that Ovid knew of and repeated. He may possibly have witnessed 'an illegal', that is politically unacceptable, marriage between Julia the Younger and her lover. (She subsequently had an illegitimate child while in exile).

[Book I:Introduction](#) Germanicus' 'grandfather'.

[Book I: January 11](#) His performance of the sacred rites. His deification. He assumed the title of Emperor, Julius Caesar his adoptive father having refused the crown.

[Book I: January 13](#) The title Augustus conferred on Octavian in 27BC. He was voted the oak-leaf crown *in perpetuum* in token of his care for his people and it was hung on his palace doorway.

[Book I: January 16](#) [Book II: February 5](#) An incarnation of [Jupiter](#).

[Book II: Introduction](#) This reference may represent the original dedication of the *Fasti* to Augustus.

[Book II: February 1](#) His care for the shrines and temples.

[Book II: February 5](#) Titled the ‘Father of the Country’, *pater patriae*. His laws encouraging marriage and chaste behaviour.

[Book III: March 6](#) Augustus presided over the [Vestal Virgins](#) having become *Pontifex Maximus*, High Priest, on this day in 12BC.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Descended from [Venus](#) through [Aeneas](#), and his own adoption by [Julius Caesar](#) into the Julian family.

[Book IV: April 4](#) He rebuilt the temple to [Cybele](#) after a fire in 3AD, so dating this passage of the *Fasti* to after 3AD.

[Book IV: April 16](#) Made *Imperator* on April 16, for his relief of Mutina.

[Book IV: April 28](#) His house on the [Palatine](#), and his building of a chapel of [Vesta](#) there on becoming *Pontifex Maximus*. The chapel was dedicated on this day.

[Book V: May 1](#) Augustus created two hundred and sixty five districts (*vici*) in Rome, each with a shrine of the [Lares Compitales](#), with two statues of the Lares and one of his Genius, or Guardian Spirit.

[Book V: May 12](#) Augustus dedicated a temple to Mars the Avenger (Uitor) August 1st, 2 BC on his avenging Julius Caesar's death, and another temple in 20BC commemorating the recovery of the Parthian standards.

[Book VI: June 30](#) Augustus' aunt Atia the younger (his mother was her sister Atia the Elder) married Lucius Marcius Philippus.

Aurora

The Dawn. Goddess of the Morning, and wife of [Tithonus](#). The daughter of the Titan Pallas, hence called Pallantias or Pallantis, who fathered Zelus (zeal), Cratus (strength), Bia (force) and Nicē (victory) on the River Styx.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book IV: April 28](#) Wife of Tithonus.

The Dawn.

[Book III: March 5](#) Sheds dew. Her saffron cheeks.

[Book IV: April 5](#) Called Pallantias.

[Book V: May 2](#) Her alternative parentage, as Eos the daughter of [Hyperion](#) and Theia.

Aventine Hill

One of the seven hills of [Rome](#), the seat of [Aventinus](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) The haunt of [Cacus](#).

[Book III: March 1](#) The ancient sacred oak grove below it.

[Book III: March 31](#) Moon worship there on this date.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) [Book VI: June 11](#) Named after Aventinus. [Hercules](#) pastured his cattle on the hill.

[Book IV: April 21](#) The founding of the City.

[Book V: May 1](#) The peak of the Hill with its temple to [Bona Dea](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) The Publician Road up the Aventine, made in 240BC.

[Book VI: June 19](#) The worship of [Minerva](#) there.

Aventinus

A mythical Alban king who gave his name to the [Aventine hill](#) from which he ruled.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The successor to [Remulus](#).

Azan

Unknown. There was an Azan son of Arcas, mentioned in myth in connection with Selene the Moon goddess, wife of Endymion.

[Book III: March 15](#) Father of [Anna](#) as a nymph.

Bacchus

The god Dionysus, the ‘twice-born’, the god of the vine. The son of [Jupiter](#)-Zeus and [Semele](#). His worship was celebrated with orgiastic rites borrowed from Phrygia. His female followers are the Maenades. He carries the *thyrsus*, a wand tipped with a pine-cone, the Maenads and Satyrs following him carrying ivy-twined fir branches as *thyrsi*. (See Caravaggio’s painting – Bacchus – Uffizi, Florence) He was equated by the Romans with [Liber](#) the fertility

god. See Euripides' *Bacchae*. Also called Lenaeus, 'of the winepress'.

[Book I: January 9](#) Goats sacrificed to Bacchus. He is 'ivy-berried', and his triennial festival the *trietericus*, was celebrated in Greece.

[Book II: February 15](#) The vine god. His sacred grove.

[Book III: March 5](#) He loves [Ampelus](#), and makes him the star [Vindemitor](#) the Grape-Gatherer, in Virgo.

[Book III: March 8](#) He rescued and married [Ariadne](#), and made her a goddess.

[Book III: March 17](#) The Liberalia, his festival on this date. His discovery of honey. Various other attributes described by Ovid. He stirs bands of women with his *thyrsus*.

[Book V: May 2](#) Nursed by the [Hyades](#) (the nymphs of Mount Nysa) in one variant of myth.

Battus

King of Malta.

[Book III: March 15](#) King of Malta.

Bear, Ursa Major

The Great Bear, The Waggon (plaustra), The Wain, The Plough, The Big Dipper, Helice. The constellation of Ursa Major. It represents [Callisto](#) turned into a bear by [Jupiter](#), or the plough or waggon or cart of [Bootès](#). The two stars of the 'bowl' furthest from the 'handle', Merak and Dubhe, point to Polaris the pole star. The 'handle' points to the star Arcturus in the constellation

Bootës, who is the Waggoner or Herdsman or Bear Herd (Arcturus means the Bearkeeper) or Ploughman.

[Book II: February 11](#) Callisto turned into the Bear.

[Book III: Introduction](#) The Little Bear and Great Bear distinguished as [Cynosura](#) and [Helice](#).

[Book III: March 17](#) Mentioned. The Kite star referred to is unknown. Possibly the stars forming the modern Lynx or Camelopardis, which would have been difficult to see near the horizon in the northwest before dawn, as they are relatively faint stars.

[Book VI: June 7](#) Arcturus in Bootes set at dawn in the northwest on this date, before the [Bear](#), Ursa Major, so leaving the Bear unafraid of the following Bear-ward.

Bellona

The goddess of War.

[Book VI: June 3](#) A temple dedicated to her by [Appius Claudius Caecus](#) in 296BC, after defeating the Etruscan and Samnite alliance.

Bootes, Arctophylax

The constellation of the Waggoner, or Herdsman, or Bear Herd. The nearby constellation of Ursa Major is the Waggon, or Plough, or [Great Bear](#). He holds the leash of the constellation of the hunting dogs, Canes Venatici. He is sometimes identified with [Arcas](#) son of [Jupiter](#) and [Callisto](#). Arcas may alternatively be the Little Bear. Contains the star Arcturus.

[Book II: February 11](#) Bootes rose at twilight in the northeast on this date. The constellation, *Arctophylax*, represents Arcas.

[Book III: March 5](#) Bootes at dawn was sinking in the West, just above [Vindemitor](#), the star in Virgo referred to. Both would have been clearly visible just before dawn.

[Book V: May 26](#) The constellation was setting in the West at dawn at this date.

Boreas

The North Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Zephyrus is the West Wind, and Auster is the South Wind. He is identified with Thrace and the north.

[Book V: May 2](#) He stole Orithyia, daughter of [Erectheus](#) of Athens, and married her.

Bovillae

An ancient Latin town (le Frattocchie, at the foot of the Alban hills)

[Book III: March 15](#) A certain Anna came from there. Ovid uses the tale to account for worship of [Anna Perenna](#) there.

Briareus

The hundred-headed Giant, one of the Titans.

[Book III: March 17](#) Involved in the war against the gods.

Brontes

One of the three Cyclopes who forged [Jupiter](#)'s thunderbolts.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Mentioned.

Brutus

The Brutus who expelled [Tarquin](#) from Rome. See Livy i.56.4

[Book II: February 24](#) Ovid tells the story.

Brutus, Decimus Junius

He defeated the Gallaecans (Galicians) in northwest Spain in 138/7BC.

[Book VI: June 9](#) On this date.

Cacus

The three-headed giant who lived in a cave, stole [Hercules](#)' cattle, and was killed by him. The bellowing of the stolen bulls gave him away. (See also Virgil's *Aeneid*).

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book V: May 14](#) [Book VI: Introduction](#) Destroyed by Hercules on the site of [Rome](#).

Cadmus

The son of the Phoenician king [Agenor](#), who searched for his sister [Europa](#) stolen by [Jupiter](#). The founder of (Boeotian=Aonian)[Thebes](#). The father of [Semele](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) An exile from Tyre.

Caducifer

An epithet for [Mercury](#), the Messenger God, as bearer of the caduceus.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Sent by [Jupiter](#) to [Tartarus](#).

Caenina

A city of [Latium](#) associated with the [Sabines](#).

[Book II: February 5](#) Mentioned.

Callisto

A nymph of [Nonacris](#) in [Arcadia](#), a favourite of Phoebe-[Diana](#). The daughter of [Lycaon](#). [Jupiter](#) raped her.

Pregnant by him, she was expelled from the band of Diana's virgin followers by Diana as Cynthia, in her Moon goddess mode. She gave birth to a son [Arcas](#) and was turned into a bear by the jealous [Juno](#) and then set among the stars as [Ursa Major](#), the Great Bear.

[Book I: January 11](#) Mother of Arcas.

[Book II: February 11](#) Her story and metamorphosis.

Calpetus

The son of [Capys](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Father of [Tiberinus](#).

Camenaë

The water nymphs whose spring ran through the sacred grove outside the Porta Capena. They became identified with the [Muses](#).

[Book III: March 1](#) [Egeria](#) one of them.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The Muses. Aonian because their haunt of Mount Helicon was in Aonia.

Camillus

Marcus Furius Camillus, soldier and statesman, of patrician descent, censor in 403BC. He triumphed four times, was five times dictator, and was honored with the title of Second Founder of Rome. When accused of having unfairly distributed the spoil taken at Veii, which was captured by him after a ten years siege, he went into voluntary exile at Ardea. Subsequently the Romans, when besieged in the Capitol by the Gauls, created him dictator; he completely defeated the enemy) and drove them from Roman territory. He dissuaded the Romans, disheartened by the devastation wrought by the Gauls, from migrating to Veii, and induced them to rebuild the city. He afterwards fought successfully against the Aequi, Volsci and Etruscans, and repelled a fresh invasion of the Gauls in 367. He died of, the plague in the eighty-first year of his age (365).

[Book I: January 16](#) [Book VI: June 1](#) He vowed a Temple in 367BC, the Temple of [Juno Moneta](#) on the Capitol was said to be founded in fulfilment of this vow. Steps led up to it from the Forum near which was the old Temple of [Concord](#).

Camerina

The city in Southern Sicily. 'Camerina was first founded by the Syracusans 135 years (to the best of one's

reckoning) after the foundation of Syracuse. Its founders were Daxon and Menecolos But the people of Camarina were driven out of their city by the Syracusans, who made war on them because they revolted, and some time later Hippocrates, the tyrant of Gela took over their land in exchange for some Syracusan prisoners of war and resettled the city of Camarina, acting as founder himself. Once again the inhabitants were driven out, this time by Gelon, and the city was settled for the third time by the people of Gela' (Thucydides 6.2-5).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Campus Martius

The great recreation ground of ancient [Rome](#), the Field of [Mars](#), just outside the ancient city to the north-west along the [Tiber](#). Originally it was open pasture outside the city boundary (*pomerium*) in the bend of the Tiber south of the Pincian Hill and east of the [Janiculum](#), used for army musters and political assemblies. It took its name from the altar of Mars located there. It was encroached on by public buildings later including the Portico of Octavia and the Theatre of [Pompey](#), but still retained its function as a park and exercise ground.

[Book I: January 11](#) Site of the [Juturnalia](#), by the [Aqua Virgo](#).

[Book II: February 27](#) [Book III: March 14](#) Horse races conducted there on this day, the Equirria.

[Book VI: June 7](#) Games held there on this date. A festival of the [Tiber](#).

Cancer, Constellation of the Crab

The constellation of the Crab, and the zodiacal sun sign. It represents the crab that attacked [Hercules](#) while he was fighting the multi-headed Hydra and was crushed underfoot but subsequently raised to the stars. The sun in ancient times was in this constellation when furthest north of the equator at the summer solstice (June 21st). Hence the latitude where the sun appeared overhead at noon on that day was called the Tropic of Cancer (23.5 degrees north).

[Book I: January 3](#) Cancer set at about 8am as seen from Rome at that date.

[Book VI: June 19](#) The sun entered Cancer at this date.

Capella

The 'she-goat', the sixth brightest star in the sky, now part of the constellation Auriga the Charioteer, but once part of the [Olenian](#) Goat, representing Aege the goat-nymph (named from the Aegean, or Goat Hill, and daughter of Olenos), who is [Amaltheia](#), who once suckled [Jupiter](#).

[Book V: May 1](#) Capella was visible just before dawn in the north-east at this date, and was setting just after twilight in the north-west.

Capitol, Capitoline

The southern summit of the Capitoline Hill of [Rome](#), but used as a name for the whole Hill.

[Book I: January 9](#) The Capitol saved by a goose crying out.

[Book I: January 16](#) The temple of [Juno](#) Moneta (money/mint/stamp) on the Capitol. A stairway led up to it from the [Forum](#), near the old temple of [Concord](#).

[Book II: February 1](#) The temple of Jupiter *Tonans*, the Thunderer, on the Capitol.

[Book II: February 23](#) The building of the temple to Jupiter.

[Book VI: June 9](#) The capture of Rome by the Gauls in 390BC. The Capitol was besieged and the defenders threw out loaves of bread to show that they had provisions to last out the siege.

Capricorn

The constellation of the Goat, with a fish's tail. It represents the goatish horned god [Pan](#) who jumped into a river to escape the approach of the monster [Typhon](#), turning his lower half into a fish. The sun in Ovid's day was in Capricorn at the winter solstice, which has now precessed into Sagittarius.

[Book I: January 17](#) The sun moved from Capricorn to [Aquarius](#) on this date.

Capys

The son of [Assaracus](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Anchises](#). His descendant of the same name, the son of [Epytus](#) and father of [Calpetus](#).

Carmentis, Carmenta

One of the Camenae, or prophetic nymphs. She first lived in [Arcadia](#) (Parrhasia) where she had a son [Evander](#), by [Mercury](#). Evander founded Pallantium, and she came to Italy with him, where she changed the fifteen Greek letters of the alphabet he had brought with him to Roman letters. [Book I: January 11](#) Her festival on this date. Ovid derives the name from *carmen*, song. Mother of Evander.

[Book I: January 15](#) Her rites repeated on this day.

Maenalus was a mountain in Arcadia.

[Book II: February 13](#) The *Porta Carmentalis* next to the temple of [Janus](#), its right hand arch considered unlucky.

[Book VI: June 11](#) She assists [Ino](#).

Carna

Goddess of the hinge (*cardo*) and therefore of openings and closings.

[Book VI: June 1](#) The origin of her powers.

Carseoli

A town on the road to Paelignian Corfinium.

[Book IV: April 19](#) Ovid passes through.

Carthage

The Phoenician city of North Africa.

[Book III: Introduction](#) A reference to Carthage, the Punic Wars, and possibly [Hannibal](#).

[Book VI: Introduction](#) Juno's chariot and weapons there, see also Virgil *Aeneid* 1:12.

[Book VI: June 8](#) The Carthaginian victory at Lake Trasimene in 217BC.

Castor

The son of Tyndareus of Sparta and [Leda](#), and twin brother of [Pollux](#) who was in fact fathered by [Jupiter](#)-Zeus. They were brothers of Helen. Castor was an expert horseman, Pollux a noted boxer. They came to be regarded as the protectors of sailors, and gave their names to the two major stars of the constellation [Gemini](#), The Twins.

[Book I: January 27](#) Their temple in the Forum was close to that of the deified [Julius Caesar](#). It was rebuilt by [Tiberius](#) in AD6 and dedicated in his and his brother [Drusus](#) the Elder's names.

[Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of [Leucippus](#), [Phoebe](#) and [Hilaira](#), were raped and abducted by the two brothers. The daughters were betrothed to [Idas](#) and [Lynceus](#) who took revenge on Castor and Pollux, who in turn became stars, when Pollux chose to share his immortality with Castor.

Celaeno

One of the [Pleiads](#). She slept with [Neptune](#).

[Book IV: April 2](#) Mentioned.

Celer

'Speedy', the overseer of the building of Rome, chosen by [Romulus](#) himself.

[Book IV: April 21](#) [Book V: May 9](#) Ovid has him kill [Remus](#).

Celeus

An Athenian who owned the land that became [Ceres](#)' shrine at [Eleusis](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) The father of [Triptolemus](#).

Cerealia

The Festival and Games of Ceres.

[Book III: March 17](#) Her Festival and Games shared with [Bacchus](#).

[Book IV: April 19](#) The Festival held on this day.

Ceres

The Corn Goddess. The daughter of Saturn and Rhea, and [Jupiter](#)'s sister. As Demeter she is represented in the sky by the constellation and zodiacal sign of Virgo, holding an ear of wheat, the star Spica. It contains the brightest quasar, 3C 273. (The constellation alternatively depicts Astraea.) The worship of her and her daughter [Persephone](#), as the Mother and the Maiden, was central to the [Eleusinian](#) mysteries, where the ritual of the rebirth of the world from winter was enacted. Ceres was there a representation of the Great Goddess of Neolithic times, and her daughter her incarnation, in the underworld and on earth. Her most famous cult in [Rome](#) was on the [Aventine](#), and dated from the 5th century BC.

[Book I: January 9](#) The first divinity to demand blood sacrifice.

[Book I: January 24](#) Propitiated with mother Earth, as a goddess of the harvest, with corn and the entrails of a pregnant sow. The arts of Ceres are fostered by Peace, brought by the Caesars.

[Book II: February 17](#) The first fruits of the harvest were offered to her.

[Book III: March 17](#) She shares the games of the [Cerealia](#), April 19, with [Bacchus](#) (the two representing bread and wine, food and drink).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Her games celebrated. Ovid tells of the rape of Persephone.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Daughter of [Saturn](#) and [Ops](#) (Rhea). Bread is her gift.

Chaos

The source and state of the Universe at its creation. See Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Book I.

[Book I: January 1](#) Ovid suggests that Janus was called Chaos, referring to a possible derivation of Ianus from *hiare*, to open, as $\chi\acute{\alpha}\omicron\varsigma$ from $\chi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\kappa\epsilon\iota\nu$.

Charybdis

The whirlpool between Italy and [Sicily](#) in the Messenian straits. Charybdis was the voracious daughter of Mother Earth and [Neptune](#), hurled into the sea, and thrice, daily, drawing in and spewing out a huge volume of water.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Avoided by [Ceres](#).

Chiron

One of the Centaurs, half-man and half-horse. He was the son of Philyra and [Saturn](#). Phoebus [Apollo](#) took his new born son [Aesculapius](#) to his cave for protection. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Centaurus, which contains the nearest star to the sun, Alpha Centauri. [Book V: May 3](#) At twilight the constellation was rising in the south at or near maximum elevation at this date. It remained very low down on the horizon before setting.

Chloris

The Greek goddess of the Spring.

[Book V: May 2](#) Mentioned.

Cilicia

The southeast coastal region of Asia Minor, incorporated into the Empire from 67BC when [Pompey](#) suppressed the endemic piracy of the coastal area. Famous for its saffron, derived from crocus flowers.

[Book I: January 1](#) Cilician saffron grains burnt on the hearths.

Cincinnatus

Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, a Roman statesman of the 5th century BC, who was made dictator to save a legion besieged by a hostile Italian tribe. After his victory he returned to his farm, despite pleas that he remain. His

rejection of autocratic rule made him a symbol of traditional Roman values.

[Book I: January 1](#) Mentioned.

Circeium, Cape Circeo

The sea-nymph, daughter of [Sol](#) and Perse, and the granddaughter of [Oceanus](#), Circe, (Kirke or Circe means a small falcon) was famed for her beauty and magic arts and lived on the 'island' of Aeaea, which is the promontory of Circeii. (Cape Circeo between Anzio and Gaeta, on the west coast of Italy, now part of the magnificent *Parco Nazionale del Circeo* extending to Capo Portiere in the north, and providing a reminder of the ancient Pontine Marshes before they were drained, rich in wildfowl and varied tree species.) Cicero mentions that Circe was worshipped religiously by the colonists at Circei. ('On the Nature of the Gods', Bk III 47)

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

Claudia Quinta

A descendant of [Clausus](#), accused of unchastity, who disproved it by freeing the boat carrying [Cybele](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Her tale.

Clausi, House of

An ancient family of Rome.

[Book V: May 1](#) Mentioned.

Clausus

A [Sabine](#) leader, the ancestor of the Claudian House, who helped [Aeneas](#). See Virgil *Aeneid* VII:706.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Ancestor of [Claudia Quinta](#).

Clio

The [Muse](#) of History.

[Book V: Introduction](#) [Book VI: June 30](#) Mentioned.

Clotho

The three Fates were born of Erebus and Night. Clothed in white, they spin, measure out, and sever the thread of each human life. Clotho spins the thread. Lachesis measures it. Atropos wields the shears.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Angered at [Hippolytus](#)' resurrection.

Clusius

[Book I: January 1](#) A name for [Janus](#), from *claudio* (*cludo*) I close.

Cnossian Crown, Cretan Crown, Corona Borealis

The *Corona Borealis*. The crown of [Ariadne](#), the daughter of King Minos of Cnossos, given to her by [Bacchus](#), and set in the heavens at her death.

The Northern Crown, the *Corona Borealis*, is a constellation between Hercules and Serpens Caput, consisting of a main arc of seven stars with a few outliers, its central jewel being the blue-white star Gemma.

[Book III: March 8](#) It rose in the north-east at nightfall on this date.

Colline Gate

Porta Collina: a gate in the Servian wall of Rome, named Collina, because it was on the Quirinal Hill (*collis*). At this gate, the *via Salaria* and the *via Nomentana* divided.
[Book IV: April 23](#) The temple of [Venus](#) of [Eryx](#), nearby.

Concord, Temple of

On the [Capitol](#), near the temple of [Juno](#) Moneta.

[Book I: January 16](#) Marcus Furius [Camillus](#) vowed to build the temple in 367BC. It was restored by [Tiberius](#) from his German spoils in AD10.

Concordia

The goddess Concord symbolised the harmonious union of citizens. A temple was erected to her in 367 at the time when the plebeians won political equality.

[Book II: February 22](#) The goddess present on this date.

[Book III: March 30](#) The goddess venerated on this day.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) She makes peace between [Juno](#) and [Hebe](#) by offering an alternative origin for the month of June. Her hair is twined with laurel, the symbol of peace.

[Book VI: June 11](#) A temple dedicated by [Livia](#).

Consus

An ancient Roman harvest god. There were two festivals on August 21 and December 15. At the *Consualia* the Rape of the Sabine Women took place.

[Book III: March 1](#) Mentioned.

Coronis

The daughter of Phlegyas of Larissa, King of the Lapiths and Ixion's brother. She lived on the shores of Lake Beobis in Thessaly. She was loved by [Apollo](#). She was unfaithful to Apollo and killed by him. The god saved their unborn child [Aesculapius](#) and gave him into the care of [Chiron](#) the Centaur.

[Book I: January 1](#) The mother of Aesculapius.

Corvus, Constellation of

The constellation of the Raven or Crow, near [Hydra](#) and [Crater](#). [Apollo](#) is linked to the myths regarding Corvus, since he turned himself into a crow during the war of the giants with the gods.

[Book II: February 14](#) Ovid relates the associated myth. The constellation rose just after twilight at this date.

Corvus, Marcus Valerius

(c. 370-270 B.C.), Roman general of the early republican period. According to the legend (349 BC) a raven settled on his helmet during his combat with a gigantic Gaul, and distracted the enemys attention by flying in his face. He was twice dictator and six times consul, and occupied the curule chair twenty-one times. In his various campaigns he defeated successively the Gauls, the Volscians, the Samnites, the Etruscans and the Marsians. His most important victory (343) was over the Samnites at Mount Gaurus.

[Book I: January 13](#) Mentioned.

Corybantes

Mythologically the sons of [Apollo](#) and [Thalia](#) the Muse. Crested dancers dedicated to Zagreus. Perhaps archaically identifiable with the shaven-headed [Curetes](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Drowned the cries of the infant [Jupiter](#).

Cranaë

A nymph identified with the goddess [Carna](#).

[Book VI: June 1](#) She protected the infant [Proca](#).

Crassus, Marcus Licinius

He and his son Publius were defeated by the Parthians at Carrhae in 53BC. The standards were lost, but re-captured in 20BC.

[Book V: May 12](#) [Book VI: June 9](#) Augustus regained the standards.

Crater, Constellation of

The constellation of the Cup or Bowl, representing the chalice of [Apollo](#), associated with neighbouring [Corvus](#) and [Hydra](#).

[Book II: February 14](#) Ovid relates the associated myth. The constellation was rising at twilight at this date.

Crathis

Possibly the Italian River Crathis, modern Crati, site of the ancient town of Sybaris. Camere is unknown.

[Book III: March 15](#) [Anna](#) sails there.

Cremera

A stream near [Veii](#).

[Book II: February 13](#) Site of the fort built by the [Fabii](#).

Crete

The Mediterranean Island.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Ruled by the mythical King Minos, hence Minoan.

Crocus

A youth who pined away from love of the nymph Smilax, and was changed into the crocus flower. Smilax became the flowering bindweed.

[Book V: May 2](#) Mentioned.

Cupid

The god of love, son of [Venus](#) (Aphrodite). He is portrayed as a blind winged child armed with a bow and arrows, and carries a flaming torch.

[Book II: February 15](#) He hides with his mother by the [Euphrates](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The twin Amors, Venus Aphrodite's children were Eros and Anteros in Greek Mythology.

Cures

A small Sabine town, home of [Numa](#) the second King of Rome, and the Sabine capital.

[Book II: February 5](#) [Book II: February 17](#) [Book VI: June 5](#)
Mentioned.

[Book III: March 1](#) Angered by the Rape of the Sabine Women.

Curetes

They or the Dactyls guarded the infant [Jupiter](#). They were the sons of [Rhea](#), and stood around the golden cradle, hung on a tree, clashing their spears and shouting, to drown the noise of his wailing (like the sound of heavy rain?). They seem to have been associated with rain-making ceremonies, have shaved their heads, or perhaps part-shaved them into a crest, and thus identifiable with the [Corybantes](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Drowned the infant Jupiter's cries.

Curio Maximus

Each tribe was subdivided into ten *curiae* or wards, each with its *curio* or warden. These priests formed a college presided over by one of their number, appointed as the *Curio Maximus*.

[Book II: February 17](#) Mentioned regarding the [Feast of Ovens](#).

Curius

Vowed an altar to the [Lares](#).

[Book V: May 1](#) Mentioned.

Curtius

In 362 BC Marcus Curtius rode fully armed into a gulf that appeared in the Forum, which could not be filled till the most precious thing in Rome was hurled into it. He cried out that weapons and courage were Rome's most precious possessions and the gulf filled.

[Book VI: June 9](#) The Lake of Curtius named after him.

Cyane

A fountain nymph of Sicily whose stream flowed into the River [Anapis](#), near [Syracuse](#). She was loved by Anapis and wedded him. She obstructed [Dis](#) in his abduction of [Proserpine](#) and Dis opened up a way to [Tartarus](#) from the depths of her pool. See the *Metamorphoses*.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Cybele

The Phrygian great goddess, personifying the earth in its savage state, worshipped in caves and on mountaintops. Merged with Rhea, the mother of the gods. Her consort was [Attis](#), slain by a wild boar like [Adonis](#). His festival was celebrated by the followers of Cybele, the [Galli](#), or Corybantes, who were noted for convulsive dances to the music of flutes, drums and cymbals, and self-mutilation in an orgiastic fury.

[Book II: February 1](#) Her shrine near that of [Juno Sospita](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Her festival the Megalensian (from Megale, Great Goddess) was on this day. Mount

Berecyntus in Phrygia produced boxwood flutes. Ovid tells the legends of [Attis](#) and [Claudia Quinta](#) associated with her.

[Book VI: June 9](#) The Pan of Asia Minor, [Priapus](#), is located in the same region.

Cyclades

The scattered islands of the southern Aegean off the coast of Greece, forming a broken circle.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Passed by [Cybele](#).

Cyclopes

A race of giants living on the coast of Sicily of whom Polyphemus was one. They had a single eye in the centre of their foreheads. They forged [Jupiter](#)'s lightning-bolts.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by their caves, under [Etna](#).

Cyllene

A mountain in [Arcadia](#), [Mercury](#)'s birthplace, hence Cyllenius, an epithet of Mercury. (Pausanias, VIII, xvii, noting it as the highest mountain in Arcadia mentions the ruined shrine of Hermes-Mercury on its summit, and says it got its name from Cyllen son of Elatus. Mercury's statue was of juniper (*thuon*) and stood eight feet tall. Pausanias says that Cyllene was famous for its white (*albino*?) blackbirds.)

[Book V: Introduction](#) Mercury born there.

Cynosura

The Little [Bear](#), from the Greek κυνός ούρα the dog's tail.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Used by the [Phoenicians](#) for navigation.

Cynthia

The moon goddess, an aspect of [Diana](#).

[Book II: February 3](#) Identified with Diana, entranced by [Arion](#)'s music.

[Book II: February 11](#) Identified with Diana.

Cyrene

A water nymph, mother of [Aristaeus](#) by [Apollo](#).

[Book I: January 9](#) She sends Aristaeus to see [Proteus](#).

Cytherea, see [Venus](#)

An epithet for Venus from Cythera, her sacred island.

[Book III: March 15](#) Cytherean used as an epithet of her son [Aeneas](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Myrtle her sacred plant.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Cythera her island, passed by [Cybele](#).

[Book IV: April 16](#) Hastens the dawn for [Augustus](#), in her role as origin of the Julian House.

Dardanus

The son of [Jupiter](#) by the Pleiad [Electra](#), and origin of the Trojan people.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book VI: Introduction](#)

Dardanian=Trojan.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) An ancestor of [Romulus](#).

[Book VI: June 9](#) [Ilus](#) his descendant.

Daunus

King of Daunia in Italy. The father of [Turnus](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) [Diomedes](#) married his daughter Euipe.

Decemvirs

A commission of ten men for public or religious duties.

[Book II: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: April 6](#) Ovid served in the College of Ten and was entitled to a seat at the games.

Deucalion

King of Phthia. He and his wife Pyrrha, his cousin, and daughter of Epimetheus, were survivors of the flood. He was the son of Prometheus. (See Michelangelo's scenes from the Great Flood, Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome)

[Book IV: April 21](#) His association with water.

Diana

Daughter of [Jupiter](#) and [Latona](#) (hence her epithet Latonia) and twin sister of [Apollo](#). She was born on the island of Ortygia which is Delos (hence her epithet Ortygia).

Goddess of the moon and the hunt. She carries a bow, quiver and arrows. She and her followers are virgins. She is worshipped as the triple goddess, as [Hecate](#) in the underworld, Luna or [Cynthia](#) the moon, in the heavens,

and Diana the huntress on earth. (Skelton's 'Diana in the leaves green, Luna who so bright doth sheen, Persephone in hell') [Callisto](#) is one of her followers. (See Luca Penni's – Diana Huntress – Louvre, Paris, and Jean Goujon's sculpture (attributed) – Diana of Anet – Louvre, Paris.) She was worshipped at the sacred grove and lake of [Nemi](#) in Aricia, as Diana *Nemorensis*, and the rites practised there are the starting point for Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' (see Chapter I et seq.) She hid [Hippolytus](#), and set him down at Aricia (Nemi), as her consort [Virbius](#). The Romans identified the original [Sabine](#) goddess Diana with the Greek Artemis and established her cult on the [Aventine](#). Strabo mentions the connection of the cult of Aricia with the Tauric Chersonese (5.3.12, C.239)

[Book I: January 9](#) When the Greeks were stalled at Aulis on their way to [Troy](#), [Iphigeneia](#) was sacrificed to gain a favourable wind. Diana snatched the girl from the altar and substituted a hind. Iphigeneia was transported to the Tauric Chersonese.

[Book II: February 11](#) Callisto one of her followers, expelled from her sacred band.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Worshipped on [Crete](#) (as the 'Lady of the Creatures', and archetypal mode of the Great Goddess). The Moon goddess, passing through one or parts of two zodiacal signs in a month.

[Book III: March 1](#) Worshipped at [Nemi](#).

[Book IV: April 21](#) It was sacrilegious to see her bathing, in her sacred grove. See the myth of Actaeon in the *Metamorphoses*.

[Book V: May 1](#) Watchdogs sacred to her, presumably from the story of Actaeon, and her role as a hunting goddess and mistress of the animals.

[Book V: May 2](#) She took vengeance on [Meleager](#) for the neglect by his father Oeneus of her altar fire.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Protectress of [Hippolytus](#). Her grove at Nemi in Aricia. Called Dictynna, who is also the deified Britomartis.

Didius

Titus Didius fought in the Marsic wars. Lucius Porcius Cato was killed by the same tribe of Marsians in 89BC.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Dido

The Phoenician Queen of [Carthage](#), a manifestation of Astarte, the Great Goddess. A [Sidonian](#), she founded Carthage, loved [Aeneas](#), and committed suicide when he deserted her. (See Virgil, The Aeneid, Book IV, and Marlowe's The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage: See also Purcell's operatic work 'Dido and Aeneas'.)

[Book III: March 15](#) Her death.

Didyme

An offshore island of northern Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Dindymus

A mountain in Mysia in Asia Minor, sacred to [Cybele](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) [Attis](#) fled there.

Diomedes

The son of [Tydeus](#) King of Argos, and a Greek hero in the Trojan War. The grandson of Oeneus of Calydon, and hence called Oenid. He married Euipe the daughter of King [Daunus](#), and founded Brundisium (Brindisi). He was worshipped as a God in Venetia and Southern Italy.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Reached Italy.

[Book VI: June 9](#) He was said to have stolen the Palladium, the statue of Pallas [Minerva](#), from Troy.

Dione

An epithet for [Venus](#). Also a name for an early consort of Zeus-[Jupiter](#) (a goddess superceded by him at Dodona?)

[Book II: February 15](#) She and [Cupid](#) flee from [Typhon](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Venus. Goddess of licit and illicit love.

Dis

A name for Pluto, king of the Underworld, brother of [Neptune](#) and [Jupiter](#). His kingdom in the Underworld described. At [Venus](#)'s instigation [Cupid](#) strikes him with an arrow to make him fall in love with [Proserpine](#). He rapes and abducts her, re-entering Hades through the pool of Cyane.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ovid tells the tale.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Angered at [Hippolytus](#)' resurrection.

Dog, Constellation of Canis Major

The constellation near [Orion](#), containing Sirius the Dog-star, which rises in August and is associated with dry parching weather. Supposedly the dog Maera, that discovered the body of Icarus.

[Book IV: April 25](#) A dog sacrificed (oddly at this time) to encourage a good harvest.

Dolphin, Constellation of Delphinus

A constellation originating in Greek times. Dolphins were the messengers of Neptune-Poseidon, and one saved the life of Arion the musician whose lyre is represented by Lyra. It lies in a rich area of the Milky Way and is a hunting ground for novae. It contains nine main stars as Ovid suggests, the four main stars forming the rectangle known as Job's coffin.

[Book I: January 9](#) Delphinus, near Lyra, would have risen at 7am, i.e. at dawn, from Rome, at this date and set in the West after dusk, and so be visible for a short time each night as a constellation.

[Book II: February 3](#) Delphinus would be setting before dusk at this date, and therefore be invisible. Made a constellation by [Jupiter](#). Its nine stars.

[Book VI: June 10](#) [Book VI: June 17](#) The constellation was rising at twilight in the east, at this date.

Drusus, Junior

Born 13BC. The son of [Tiberius](#) and Vipsania (daughter of Agrippa), and the cousin and brother of [Germanicus](#)

through Germanicus's adoption by Tiberius. He married the Elder Livilla.

[Book I: Introduction](#) Mentioned as Germanicus' 'brother'.

Drusus, Senior

Surnamed Germanicus, the younger son of [Livia](#) Augusta by her first husband (Tiberius Claudius Nero). The father of [Germanicus](#).

[Book I: January 13](#) Brother of [Tiberius](#), he died, aged 31, from a fall from his horse, in 9BC.

Dryads

Wood nymphs. The nymphs of the trees.

[Book IV: April 21](#) It was sacrilegious to gaze on them.

Eagle, Constellation of Aquila

Jupiter's sacred bird, the eagle, that carried his thunderbolts. Represented in the sky by the constellation Aquila. Its brightest star is Altair.

[Book V: May 25](#) [Book VI: June 1](#) The constellation was rising in the east at twilight at this date.

Earth

Tellus, the personification of the Earth.

[Book V: May 11](#) Sent a [Scorpion](#) against [Latona](#).

Eetion

The father of Andromache and King of Thebe in the Troad.

[Book IV: April 4](#) His kingdom passed by [Cybele](#).

Egeria

An Italian nymph, wife of [Numa](#). Unconsoled at his death she is turned into a fountain, and its attendant streams (at Le Mole, by [Nemi](#) in Aricia). She was worshipped as a minor deity of childbirth at Aricia, and later in Rome. (outside the Porta Capena: see Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' Chapter I.)

[Book III: Introduction](#) She is mentioned.

[Book III: March 1](#) The servant of [Diana](#) at Nemi. One of the [Camenae](#), water-nymphs of the grove outside the Porta Capena, who became identified with the [Muses](#).

[Book IV: April 15](#) She advises [Numa](#).

Electra, the [Pleiad](#)

A daughter of [Atlas](#). One of the [Pleiads](#). She slept with [Jupiter](#) and bore him [Mercury](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) [Book VI: Introduction](#) The mother of [Dardanus](#).

[Book IV: April 2](#) Mentioned. She couldn't bear to watch Troy's destruction and so became a hidden Pleiad.

Eleusis

A city in Attica, famous for the worship of [Ceres](#)-Demeter. Sacred to Ceres, the Mother, and [Persephone](#), the Maiden. The place where [Theseus](#) defeated Cercyon.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres' holy site.

Elissa, see [Dido](#)

An epithet for Dido.

[Book III: March 15](#) Her death.

Enna

Henna (Enna) a town in [Sicily](#). The plains around it.

[Book IV: April 12](#) [Persephone](#) was snatched from there.

Epeus

The maker of the Wooden Horse, at Troy.

[Book III: March 19](#) Mentioned.

Epytus

The son of [Alba](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Capys](#).

Equirria

The Horse Races.

[Book II: February 27](#) Conducted on this day.

Erato

The [Muse](#) of erotic poetry.

[Book IV: April 4](#) She replies to Ovid's question.

Erectheus

King of Athens, son of Pandion, father of Orithyia and Procris.

[Book V: May 2](#) Boreas stole his daughter Orithyia.

Erichthonius

The son of [Dardanus](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Father of [Tros](#).

Erigone

The daughter of Icarius. His dog, Maera, led Erigone to his grave after he was killed. Erigone became the constellation Virgo. Ovid intended to tell the story somewhere in the later months of the *Fasti*.

[Book V: May 22](#) The dog became the constellation *Canis Minor* which set in the west at dusk on this date.

Erythean

Erythea, or Erytheia was a location, possibly an island, in Spain, where Geryon the three-headed king of Tartessus, pastured the cattle that Hercules plundered. Possibly identified with Cadiz (Gades).

[Book V: May 14](#) The plundered cattle.

Eryx

A mountain on the north-western tip of Sicily sacred to [Venus](#) Aphrodite. Daedalus made a golden honeycomb for her shrine there, after fleeing from Crete via Cumae.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: April 23](#) Taken in 212BC by the Romans. The cult of Venus pf Eryx transferred to Rome.

Esquiline

The Esquiline Hill, one of the Seven Hills of [Rome](#).
Propertius lived there.

[Book II: February 15](#) A sacred grove of [Juno](#) below it.

[Book III: March 1](#) [Romulus](#) had a lookout there to watch [Titus](#) Tatius on the neighbouring hill. Ovid derives its name from *excubiae*, a watch.

[Book VI: June 11](#) The site of [Servius](#)' palace.

Etna, Aetna

The volcanic mountain in eastern Sicily.

[Book I: January 11](#) Its volcanic eruptions as analogy.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Placed above the [Giants](#) by [Jupiter](#).

Euboea

One of the largest of the Aegean islands close to the south-east of Greece and stretching from the Maliac Gulf and the Gulf of Pagasae in the north to the island of Andros in the south. At Chalcis it is less than a hundred yards from the mainland. The Carystian shoals are south of Euboea.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Passed by [Cybele](#).

Euphrates

The river which rises in Eastern Turkey and flows south east through Syria and into Iraq. It joins the Tigris and flows into the Persian Gulf.

[Book II: February 15](#) [Venus](#) hides in the Syrian reaches.

[Book VI: June 9](#) [Crassus](#) lost the eagles in his defeat nearby.

Europa

Daughter of [Agenor](#), king of Phoenicia, and sister of [Cadmus](#), abducted by Jupiter disguised as a white bull. (See Paolo Veronese's painting – The Rape of Europa – Palazzo Ducale, Venice)

[Book V: May 14](#) Carried off by [Jupiter](#).

Evander

The son of [Carmentis](#), one of the Camenae, or prophetic nymphs. She first lived in [Arcadia](#) where she bore Evander, to [Mercury](#). Evander founded Pallantium, and she came to Italy with him, where she changed the fifteen Greek letters of the alphabet he had brought with him to Roman letters. In reality perhaps an exiled Greek king of Arcadia who settled on the site of ancient Rome.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book V: May 14](#) The son of Carmentis. He reaches Italy. His house is called Tegean, for Arcadian.

[Book II: February 15](#) [Book IV: Introduction](#) [Book VI: June 11](#) He brought his Arcadian gods to Italy.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Introduced the worship of [Faunus](#).

Fabii

The ancient family surnamed Maximus after Quintus Fabius Maximus.

[Book I: January 13](#) Mentioned.

[Book II: February 13](#) The action of the Fabii against [Veii](#) in 477BC.

[Book II: February 15](#) Followers of [Remus](#).

Fabius

Quintus Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, Cunctator ('*The Delayer*') (?275-203BC). He was appointed Dictator of Rome after [Hannibal](#)'s victory at Lake Trasimene in 217BC. He was nicknamed Cunctator for his tactics in delaying open battle with the [Carthaginians](#). When the Roman army was destroyed at Cannae in 216BC pursuing open warfare his tactics were vindicated.

[Book I: January 13](#) Origin of the Maximus surname of the Fabii.

[Book II: February 13](#) The Delayer.

Falerii

The Etruscan city on the bank of the [Tiber](#) north-west of [Rome](#), beyond Mount Soracte, captured by Rome in 241BC. It was famous for its orchards, pastures and cattle. Ovid's second wife was from Falerii. *Faliska herba* is the 'grass of Falerii'.

[Book I: January 1](#) The best pasture for cattle.

[Book III: March 19](#) The source of Rome's worship of Minerva *Capta*?

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The Faliscan country named from [Halaesus](#).

Faunus

Demi-gods. Rural deities with horns and tails. The father of [Latinus](#). The god of forests and herdsmen.

[Book I: January 9](#) [Book IV: April 15](#) Identified with Pan.

[Book II: February 13](#) His altars tended on this date.

[Book II: February 15](#) His rites at the [Lupercalia](#). The tale of Faunus, [Hercules](#) and [Omphale](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) Worshipped in [Arcadia](#), a pine-crowned god.

[Book III: March 1](#) A pre-Roman god, the son of [Picus](#). Helps [Numa](#).

[Book IV: April 15](#) Numa sacrifices to him.

[Book IV: April 21](#) It was sacrilegious to disturb Faunus (Pan) at midday.

[Book V: Introduction](#) His rites introduced into Italy by [Evander](#).

Faustulus

The Shepherd who gave help to [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: April 21](#) [Book V: May 9](#) With his wife [Acca](#), mourns for Remus, and sees his ghost.

February

The month. Ovid gives derivations for its name.

[Book II: Introduction](#) Origin.

Fenestella

An unknown gate, 'The Little Window'.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Feralia

The Festival of the Dead when the ancestral shades were propitiated.

[Book II: February 21](#) Ended on this day.

Fidius, See [Semo Sancus](#)

Flamen Dialis

The *Flamen* was a priest of a particular god. The *Flamen Dialis* the High Priest of [Jupiter](#).

[Book I: January 13](#) [Book II: Introduction](#) [Book III: March 1](#) Mentioned. The priest wore a cap with a point or peak, an *apex*. His wife mentioned.

[Book VI: June 6](#) His wife speaks to Ovid.

Flaminius

Defied the oracles in 217BC and was defeated by the Carthaginians at Lake Trasimene.

[Book VI: June 22](#) Mentioned.

Flora

The goddess of Spring and of flowering and blossoming plants. Her cult was in existence in Rome at an early date. A temple was dedicated to her in 238BC on the advice of the Sibylline Books. She was later identified with the Greek goddess Chloris. May blossom was associated with her worship.

[Book IV: April 28](#) The [Floralia](#) begins on this day.

[Book V: May 2](#) The Floralia carried over into May (April 28-May 3). Ovid fancifully derives Flora from the Greek

[Chloris](#) by a corruption of the first letter. For the detail of the roses breathed from her lips see Botticelli's painting *Primavera*.

Floralia

The Feast of and Rites of [Flora](#).

[Book IV: April 28](#) Celebrated through to May.

Fools, Feast of

A name for the last day for holding the [Feast of Ovens](#).

[Book II: February 17](#) The day designated by Ovid as so named.

Fornacalia

See the [Feast of Ovens](#).

[Book II: February 17](#) Its latest date.

Fornax

Goddess of the Ovens.

[Book II: February 17](#) Farmers prayed to her to regulate the heat of the ovens when parching the grain.

Fortuna Virilis

Virile Fortune, a representation of *Fors Fortuna*.

[Book IV: April 1](#) Worshipped on this date by women of the lower orders, in the men's public baths.

Fortune

[Book V: May 25](#) A temple dedicated to *Fortuna Publica* (*populi Romani*), Fortune's epithet in Rome.

[Book VI: June 11](#) A temple dedicated by [Servius Tullius](#). It was burnt down in the fire of 213BC.

[Book VI: June 24](#) The festival of *Fors Fortuna*, ancient pre-Roman goddess of Fate.

Forum Boarium

Took its name from the statue of an ox there.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Furies

The Erinyes. The Eumenides or 'Kindly Ones', their ironic title. The Three Sisters, were Alecto, Tisiphone and Megaera, the daughters of Night and Uranus. They were the personified pangs of cruel conscience that pursued the guilty. (See Aeschylus – The Eumenides). Their abode is in Hades by the [Styx](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) [Attis](#) thinks they are pursuing him.

[Book VI: June 11](#) [Athamas](#) haunted by Tisiphone.

Gabii

A city taken by [Tarquin](#) the Proud.

[Book II: February 24](#) Ovid tells the story.

Galatea

A sea nymph, daughter of Nereus and Doris. (See the fresco 'Galatea' by Raphael, Rome, Farnesina)

[Book VI: June 21](#) Mentioned.

Galli

The followers of [Cybele](#) who ritually castrated themselves.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Mentioned.

Gallus

A River in Phrygia.

[Book IV: April 4](#) It maddened those who drank its waters.

Ganymede

The son of [Tros](#), brother of [Ilus](#) and [Assaracus](#), loved by [Jupiter](#) because of his great beauty. Jupiter, in the form of an eagle, abducted him and made him his cup-bearer, against [Juno](#)'s will. Ganymede's name was given to the largest moon of the planet Jupiter.

[Book II: February 5](#) Identified with the constellation [Aquarius](#).

[Book VI: Introduction](#) Juno resents the abduction.

Gelas

The river in eastern and southern Sicily at whose mouth stood the city of Gela on the southern coast. After Syracuse and Agrigentum, Gela was the wealthiest city in Sicily in early times. In the reigns of Hippocrates, B.C. 498-491, and Gelon, B.C. 491-485, it extended its dominion over a large part of the island. Gelon even made himself master of [Syracuse](#), and transported there a great

portion of the population of Gela, after which its prosperity began to wane.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Gemini

The constellation of the Twins, representing [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#), sons of [Leda](#) and [Tyndareus](#). Pollux was in fact fathered by [Jupiter](#). The twin stars of the constellation are exactly 4.5 degrees apart. It is the source of the Geminid meteor shower in December.

[Book V: May 20](#) The sun entered the sign of Gemini at this date.

Germanicus

Germanicus (15BC-AD19) was the handsome, brilliant and popular son of the elder [Drusus](#), grandson of Antony, and adopted (4AD) son of [Tiberius](#), and husband of Agrippina (daughter of Agrippa, granddaughter of [Augustus](#)). He was consul in AD12, and commander in chief of campaigns in Germany in AD14-16. In AD17 he was appointed to govern Rome's eastern provinces and died in Antioch in mysterious circumstances, perhaps, as rumoured, through the effects of poison. He was the father of Caligula. Ovid re-dedicated the *Fasti* to him after Augustus's death.

[Book I:Introduction](#) The *Fasti* dedication. Part of Germanicus's translation of Aratus' *Phaenomena* survives, attesting to his poetic interests.

[Book I: January 1](#) The year to come (possibly AD 16,17 or 18 when he was campaigning in Germany) will be auspicious for him. Ovid alludes to the triumph of Germanicus and Tiberius on 26 May AD17 decreed two years previously. The river Rhine was represented in the procession (see Tacitus).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Specifically addressed by Ovid.

Giants, Gigantes

Monsters, sons of Tartarus and Earth, with many arms and serpent feet, who made war on the gods by piling up the mountains, and overthrown by Jupiter. They were buried under Sicily.

[Book III: March 7](#) [Book V: Introduction](#) [Jupiter](#) fought with them.

Glaucus

The son of Minos and [Pasiphae](#), who was drowned in a jar of honey. He was saved by the seer, Polyeidus, or by [Aesculapius](#), using a herb employed by one snake to revive another.

[Book VI: June 21](#) The tale mentioned.

Good Goddess, Bona Dea

Worshipped by women. Formerly an Earth-Goddess, an aspect of the Great Goddess.

[Book V: May 1](#) Her temple on the [Aventine](#).

Graces

The Charites, the three Graces. The daughters of [Jupiter](#) and Eurynome. Aglaia, Hegemone and Euphrosyne (or Giving, Receiving and Thanking).

[Book V: May 2](#) Companions of [Flora](#).

Gradivus, see [Mars](#)

An epithet of Mars, as the Marching God.

[Book II: February 27](#) [Book III: March 1](#) Mentioned.

[Book III: March 15](#) Deceived by [Anna](#).

Gyges

The hundred-handed Giant son of mother Earth. His brothers were [Briareus](#) and Cottus.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Mentioned.

Haemonia

The ancient name for Thessaly from Haemon father of Thessalos.

[Book II: Introduction](#) The land of [Acastus](#), king of Iolchos.

Haemus

A mountain in Thrace supposed to be a mortal turned into a mountain for assuming the name of a great god.

[Book I: January 9](#) The mountain mentioned.

Halaesus, Halesus, Haliscus

A bastard son of [Agamemnon](#), who was driven out, and reaching Italy founded [Falerii](#). He taught the inhabitants

the mysteries of Hera ([Juno](#)), celebrated in the Argive manner.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Gave his name to the Faliscan country.

Hamadryads

The wood nymphs.

[Book II: February 11 Callisto](#) was one, in [Diana](#)'s sacred band.

Hasdrubal

Hasdrubal, Hannibal's brother fell at the Metaurus in 207BC. This Hasdrubal is probably the son of Gisco who took poison after the defeat of [Syphax](#).

[Book VI: June 23](#) On this day.

Hebe

The daughter of [Juno](#), born without a father. She became the wife of [Hercules](#) after his deification, and had the power to renew life.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) In Latin called *Iuventas* (Youth).

Hebrus

The chief river of Thrace.

[Book III: March 17](#) Crossed by [Bacchus](#).

Hecate

The daughter of the Titans Perses and Asterie, [Latona](#)'s sister. A Thracian goddess of witches, her name is a

feminine form of [Apollo](#)'s title '*the far-darter*'. She was a lunar goddess, with shining Titans for parents. In Hades she was Prytania of the dead, or the Invincible Queen. She gave riches, wisdom, and victory, and presided over flocks and navigation. She had three bodies and three heads, those of a lioness, a bitch, and a mare. Her ancient power was to give to or withhold from mortals any gift. She was sometimes merged with the lunar aspect of [Diana](#)-Artemis, and presided over purifications and expiations. She was the goddess of enchantments and magic charms, and sent demons to earth to torture mortals. At night she appeared with her retinue of infernal dogs, haunting crossroads (as [Trivia](#)), tombs and the scenes of crimes. At crossroads her columns or statues had three faces – the Triple Hecates – and offerings were made at the full moon to propitiate her.

[Book I: January 1](#) Three-faced guardian of the crossroads.

Hector

The Trojan hero, eldest son of [Priam](#) and Hecuba. See Homer's Iliad.

[Book V: May 3](#) Killed by [Achilles](#) who was [Chiron](#)'s pupil.

Helice, see [Bear](#) Constellation

The Great Bear, from the Greek έλική the twister.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Used by the Greeks for navigation.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Addressed by [Ceres](#). The constellation is circumpolar and never rises or sets.

Hellespont, Helle

Helle, the daughter of Athamas and Nephele, was the sister of Phrixus, and granddaughter of Aeolus. Escaping from [Ino](#) on the golden ram, she fell into the sea and was drowned, giving her name to the Hellespont, the straits that link the Propontis with the Aegean Sea.

[Book I: January 9](#) [Book VI: June 9](#) Priapus the Hellespontine god of [Lampsacus](#).

[Book III: March 23](#) [Book IV: April 20](#) The story of Helle.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The Hellespont named for her.

[Book IV: April 25](#) Her Ram, is the constellation [Aries](#).

Helorus

The modern river Tellaro, near Noto in the province of [Syracuse](#). Its river valley is compared to that of [Tempe](#) in northern Greece.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Hercules

(The following material is covered by [Ovid](#) in the *Metamorphoses*). The Hero, [son of Jupiter](#). He was set in the sky as the constellation Hercules between [Lyra](#) and Corona Borealis. The son of Jupiter and Alcmena, the wife of Amphitryon (so Hercules is of [Theban](#) descent, and a Boeotian). Called [Alcides](#) from Amphitryon's father Alceus. Called also Amphitryoniades. Called also Tirynthius from Tiryns his city in the Argolis. Jupiter predicted at his birth that a scion of Perseus would be

born, greater than all other descendants. [Juno](#) delayed Hercules' birth and hastened that of Eurystheus, grandson of Perseus, making Hercules subservient to him. Hercules was set twelve labours by Eurystheus at Juno's instigation.

1. The killing of the Nemean lion.
2. The destruction of the Lernean Hydra. He uses the poison from the Hydra for his arrows.
3. The capture of the stag with golden antlers.
4. The capture of the Erymanthian Boar.
5. The cleansing of the stables of Augeas king of Elis.
6. The killing of the birds of the Stymphalian Lake in Arcadia.
7. The capture of the Cretan wild bull.
8. The capture of the mares of Diomedes of Thrace, that ate human flesh.
9. The taking of the girdle of Hippolyte, Queen of the Amazons.
10. The killing of Geryon and the capture of his oxen.
11. The securing of the apples from the Garden of the Hesperides. He held up the sky for Atlas in order to deceive him and obtain them.
12. The bringing of the dog Cerberus from Hades to the upper world.

He fought with [Achelous](#) for the hand of Deianira. He married Deianira, killed Nessus, fell in love with Iole, daughter of Eurytus who had cheated him, and received the shirt of Nessus from the outraged Deianira. (See Cavalli's opera with Lully's dances – *Ercole Amante*). He was then tormented to death by the shirt of Nessus.

[Book I: January 11](#) He returned from Spain (Erythea in Southwest Spain) having captured the cattle of Geryon in the Tenth Labour.

[Book II: February 13](#) The [Fabii](#) claimed descent from Hercules.

[Book II: February 15](#) The tale of [Faunus](#), Hercules and [Omphale](#).

[Book V: May 3](#) He visits [Chiron](#) the Centaur, tutor of [Achilles](#), and accidentally wounds him with a poisoned arrow, soaked in the blood of the Lernean Hydra. Hercules had destroyed Troy because [Laomedon](#) broke faith with him.

[Book V: May 14](#) He substituted ritual effigies for human sacrifice, after reaching the banks of the [Tiber](#).

[Book V: May 20](#) His twelve labours.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) He married Juno's daughter, [Hebe](#), after his deification.

[Book VI: June 4](#) Hercules *Custos* (The Guardian) protects the Circus below the roof, which is protected by [Bellona](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) He rescues [Ino](#). He is called Oetaean from his funeral pyre on Mount Oeta.

[Book VI: June 30](#) [Juno](#) reluctantly gave Hercules a place in the temple of the [Muses](#).

Hesiod

Hesiod the Greek poet of Ascra. See *Theogonia* 22.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

Hesperus

The Evening. The planet Venus as the 'evening star.

[Book II: February 15](#) The evening.

[Book V: May 9](#) The evening star.

Hilaira

[Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of [Leucippus](#), [Phoebe](#) and Hilaira, were raped and abducted by [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#).

They were betrothed to [Idas](#) and [Lynceus](#). Hilaira was a priestess of Athene-[Minerva](#).

Himera

A river and town on the northern coast of Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Hippocrene

One of the two springs on Mount Helicon associated with the [Muses](#). Hippocrene is the other. Ovid identifies them.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The founts of poetic inspiration.

Hippolytus

The son of [Theseus](#) and the Amazon Hippolyte. He was admired by [Phaedra](#), his step-mother, and was killed at Troezen, after meeting 'a bull from the sea'. He was brought to life again by [Aesculapius](#), and hidden by [Diana](#) ([Cynthia](#), the moon-goddess) who set him down in the sacred grove at Arician [Nemi](#), where he became [Virbius](#), the consort of the goddess (as [Adonis](#) was of [Venus](#), and [Attis](#) of [Cybele](#)), and the King of the Wood (*Rex Nemorensis*). All this is retold and developed in Frazer's

monumental work, on magic and religion, ‘The Golden Bough’ (see Chapter I et seq.). (See also Euripides’s play ‘Hippolytos’, and Racine’s ‘Phaedra’.)

[Book III: March 1](#) Concealed at Nemi.

[Book V: May 2](#) An example of divine punishment by [Neptune](#). Ovid suggests he might have averted [Phaedra](#)’s love for him.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Saved by Aesculapius, and set down at Nemi as Virbius.

Hours

The Greek Horae were goddesses of time: variously the year, seasons and the hours of the day. They became guardians of the natural order and of morality. Hesiod names Eunomia (who saw that law was observed), Dike (who attended to justice) and Irene (who was a goddess of peace). There was a later and more elaborate mythology that made them guardians of youth, and the daughters of [Zeus](#) and [Themis](#).

[Book I: January 1](#) They sit at Heaven’s Gate with [Janus](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Companions of [Flora](#).

Hyacinthus

Son of Amyclas, king of Amyclae, hence he was called Amyclides. His home was Amyclae, in Taenarus, near Sparta. Loved by [Phoebus](#), he was killed by a discus while they were competing. Phoebus turned him into a hyacinth (the blue larkspur, *hyacinthos grapta*) that has the marks AI AI (woe! woe!) of early Greek letters on the base of its

petals, and was sacred to Cretan Hyacinthus. Later it was linked to Ajax. Sparta celebrated the *Hyacinthia* festival in his honour. (Therapnean here means Spartan since Therapne was a town in Laconia).

[Book V: May 2](#) Flora claims that she created the flower, the hyacinth, from his blood.

Hyades

The daughters of [Atlas](#) and Aethra, half-sisters of the [Pleiades](#). They lived on Mount Nysa and nurtured the infant [Bacchus](#). The Hyades are the star-cluster forming the ‘face’ of the constellation [Taurus](#) the Bull. The cluster is used as the first step in the distance scale of the galaxy.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: April 17](#) The Hyades set before night in the west at this date.

[Book V: May 2](#) The cluster, a ‘herd’ of piglets (the *Suculae*, from the Greek ὑς), was setting at twilight at this date, when the Sun was virtually conjunct them in [Taurus](#). Alternatively they are granddaughters of [Tethys](#) and [Oceanus](#).

[Book VI: June 2](#) The horns and brow of Taurus. The Hyades were rising at dawn at this date.

[Book VI: June 15](#) Thyone, one of the Hyades, used for them all. The Hyades were rising before dawn on this date.

Hyas

Brother of the Hyades, and son of [Atlas](#) and [Aethra](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Killed by a lioness, gave his name to the [Hyades](#), his sisters.

[Book V: May 25](#) The Hyades were rising before dawn on this date.

Hymen

The God of marriage.

[Book II: February 21](#) Marriage not auspicious on the [Festival of the Dead](#).

Hyperion

A Titan, the son of Coelus and Terra, and father of the sun-god.

[Book I: January 9](#) The sun-god worshipped in Persia by horse sacrifice.

[Book V: May 2](#) The father of [Aurora](#) (Eos) by Theia.

Hyrieus

An old farmer, who is visited by the gods.

[Book V: May 11](#) [Book VI: June 17](#) The gods create a son, [Orion](#), for him.

Iarbas

Suitor of [Dido](#).

[Book III: March 15](#) He took the kingdom after her death.

Icarus

The son of Daedalus for whom his father fashioned wings of wax and feathers like his own in order to escape from

Crete. Flying too near the sun, despite being warned, the wax melted and he drowned in the Icarian Sea, and was buried on the island of Icaria. (See W H Auden's poem 'Musée des Beaux Arts' referring to Brueghel's painting, Icarus, in Brussels)

[Book IV: April 4](#) Icaria passed by [Cybele](#).

Ida

The extensive range of mountains in western Mysia, the highest peak Gargaros rising to over 4500 feet and commanding a fine view of the [Hellespont](#) and Propontis. There is also a Cretan Mount Ida. The supposed Trojan origin of the Romans via [Aeneas](#), results in the epithet Idalian for the Roman people.

[Book I: January 9](#) Idalians, the Romans.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) [Solymus](#), a companion of Aeneas is from Ida.

[Book V: May 1](#) Haunt of the goat-nymph [Amalthea](#).

Idas

The putative son of Aphareus, king of Messene, and Arene, but actually fathered by [Neptune](#).

[Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of [Leucippus](#), [Phoebe](#) and [Hilaira](#), were raped and abducted by [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#).

They were betrothed to Idas and Lynceus his half-brother, who fought them.

Ilia, see [Silvia](#)

Ilus

The son of [Tros](#), and builder of Troy (Ilium). The father of [Laomedon](#).

[Book VI: June 9](#) The founder of Troy.

Inachian Heifer

Io the daughter of Inachus a river-god of Argolis, chased and raped by [Jupiter](#). Changed to a heifer by Jupiter and conceded as a gift to [Juno](#).

After [Mercury](#) killed Argus her guard, and driven by Juno's fury Io has reached the Nile, she is returned to human form. With her son Epaphus she is worshipped in Egypt as a goddess. Io is therefore synonymous with [Isis](#) (or Hathor the cow-headed goddess with whom she was often confused), and Epaphus with Horus. Worshipped in Crete as a manifestation of Isis.

[Book III: March 15](#) Identified with [Anna Perenna](#).

Inachus

A river in Argolis. The river-god, father of [Io](#) (Inachis).

[Book I: January 9](#) Geese sacrificed to Io.

Ino

The daughter of [Cadmus](#), wife of [Athamas](#), and sister of [Semele](#) and Agave. She fostered the infant [Bacchus](#). She plotted the deaths of her step-children, [Phrixus](#) and [Helle](#). She parched seed to prevent it sprouting and so incurred an oracle against them.

[Book II: February 22](#) [Book III: March 23](#) The incident of the parched seed.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Ovid identifies her with *Mater Matruta*. She nursed the infant Bacchus.

Io

Daughter of [Inachus](#) a river-god of Argolis, chased and raped by [Jupiter](#). With her son Epaphus she was worshipped in Egypt as a goddess. Io is therefore synonymous with [Isis](#) (or Hathor the cow-headed goddess with whom she was often confused), and Epaphus with Horus. Isis had a centre of worship at Pharos in Egypt.

[Book I: January 9](#) Geese sacrificed to her.

[Book IV: April 20](#) [Book V: May 14](#) Ovid suggests the constellation of [Taurus](#) may represent her.

Iphigeneia

The daughter of [Agamemnon](#), king of Mycenae, and Clytaemnestra. She is called Mycenis. She was sacrificed by her father at Aulis, to gain favourable winds for the passage to [Troy](#) but snatched away by [Diana](#) to Tauris, a deer being left in her place. Orestes her brother found her there and they fled to Athens with the image of the goddess. She later became priestess of Diana-Artemis at Brauron.

[Book I: January 9](#) Rescued by Diana at Aulis.

Janiculum

A hill on the right bank of the [Tiber](#) (looking downriver) opposite ancient [Rome](#).

[Book I: January 1](#) Named after [Janus](#) according to Ovid.

January

The month, named for [Janus](#).

[Book I:Introduction](#) Derived from Janus.

Janus

The Roman two-headed god of doorways and beginnings, equivalent to the Hindu elephant god Ganesh. The Janus mask is often depicted with one melancholy and one smiling face. The first month of the year in the Julian calendar was named for him, January (*Ianuaris*).

[Book I:Introduction](#) [Book II: Introduction](#) The month January, the gateway of the year, derived from Janus.

[Book I: January 1](#) A dialogue with the god. His name derived from *hiare* to open, or *eo* I go, according to Ovid. His temple, with a statue of the god beneath an archway, stood between the Forum Romanum and Forum Iulium.

[Book I: January 9](#) Sacrificial day (*Agon*) of the god. Ovid suggests derivations of *Agon*.

[Book III: March 30](#) Janus venerated on this day, four days after the equinox.

[Book V: May 9](#) The first month sacred to him.

[Book VI: June 1](#) He loved [Carna](#), and gave her power over hinges. White-thorn sacred to him, and used to ward off evil.

Jason

The son of Aeson, and leader of the Argonauts, hero of the adventure of the Golden Fleece. The fleece is represented in the sky by the constellation and zodiacal sign of [Aries](#), the Ram. In ancient times it contained the point of the vernal equinox (The First Point of Aries) that has since moved by precession into [Pisces](#). He reached Colchis and the court of King Aetes where he accepted [Medea](#)'s help to secure the fleece and married her before returning to Iolchos.

[Book I: January 11](#) An exile from Thessaly.

[Book II: February 22](#) His wife, Medea.

Juba

King of Numidia. Aligned with [Scipio](#) and beaten by [Caesar](#) in North Africa where the remnants of the Pompeian party were being reorganised.

[Book IV: April 6](#) Beaten at the battle of Thapsus in 46BC.

Julia Augusta

[Book I: January 11](#) The title for [Livia](#) after adoption into the Julian family, under which she was subsequently deified by Claudius.

Julius Caesar

The Roman general and Tribune. Assassinated and subsequently deified.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book V: May 12](#) His performance of the sacred rites as Pontifex Maximus. His deification.

[Book II: February 5](#) Deified by [Augustus](#), his adopted son.
[Book III: Introduction](#) He reformed the calendar in 46BC.
[Book III: March 15](#) [Book V: May 12](#) His assassination on this date, the Ides of March, in 44BC. His deification. Augustus (Octavian) avenged him at Philippi.
[Book IV: April 6](#) Caesar crushed [Pompey](#)'s supporters in Africa at the battle of Thapsus in 46BC.
[Book IV: April 14](#) Caesar relieved the siege of Mutina (Modena) in 43BC, fighting against Mark Antony.

Julus, Iulus

Ascanius, the son of [Aeneas](#), from whom the [Julian](#) clan claimed their origin. The ancestor of [Julius Caesar](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Founder of the Julian House.

Juno

The daughter of Rhea and Saturn, wife and sister of [Jupiter](#), and the queen of the gods. A representation of the pre-Hellenic Great Goddess. (See the Metope of Temple E at Selinus – The Marriage of Hera and Zeus – Palermo, National Museum.)

[Book I: Introduction](#) Tutelary goddess of the monthly Kalends.

[Book I: January 1](#) She sided with the Greeks against the Trojans, and therefore also against their descendants via [Aeneas](#), the Romans. So she assisted [Tatius](#) and the [Sabines](#) in their attack on the citadel.

[Book II: February 1](#) Juno *Sospita*, the Saviour, honoured with new temples at this time. Juno *Sospita* received fervent invocations at the time of labour and childbirth.

[Book II: February 11](#) She transformed [Callisto](#) into a bear.

[Book II: February 15](#) [Book V: May 2](#) Her sacred grove below the [Esquiline](#) Hill. Worshipped as Juno [Lucina](#) the goddess of childbirth.

[Book II: February 21](#) [Lara](#) reported [Jupiter](#)'s amour to her.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Worshipped in [Sparta](#) and [Mycenae](#).

[Book III: March 1](#) The founding of her temple on the Esquiline. The mother of [Mars](#). Mention of the *Matronalia*, in honour of Juno Lucina.

[Book III: March 17](#) Stepmother of [Bacchus](#).

[Book IV: April 20](#) Juno's disapproval of Jupiter's *amours*, here his love for [Europa](#) and [Io](#).

[Book VI: Introduction](#) Her statue in the temple on the Capitol, dedicated to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. The month of June named after her (called *Junonius* in Aricia and Praeneste).

[Book VI: June 1](#) The temple of Juno Moneta founded on the Capitol. Juno Moneta having been the adviser of those to be married became the adviser to the Roman people. Her sacred geese warned (*monere*) the defenders when the Gauls attacked the citadel. Later the mint was installed nearby, and the word 'money' is derived from the temple.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Daughter of [Saturn](#) and [Ops](#) (Rhea).

[Book VI: June 11](#) She persecuted the family of Jupiter's lover, [Semele](#).

[Book VI: June 30](#) Juno reluctantly gave [Hercules](#) a place in the temple of the [Muses](#).

Jupiter

The sky-god, the Greek Zeus, son of Saturn and Rhea, born on Mount Lycaeum in Arcadia and nurtured on [Mount](#) Ida in [Crete](#). The oak is his sacred tree. His emblems of power are the sceptre and lightning-bolt. His wife and sister is [Juno](#) (the Greek Hera). (See the sculpted bust (copy) by Brassides, the Jupiter of Otricoli, Vatican)

[Book I: Introduction](#) Tutelary god of the monthly Ides.

[Book I: January 1](#) His temple on the [Capitoline](#), and his name as synonymous with the Emperor's. Even his coming and going is at the discretion [of Janus](#). His early shrine on the [Palatine](#) in the time of [Romulus](#) is mentioned. He deposed [Saturn](#). His temple on an island in the [Tiber](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) [Hercules](#) was his son.

[Book I: January 13](#) A gelded ram offered to him on the Ides.

[Book II: February 1](#) His temple as Jupiter *Tonans*, the Thunderer, on the Capitol. This primitive aspect of Jupiter echoes both the Greek Zeus, and the Etruscan gods Tinias, and Summanus.

[Book II: February 3](#) He made [Delphinus](#) a constellation.

[Book II: February 11](#) He raped [Callisto](#) and set her among the stars as [Ursa Major](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) He fought against [Typhon](#) and the Giants.

[Book II: February 21](#) Loved [Juturna](#). He makes [Lara](#) mute.

[Book II: February 23](#) The building of his temple on the [Capitol](#).

[Book III: March 1](#) Worshipped as *Elicius*. Ovid justifies the name.

[Book III: March 7](#) [Book V: Introduction](#) Worshipped as [Veiovis](#), the young Jupiter. He took up his lightning bolts after the [Giants](#) had assaulted the heavens. He was nursed by nymphs on Mount Ida in Crete.

[Book III: March 8](#) [Book III: March 17](#) [Book VI: June 11](#) The father of [Bacchus](#), by [Semele](#), who was consumed by fire in her union with him. Bacchus was snatched from the flames. Jupiter dethroned his father [Saturn](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Dardanus](#) by [Electra](#).

[Book IV: April 2](#) He slept with [Maia](#), Electra, and [Taygete](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) The brother of [Dis](#).

[Book IV: April 13](#) A temple to Jupiter Victor was dedicated by Quintus [Fabius Maximus](#) on this day.

[Book IV: April 20](#) The constellation [Taurus](#) represents him abducting [Europa](#).

[Book IV: April 21](#) Invoked by [Romulus](#) at the founding of Rome.

[Book IV: April 23](#) The [Vinalia](#) sacred to Jupiter. Ovid explains the reason.

[Book V: Introduction](#) [Book V: May 15](#) Fathered [Mercury](#) on [Maia](#), most beautiful of the [Pleiads](#).

[Book V: May 1](#) His cradle tended by [Amalthea](#), the goat-nymph, who is represented by the star [Capella](#), the ‘she-goat’.

[Book V: May 2](#) In one variant of myth [Minerva](#) (Athene) was born from Zeus’ head, without a mother.

[Book V: May 11](#) Helped create a son, [Orion](#) (Urion) for [Hyrieus](#).

[Book V: May 14](#) Disguised as a bull he carried off [Europa](#). The bull form became the constellation [Taurus](#).

[Book V: May 25](#) The eagle (constellation [Aquila](#)) is his sacred bird.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) The temple on the Capitol, dedicated to Jupiter, Juno and Minerva.

[Book VI: June 9](#) The altar of Jupiter the Baker. Jupiter gives instructions regarding the defence of the citadel.

[Book VI: June 13](#) A temple was dedicated to Jupiter *Invictus*.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Threatened [Aesculapius](#) for reviving [Hippolytus](#), having himself resurrected Aesculapius.

[Book VI: June 27](#) The temple of Jupiter the Stayer in front of the Palatine. Vowed by Romulus if Jupiter stayed the flight of the Roman troops during a battle between the Romans and Sabines.

Justice

The goddess of Justice. Here Ovid bases her on the Greek goddess Astraea ("the star-maiden") the daughter of Zeus and Themis. She was, as was her mother, a goddess of justice. During the Golden Age, when the gods lived

among mankind, she lived on the earth. When evil and wickedness increased its grip on humanity, the gods abandoned mankind. Astraea was the last to leave and took up a place among the stars where she was transformed into the constellation Virgo.

[Book I: January 1](#) The goddess is mentioned.

Juturna

Or Diuturna, a goddess of [Latium](#), was the goddess of still waters and rivers over which [Jupiter](#) gave her command in return for her love. She was venerated by the college of the *Fontani*, the artisans assigned to the aqueducts and fountains.

[Book I: January 11](#) The *Juturnalia*, when she was venerated, was on this date.

[Book I: January 27](#) The temple of the [Dioscuri](#) near the waters of the [Field of Mars](#), sacred to her.

[Book II: February 21](#) Loved by Jupiter. A sister of [Lara](#).

Juventas, see [Hebe](#)

Ladon

A river in [Arcadia](#). (Pausanias says, VIII xx, that its springs derive from the Phenean Lake and that it has the finest water of any river in Greece.)

[Book II: February 15](#) In Arcadia, a site of the worship of [Pan](#).

[Book V: Introduction](#) A site of the worship of [Mercury](#).

Laenas

Consul in 173BC.

[Book V: May 2](#) Mentioned.

Laestrygones

An ancient people of Campania in Italy, fabled to be cannibals. See [Lamus](#). They attacked [Ulysses](#) and his comrades.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

Lampsacus

An ancient Greek colony in Mysia, Asia Minor, known as Pityusa or Pityussa before its colonization by Ionian Greeks from Phocaea and Miletus, situated on the [Hellespont](#), opposite Callipolis (Gallipoli) in Thrace. It possessed a good harbour; and the neighborhood was famous for its wine. Lampsacus was the chief seat of the worship of [Priapus](#), a gross nature-god closely connected with the culture of the vine. The ancient name is preserved in the modern village of Lapsaki, but the Greek town possibly lay at Chardak immediately opposite Gallipoli.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Priapus was worshipped there.

Lamus

Mythical king of the Laestrygonians, and founder of Formiae. (The Laestrygonian country has been placed in Sicily, at Formia on the coast of Campania, or, as Ernle Bradford suggests in 'Ulysses Found' Ch.12, from the details of the natural harbour described by Homer in the

Odyssey, at Bonafacio in Corsica, in the sea-gate between Corsica and Sardinia.)

[Book IV: Introduction](#) His people the [Laestrygonians](#).

Lanuvium

Laomedon

The king of Troy, son of [Ilus](#) the younger, father of [Priam](#), Hesione and Antigone.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Son of Ilus, to whom the [Palladium](#) descended.

[Book VI: June 20](#) The father of [Tithonus](#) the Assyrian.

Lara, see [Tacita](#)

The Silent Goddess.

[Book II: February 21](#) Ovid derives her name from *Lala*, from the Greek λαλειν, to prattle.

Larentia

Nurse to [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

Lares

Beneficent spirits watching over the household, fields, public areas etc.

They were the public gods of the crossroads, the *Lares Compitales*, or *Praestites*, enshrined in pairs, providing protection, deriving from Etruscan and Sabine deities, as the single family *Lar* provided household protection. Each

house had a Lararium where the image of the *Lar* was kept. The *Lar* is usually coupled with the *Penates* the gods of the larder. The yearly festival of the public *Lares* was the *Compitalia*.

[Book I: January 1](#) The Household.

[Book II: February 21](#) The children of [Lara](#).

[Book II: February 22](#) An offering of food made to them.

[Book IV: April 21](#) The household gods of early [Rome](#).

[Book V: May 1](#) An altar dedicated to them on this day.

They guard and protect the City.

[Book VI: June 27](#) A sanctuary granted them on this day.

Latinus

The son of [Faunus](#), grandson of [Picus](#), king of Laurentum in [Latium](#), and father of [Lavinia](#). [Aeneas](#) married his daughter and became king.

[Book II: February 21](#) The native ruler of Latium.

[Book III: March 15](#) Merged his people with those of Aeneas, and gave him his daughter Lavinia in marriage.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The son of [Silvius](#) = Faunus and father of [Alba](#).

[Book IV: April 23](#) Called Latin Amata.

Latium

A country in Central Italy, containing [Rome](#). (The modern Lazio region. It originally designated the small area between the mouth of the [Tiber](#) and the Alban Hills. With the Roman conquest it was extended south-east to the Gulf

of Gaeta, and west to the mountains of Abruzzo, forming the so-called *Latium novum* or *adiectum*.)

[Book I: January 1](#) Its name derived by Ovid from [Saturn](#)'s concealment (*latente*).

[Book II: February 21](#) Home of [Juturna](#), and of the nymphs.

[Book III: Introduction](#) [Mars](#) worshipped there in pre-Roman times.

[Book IV: April 4](#) [Aeneas](#) brought the Trojan relics there.

Latona

Daughter of the Titan Coeus, and mother of [Apollo](#) and [Artemis](#) (Diana) by [Jupiter](#).

[Book V: May 11](#) Served by [Orion](#) whom she changed into a constellation.

Laentine Fields

The Laentine road ran towards the sea. The Laurentines were an ancient people living near the coast of [Latium](#).

Their city Laurentum is deemed identical with Lavinium.

[Book II: February 23](#) Where [Aeneas](#) landed.

Lausus

Son of [Numitor](#), killed by [Amulius](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

Lavinia

The daughter of King [Latinus](#), betrothed to [Turnus](#) but later won by [Aeneas](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) The pretext for the wars in [Latium](#).
[Book III: March 15](#) Won by Aeneas.

Learchus

The son of [Athamas](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) Killed by his maddened father.

Lemnos

The Greek island. The home of [Vulcan](#) the blacksmith of the gods. Thoas was once king there when the Lemnian women murdered their menfolk because of their adultery with Thracian girls. His life was spared because his daughter Hypsipyle set him adrift in an oarless boat.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Vulcan worshipped there.

Hypsipyle its queen.

Lemuria

The festival of the wandering spirits of the dead, who visited their old homes, and were placated by offerings of black beans signifying the living.

[Book V: May 9](#) Ovid explains the rites. The spirits called *Lemures*.

Leo

The constellation and zodiacal sign of the Lion. It contains the star Regulus ‘the heart of the lion’, one of the four guardians of the heavens in Babylonian astronomy, which lies nearly on the ecliptic. (The others are Aldebaran in Taurus, Antares in Scorpius, and Fomalhaut ‘the Fish’s

Eye' in Piscis Austrinus. All four are at roughly ninety degrees to one another). The constellation represents the lion killed by [Hercules](#) as the first of his twelve labours. [Book I: January 24](#) [Book II: February 2](#) Leo set at dawn at the end of January/start of February.

Leontini

An ancient city in E Sicily, c.20 mi (32 km) S of Catania. It was (729 B.C.) a colony of Chalcidians from the island of Naxos and passed (5th cent. B.C.) under the rule of [Syracuse](#). It was the legendary home of the [Laestrygones](#), a group of giants encountered by [Odysseus](#). The modern town occupying the site is Lentini.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Passed by Ceres.

Lesbos

The island in the eastern Aegean. Among its cities were Mytilene and Methymna. Famous as the home of Sappho the poetess, whose love of women gave rise to the term *lesbian*.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Passed by [Cybele](#).

Leucas

An island off the coast of Acarnania in western Greece, in the Ionian Sea north of Ithaca. Once joined to the mainland.

[Book V: May 14](#) There was a ritual each year on a promontory there, where someone was thrown into the sea.

Leucippus

Co-king of Messene with Aphareus.

[Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of Leucippus, [Phoebe](#) and [Hilaira](#), were raped and abducted by [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#).

They were betrothed to [Idas](#) and [Lynceus](#) his half-brother, who fought to regain them.

Leucothea

The White Goddess, the sea-goddess into whom [Ino](#) was changed, who as a sea-mew helped [Ulysses](#) (See Homer's *Odyssey*). She is a manifestation of the Great Goddess in her archetypal form. (See Robert Graves's 'The White Goddess') [Venus](#) interceded for Ino, after she had leapt into the sea with her son, and [Neptune](#) changed them into sea-deities.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Ino's divine name.

Liber, see [Bacchus](#)

An ancient rural god of Italy who presided over planting and fructification. He became associated (as Liber Pater) with [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus.

[Book I: January 9](#) [Book III: March 5](#) [Book III: March 8](#)

An epithet of Bacchus.

Libera, see [Ariadne](#)

[Book III: March 8](#) Her divine name.

Libertas

The deified virtue, Liberty, centre of one of the many Roman cults.

[Book IV: April 13](#) The *Atrium Libertatis*, not far from the Forum was dedicated to her.

Libra

The constellation of the Balance or Scales, made a separate constellation by [Julius Caesar](#) having formerly been regarded by the Greeks as the claws of [Scorpio](#). The symbol of Justice, held by the goddess Astraea, represented by the constellation Virgo.

[Book IV: April 6](#) Libra was just rising in the east at twilight on this day.

Lilybaeum

The cape (now Boeo) and ancient city of Sicily, on the extreme south-western coast. It is the modern Marsala. It was founded (396 B.C.) by Carthage and became a stronghold. In the First Punic War it resisted a long Roman siege (250–242 B.C.). Rome finally won (241 B.C.) the city and used it as a base for the African campaign of Scipio Africanus Major. The city was famous for its harbor.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Livia

Livia Drusilla (58BC-29AD), the daughter of Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus, who became Empress. Her first husband was Tiberius Claudius Nero (who fought against

Octavian-Augustus in the Perusine War) to whom she bore Tiberius, later Emperor and [Drusus](#) the father of Germanicus, who was Octavian's future general in Germany. She married Octavian, the future [Augustus](#), in 38BC, while he was Triumvir, he having forced Claudius to relinquish her. She bore Augustus no children, but exercised great power over him and the succession, helping to secure it for [Tiberius](#). [Ovid](#) may have been involved in the anti-Claudian party and so have crossed Livia or her supporters, preventing any chances of reprieve from his exile.

[Book I: January 11](#) Adopted into the Julian Family, according to Augustus' will, and titled [Julia Augusta](#), subsequently deified by Claudius.

[Book I: January 16](#) Dedicated a shrine to Concord (Concordia) which she presented to Augustus.

[Book V: May 1](#) Restored the temple of [Bona Dea](#), the Good Goddess.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Dedicated a temple of [Concord](#). Her Colonnade was built on the site of a palace of Vedius Pollio bequeathed to [Augustus](#) who demolished it. The Colonnade was named after Livia in 7BC.

Lotis

A [Naiad](#) desired by [Priapus](#).

[Book I: January 9](#) His seduction of her.

Lucifer

The morning star (the planet [Venus](#) in dawn aspect).

[Book I: Introduction](#) The dawn.

[Book II: February 9](#) Venus was a morning ‘star’ in the unknown year when Ovid was writing Book II, for example it was true in 8AD the year of his exile.

[Book III: March 26](#) The Morning Star. Ovid takes this date as the spring equinox.

[Book V: May 12](#) The Morning Star.

Lucina

‘The light bringer’, the Roman goddess of childbirth, a manifestation of [Juno](#), but also applied to [Diana](#), as the Great Goddess.

[Book II: February 15](#) Ovid suggests derivations for her name.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) Ovid derives her name from *luces* (days).

Lucretia

The wife of [Tarquinius Collatinus](#) raped by [Sextus Tarquin](#).

[Book II: February 24](#) Ovid tells the story.

Lupercal

A cave at the south west foot of the [Palatine](#) Hill said to have been the she-wolf’s den. A fig tree grew there the [Ficus Ruminalis](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) Ovid explains the origin of the name.

Luperci, Lupercalia

The priests of Lupercus, the Roman version of [Pan](#) Lukaios. The priests were divided into the colleges of the [Fabii](#) or Fabiani and Quinctiales or Quinctilii. A third college the Julii was established by Julius Caesar in 44BC. [Book II: Introduction](#) Rites of purification.

[Book II: February 15](#) [Book V: Introduction](#) The Lupercalia. The priests stripped naked and ran through the streets, apparently round the boundary of the ancient city on the [Palatine](#), starting from the [Lupercal](#). The priests named Luperci from the place of the wolf (*lupa*). They struck women on the hands with strips of sacrificial goatskin to promote fertility, and purify from barrenness and other evils.

Lyaeus

An epithet of [Bacchus](#) meaning ‘the deliverer from care’. [Book I: January 9](#) Worshipped by the minor deities.

Lycaeus

A mountain in [Arcadia](#). (Pausanias, VIII xxxviii, has a long section on this mountain, the Holy Peak, sacred to Zeus-[Jupiter](#), and [Pan](#). In the precinct of Zeus no shadow is cast.)

[Book II: February 15](#) A mountain in Arcadia, and seat of worship.

Lycaon

Son of Pelasgus. Lycaon was a king of primitive [Arcadia](#) who presided over barbarous cannibalistic practises. He was transformed into a wolf by Zeus, angered by human sacrifice. His sons offered Zeus, disguised as a traveller, a banquet containing human remains. They were also changed into wolves and Zeus then precipitated a great flood to cleanse the world.

[Book II: February 11](#) [Book III: March 17](#) The father of [Callisto](#).

Lycurgus

King of the Edonians (Edoni) of Thrace who opposed [Bacchus](#)'s entry into his kingdom at the River Strymon. Lycurgus was driven mad and killed his own son Dryas with an axe thinking he was a vine. He pruned the corpse, and the Edonians, horrified, instructed by Bacchus, tore Lycurgus to pieces with wild horses on Mount Pangaeum. [Book III: March 17](#) Mentioned.

Lynceus

The son of Aphareus, king of Messene, and Arene: half-brother to [Idas](#). [Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of [Leucippus](#), [Phoebe](#) and [Hilaira](#), were raped and abducted by [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#). They were betrothed to Lynceus and Idas, who fought to regain them.

Lyre, the Constellation Lyra

The constellation of the Lyre, representing the stringed instrument invented by [Mercury](#) and given by [Apollo](#) to Orpheus. It contains Vega the fifth brightest star in the sky, which forms one corner of the ‘summer triangle’ with Deneb in Cygnus and Altair in Aquila. Vega will be the pole star around AD14000.

[Book I: January 5](#) Lyra rose at about 3am at this date from Rome.

[Book I: January 17](#) Lyra effectively rose near dawn and set shortly after dusk at this date, thus being visible as an evening constellation for a short time at night.

[Book II: February 2](#) By this date Lyra would be setting before twilight in the north-west and thus be invisible.

[Book V: May 5](#) At this date Lyra was in fact rising at twilight in the north-east.

Maenads, Bacchae, Bacchantes, Thyiads

The female followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus, noted for their ecstatic worship of the god. Dionysus brought terror and joy. The Maenads’ secret female mysteries may indicate older rituals of ecstatic human sacrifice.

[Book IV: April 12](#) [Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Maenalus, see [Arcadia](#)

A mountain range in Arcadia. (Pausanias, VIII xxxvi, says it is sacred to [Pan](#), and the people living there hear him piping.) The haunt of [Diana](#) the goddess of the hunt and her virgin companions.

[Book II: February 11](#) [Callisto](#), the Arcadian.

[Book III: Introduction Faunus](#) worshipped in Arcadia.

[Book IV: April 15](#) Pan the god of Maenalus.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Site of the worship of [Mercury](#).

Maeonides

An epithet for Homer from Maeonia in Lydia, his reputed birthplace.

Homer is of course the Greek epic poet, (fl. c. 8th century BC? born Chios or Smyrna?), supposed main author of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

[Book II: February 5](#) He sang of [Achilles](#).

Maia

One of the [Pleiads](#). She slept with [Jupiter](#), and bore him [Mercury](#).

[Book IV: April 2](#) Mentioned.

[Book V: Introduction](#) [Book V: May 9](#) [Book V: May 15](#)

Mother of Mercury.

Majesty, Maiestas

The daughter of Honour and Reverence according to Ovid.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Her birth.

Mamurius, Mamuralia

Possibly an Oscan name of [Mars](#). A legendary craftsman at the time of [Numa](#). The *Mamuralia* was held on March 14.

[Book III: March 1](#) Ovid tells the background legend.

Manlius Capitolinus, Marcus
Defended the Capitol in 390BC.

[Book VI: June 1](#) Subsequently charged with seeking kingship.

Marcellus

Marcus Claudius Marcellus captured [Syracuse](#) in 212BC.

[Book IV: April 23](#) And took the Hill of [Eryx](#), bringing back the sacred rites of [Venus](#) from there to Rome.

March

The month, named by [Romulus](#) after his father, the god [Mars](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) So named.

Marcia

The daughter of Lucius Marcius Philippus, wife of Paullus Fabius Maximus, Ovid's patron, and a friend of Ovid's third wife who may have been part of her household.

[Book VI: June 30](#) Ovid praises her.

Mars

The war god, son of [Jupiter](#), and [Juno](#), the Roman name for the Greek god Ares. An old name for him is [Mavors](#) or Mamers. In his military aspect he became known as [Gradivus](#).

[Book I: Introduction](#) Gave his name to the first month, March.

[Book II: February 5](#) [Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Romulus](#). He deified his son.

[Book II: February 15](#) [Book IV: Introduction](#) [Book V: May 9](#) The father of Romulus and [Remus](#).

[Book II: February 27](#) Known as Gradivus, the Marching God.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Invoked by Ovid. His month of March. His sacred bird the woodpecker. Worshipped by the Latin peoples before the foundation of Rome, but particularly a god of Rome.

[Book III: March 23](#) Sacrifices to him on this day.

[Book IV: April 2](#) He slept with [Sterope](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) His birth was aided by [Flora](#)'s art.

[Book V: May 12](#) Augustus dedicated a temple to Mars the Avenger (*Ultor*) August 1st, 2 BC on his avenging Julius Caesar's death, and another temple in 20BC commemorating the recovery of the Parthian standards.

[Book VI: June 1](#) His temple beside the *Via Tecta* (probably a colonnade by the Appian Way), visible from outside the Capene Gate.

[Book VI: June 9](#) He speaks on behalf of Rome.

Marsyas

A Satyr of Phrygia who challenged [Apollo](#) to a contest in musical skill, and was flayed alive by the God when he was defeated. (An analogue for the method of making primitive flutes, [Minerva](#)'s invention, by extracting the core from the outer sheath) (See Perugino's painting – Apollo and Marsyas – The Louvre, Paris)

[Book VI: June 13](#) His discovery of the first flute.

Masinissa

He and Scipio defeated [Syphax](#) and [Hasdrubal](#) son of Gisco in 203BC.

[Book VI: June 23](#) On this day.

Matralia, Mater Matuta

The Festival of *Mater Matuta*, identified by Ovid with [Ino](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) The festival of good mothers.

Mavors, see [Mars](#)

An epithet of Mars.

[Book III: March 1](#) So addressed.

[Book IV: April 21](#) Invoked by [Romulus](#) at the founding of Rome.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) He entrusted the defence of the city to [Juno](#).

May

The month of May.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Ovid suggests various origins for the name.

Medea

The daughter of Aeetes, king of Colchis and the Caucasian nymph Asterodeia. A famous sorceress, called the Phasian from the River Phasis in Colchis. She conceived a passion for [Jason](#) and agonised over the betrayal of her country for

him.(See Gustave Moreau's painting 'Jason and Medea', Louvre, Paris: Frederick Sandys painting 'Medea', Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, England: and Castiglione's painting, 'Medea casting a spell', Wadsworth Athanaeum, Hartford, Connecticut) She determined to help Jason carry out his tasks and he took Medea back with him to Iolchos. She deceived Pelias's daughters and employed them to help destroy him. She then fled through the air with her winged dragons to reach Corinth. There she killed Glauce her rival, and then sacrificed her own sons, before fleeing to Athens where she married King [Aegeus](#).

[Book II: Introduction](#) Welcomed by Aegeus.

[Book II: February 22](#) Noted for her crimes.

Medusa

One of the three Gorgons, daughter of Phorcys the wise old man of the sea. She is represented in the sky by part of the constellation Perseus, who holds her decapitated head.

[Neptune](#) lay with her in the form of a bird, and she produced [Pegasus](#) the winged horse.

[Book III: March 7](#) [Book V: Introduction](#) Mother of Pegasus.

Megalesia

The Megalesian Games in honour of the goddess [Cybele](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Celebrated on this date.

Megara

Megara Hyblaea, a Dorian settlement of 726 BC on the east coast of Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Meleager

King of Calydon, the son of Oeneus, and Althaea, daughter of Thestius. As prince, a hero of Calydon, he joined the Calydonian Boar hunt. He fell in love with Atalanta. He killed the boar and in an argument over the spoils he murdered his uncles, Plexippus and Toxeus. His mother Althaea punished him, with death, by throwing a brand, linked to his life, into the fire.

[Book V: May 2](#) An example of divine vengeance.

Melicertes

The son of [Athamas](#) and [Ino](#). His mother Ino, maddened by [Tisiphone](#) and the sight of her son [Learchus](#)' death, at the hands of his father, leapt into the sea with him. He was changed by [Neptune](#), at [Venus](#)'s request, into the sea-god [Palaemon](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) Ovid tells the tale.

Melite, Malta

The island of Malta in the Mediterranean. Cosyra is Pantellaria about 150 miles distant.

[Book III: March 15](#) Ruled by [Battus](#), a refuge for [Anna](#).

Memnon

The son of [Tithonus](#) and Aurora, fought for Troy in the Trojan War with Greece. He was killed by [Achilles](#), but his mother Aurora begged [Jupiter](#) for funeral honours, and he created the warring flock of birds, the Memnonides, from his ashes.

[Book IV: April 20 Aurora](#), the dawn, is his mother.

Mercury

The messenger god, Hermes, son of [Jupiter](#) and the [Pleiad Maia](#), the daughter of [Atlas](#). He is therefore called Atlantiades. His birthplace was Mount [Cyllene](#), and he is therefore called Cyllenius. He has winged feet, and a winged cap, carries a scimitar, and has a magic wand, the *caduceus*, with twin snakes twined around it, that brings sleep and healing. The *caduceus* is the symbol of medicine. (See Botticelli's painting Primavera.)

[Book II: February 21](#) Summoned by Jupiter to conduct [Lara](#) to the underworld.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Born on mount Cyllene, worshipped in Arcadia. His rites introduced into Italy by [Evander](#). He named the month of May after his mother [Maia](#).

[Book V: May 9](#) The god of the *caduceus*, the son of Maia.

[Book V: May 11](#) Helps create a son, [Orion](#) (Urion) for [Hyrieus](#).

[Book V: May 15](#) His temple facing the Circus, founded on the Ides in 495BC. Ovid celebrates the god. His fountain by the Capene Gate. He stole the cattle of [Apollo](#).

Merope

The seventh 'lost' [Pleiad](#).

[Book IV: April 2](#) She married [Sisyphus](#) and hides from shame.

Metanira

Wife to [Celeus](#), and mother of [Trioletemus](#), cured by [Ceres](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Mentioned.

Metellus, Lucius Caecilius

Pontifex Maximus.

[Book VI: June 9](#) He saved the sacred relics of Vesta's temple in 241BC.

Metellus, Quintus Caecilius

[Book IV: April 4](#) He rebuilt the temple to Cybele originally dedicated in 191BC, after a fire in 111BC.

Mezentius

An Etruscan leader in the Wars in Latium.

[Book IV: April 23](#) Killed by [Aeneas](#).

Mind

Mens, the goddess of Mind (courage, heart etc).

[Book VI: June 8](#) A sanctuary to her vowed by the Senate after the defeat by the Carthaginians at Lake Trasimene in 217BC.

Minerva

The Roman name for the Greek Athene, the goddess of the mind and women's arts (also a goddess of war and the goddess of boundaries – see the Stele of Athena, bas-relief, Athens, Acropolis Museum)

[Book III: Introduction](#) A goddess of war and peaceful arts.

[Book III: March 1](#) Invoked as a goddess of peace.

[Book III: March 15](#) Loved by [Mars](#).

[Book III: March 19](#) Her festival the [Quinquatrus](#). The shrine of *Minerva Capta*, and Ovid's suggestions for the derivation of the name.

[Book V: May 2](#) In one version of myth she was born from Zeus' head, without a mother.

[Book VI: June 9](#) An image of her, the Palladium, fell from heaven, and as long as it was preserved, Troy was secure. The Greek tale has [Ulysses](#) and [Diomed](#) steal it, to bring about Troy's downfall, but the Roman legend was that [Aeneas](#) brought it to Italy and that it was kept in the temple of [Vesta](#).

[Book VI: June 13](#) Ovid invokes her favour. The Lesser Quinquatrus. Called Tritonia from her origins near Lake Triton in Libya.

[Book VI: June 19](#) Her worship on the [Aventine](#).

Mulciber

'The Melter' A name for [Vulcan](#), the smith, as a metal-worker. (See Milton's *Paradise Lost* Book I, as the architect of the towers of Heaven. 'From Morn to Noon he fell...') A synonym for fire. As such he consumed the mortal part of [Hercules](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) The father of [Cacus](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) The father of [Servius](#) Tullius. Preserves his statue.

Muses

The nine Muses are the virgin daughters of [Jupiter](#) and Mnemosyne (Memory). They are the patronesses of the arts. [Clio](#) (History), Melpomene (Tragedy), [Thalia](#) (Comedy), Euterpe (Lyric Poetry), Terpsichore (Dance), [Calliope](#) (Epic Poetry), [Erato](#) (Love Poetry), [Urania](#) (Astronomy), and [Polyhymnia](#) (Sacred Song). Mount Helicon is hence called Virgineus. Their epithets are Pierides, Aonides, and Thespiades.

[Book II: February 15](#) The Pierides invoked by Ovid.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The granddaughters of [Cybele](#), the Great Mother, and mother of Jupiter.

[Book VI: June 30](#) [Juno](#) reluctantly gave [Hercules](#) a place in the temple of the Muses.

Muta, see [Tacita](#)

Mycenae

The city in the Argolis, near Argos and Tiryns. Excavated by Schliemann who opened the beehive tombs of the royal tomb circle. Famous for its Lion Gate once topped perhaps by a statue of the Cretan Great Goddess.

[Book III: Introduction](#) [Juno](#) worshipped there.

Mylae

The ancient port, of NE Sicily, now Milazzo. It was settled by colonists from Messina. Here in 260 B.C. the Romans in a newly built fleet were led to victory over the Carthaginians by the consul Caius Duilius in the First Punic War; it was Rome's first naval triumph. Mylae was (36 B.C.) the scene of a naval victory of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa over Sextus Pompeius.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Naiads

The water nymphs, demi-goddesses of the rivers, streams and fountains.

[Book I: January 9](#) Attendants on [Bacchus](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) Greeted by [Carmentis](#).

Narcissus

The son of the Naiad Liriope and the river-god Cephisus. He rejected Echo out of pride and self-love and she wasted away. He fell in love with his own reflected image. (See the painting by Caravaggio- Palazzo Barberini, Rome), lamented the pain of unrequited love and was turned into the narcissus flower.

[Book V: May 2](#) Mentioned.

Nasica, Publius Scipio

Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica, a young man, was commissioned to receive the statue of the goddess [Cybele](#) into the City.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Mentioned.

Nemi

The grove at Aricia a town in [Latium](#), (the modern La Riccia), at the foot of the Alban Mountain, three miles from Nemi. The lake and the sacred grove at Nemi were sometimes known as the lake and grove of Aricia, and were the sanctuary of [Diana](#) Nemorensis, Diana of the Wood. (See Turner's etching and painting, The Golden Bough- British Museum and Tate Gallery). Worship there was instituted by Orestes, who fled to Italy, after killing Thoas, king of the Tauric Chersonese, taking with him the image of Tauric Diana. The rites practised there are the starting point for J.G.Frazer's monumental study in magic and religion, 'The Golden Bough'. (See Chapter I, et seq.)
[Book III: March 1 Hippolytus](#), as [Virbius](#) was the consort of Diana Nemorensis.

Nephele

The wife of [Athamas](#), and mother of [Phrixus](#) and [Helle](#). Nephele was a phantom created by [Jupiter](#) in the likeness of [Juno](#) when he wished to deceive Ixion the Lapith who pursued her. Athamas set her aside for [Ino](#).
[Book III: March 23](#) She rescues her children.

Neptune

God of the sea, brother of [Pluto](#) and [Jupiter](#). The trident is his emblem
[Book I: January 11](#) He assisted at the building of [Troy](#).
[Book IV: April 2](#) He slept with [Alcyone](#) and [Celaeno](#).

[Book V: May 11](#) Helps create a son, [Orion](#) (Urion) for [Hyrieus](#).

Nestor

King of Pylos, son of Neleus. Famed for his wisdom, eloquence and longevity, he took part in the War against Troy.

[Book III: March 15](#) His longevity.

Nomentum

Nomentum (modern Menlana), an ancient town of Italy, 14 m. N.E. of Rome by the *Via Nomentana*. It was a Latin town, but was by some considered to be Sabine, and, like Fidenae and Ficulea, was excluded from the first region by Augustus, who made the Anio its northern boundary.

[Book IV: April 25](#) Ovid travelling back from there to Rome.

Nonacris

Mount Nonacris in [Arcadia](#). Also a town in the same region.

[Book II: February 15](#) In Arcadia, a site of the worship of [Pan](#).

Numa Pompilius

Numa Pompilius, the second king of [Rome](#) (trad. 715-673BC). He searched for knowledge. Having been instructed by [Pythagoras](#) (a fable, see the *Metamorphoses*)

Bk. XV), he returned to [Latium](#) and ruled there, teaching the arts of peace. His wife was [Egeria](#), the nymph.

[Book I: Introduction](#) [Book III: Introduction](#) Added January and February to the calendar.

[Book II: February 1](#) [Book VI: June 9](#) His sanctuary, the Temple of [Vesta](#).

[Book III: March 1](#) His wife, Egeria, the nymph. He restrained the [Quirites](#).

[Book IV: April 15](#) The origins of the [Fordicidia](#) in Numa's reign.

[Book V: Introduction](#) He worshipped [Majesty](#).

Numicius

A river in [Latium](#).

[Book III: March 15](#) Hides [Anna](#).

Numitor

King of Latium. Father of [Ilia](#), and maternal grandfather of Romulus.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) He succeeded [Proca](#).

[Book V: Introduction](#) Grandfather of [Romulus](#).

Nysa

Heliconian Mount Nysa. The Nyseids were the nymphs Macris, Erato, Bromie, Bacche and Nysa who hid [Bacchus](#) in their cave and nurtured him. They became the [Hyades](#).

[Book III: March 17](#) They hid Bacchus in ivy leaves.

Ocean

The Ocean, personified as a sea-god, son of Earth and Air, and husband of [Tethys](#) his sister. Oceanus and Tethys are also the Titan and Titaness ruling the planet Venus. Some say from his waters all living things originated and Tethys produced all his children.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The primal Ocean. Husband of Tethys, father of [Pleione](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Grandfather of the [Hyades](#).

Ocresia

Ocresia of Corniculum, wife of Tullius of Corniculum. She was given by [Tarquin](#), when he took the city, as a handmaid to his wife [Tanaquil](#). Ocresia was pregnant, and [Servius](#) was her son. Later he was given [Vulcan](#) as a divine father.

[Book VI: June 11](#) The legend.

Oebalus

King of Sparta, from whom the [Sabines](#) claimed descent. He was the father of [Tyndareus](#), and therefore Helen's grandfather.

[Book I: January 1](#) An ancestor of [Tatius](#) the Sabine.

[Book V: May 20](#) The grandfather of [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#), the Tyndarides.

Olenus

Father of Aege, the goat-nymph.

[Book V: May 1](#) Associated with [Capella](#) the 'goat-star', in the constellation of Auriga the Charioteer.

Olympus

A mountain in northern Thessaly supposed to be the home of the gods.

[Book I: January 3](#) [Book III: March 7](#) The Giants piled [Ossa](#) and [Pelion](#) on Olympus during their battle with the gods.

[Book III: March 6](#) Mentioned. East of Rome.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The seat of the gods.

Omphale

Queen of Lydia, whom [Hercules](#) served for three years. She was a daughter of Jordanes, and husband of Tmolus.

[Book II: February 15](#) Mistress of Hercules. The tale of their encounter with Pan/[Faunus](#).

Ophiucus

The constellation (Anguitenens), usually identified as [Aesculapius](#). It contains Barnard's star, the second closest star to the sun, having the largest proper motion of any star. The encircling snake is the constellation Serpens.

[Book VI: June 21](#) The constellation was well above the southern horizon at twilight at this date.

Ops

A Sabine Earth-goddess, associated with agricultural wealth and the soil, identified with the Greek Rhea.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Mother by [Saturn](#) of [Juno](#), [Ceres](#) and [Vesta](#).

Orion

The mighty hunter, one of the giants, now a constellation with his two hunting dogs and his sword and glittering belt. The brightest constellation in the sky, it is an area of star formation in a nearby arm of the Galaxy centred on M42 the Orion Nebula, which marks Orion's sword. He is depicted as brandishing a club and shield at [Taurus](#) the Bull. He was stung to death by a scorpion, and now rises when [Scorpio](#) sets and vice versa. His two dogs are Canis Major, which contains Sirius the brightest star in the sky after the sun, and Canis Minor, which contains the star Procyon, forming an equilateral triangle with Sirius and Betelgeuse the red giant in Orion.

[Book IV: April 9](#) Orion was setting in the west at twilight at this date.

[Book V: May 11](#) Orion set before twilight on this date, and was therefore not visible by night. He attacked the [Scorpion](#) (Scorpio) sent to harm [Latona](#) and she turned him into the constellation.

[Book VI: June 17](#) The son of [Hyrieus](#). Orion was rising at dawn on this date.

[Book VI: June 26](#) Orion was rising at dawn at this date.

Ortygia

Part of the city of [Syracuse](#) in Sicily on an island in the harbour.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Ossa

A mountain in Thessaly in Northern Greece.

[Book I: January 3](#) [Book III: March 7](#) Piled on [Olympus](#) by the Giants in their battle with the gods.

Othryades

The sole Spartan survivor of a dispute between Argos and Sparta over Thyrea.

[Book II: February 23](#) The weapons dedicated to his name.

Ovens, Feast of

Rites celebrated at the time of parching the grain.

[Book II: February 17](#) The latest date for the festival.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Goddess of the Ovens mentioned.

Ovid

The author, Publius Ovidius Naso, born March 20th 43BC.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Born at [Sulmo](#). Ovid is clearly writing or editing from exile in Tomis at this point.

[Book VI: June 6](#) His daughter was his only child, his daughter by his second wife. She was married to a senator Cornelius Fidus and went to Africa with him, a senatorial province. See *Tristia* Book IV.X for Ovid's autobiography.

[Book VI: June 13](#) Ovid touches on his own exile at Tomis, a much less pleasant place than [Tibur](#)!

Pachynum

Now Cape Passero, the south-eastern corner of Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Paeon

A name for [Apollo](#) the Healer.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The Romans sent envoys via the oracle at Delphi.

Palemon

The name given to [Melicertes](#), [Ino](#)'s son after his transformation into a sea-god.

[Book VI: June 11](#) His divine name.

Palatine

The most important of [Rome](#)'s seven hills and traditionally the site of the earliest settlements adjacent to the [Tiber](#), south-east of the [Capitoline](#) and north of the [Aventine](#). It became a highly fashionable residential area, and [Augustus](#) lived there in a house that had belonged to the orator Quintus Hortensius. Other residents included Cicero and Mark Antony.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Evander](#), the Arcadian, landed at its foot.

[Book IV: April 21](#) The founding of the City.

[Book VI: June 27](#) The temple of [Jupiter](#) the Stayer in front of the Palatine. Vowed by [Romulus](#) if Jupiter stayed the flight of the Roman troops during a battle between the Romans and Sabines.

Pales

The pre-Roman goddess of shepherds. [Rome](#) was founded on the day of her festival, the [Parilia](#).

[Book IV: April 15](#) The sacred ashes for the Parilia produced at the [Fordicidia](#).

[Book IV: April 21](#) The Parilia, or Palilia, the feast of Pales.

Palestine

An area of the Middle East. Ovid uses the term to include the Syrian banks of the Euphrates.

[Book II: February 15](#) The banks of the [Euphrates](#).

Palilia, see [Parilia](#)

Pallas, son of Evander

Pallas son of [Evander](#), killed by [Turnus](#) and avenged by [Aeneas](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) A victim of the wars in [Latium](#).

Pallas Athene, see [Minerva](#)

The patron goddess of Athens, born fully grown and armed from the head of Zeus. Associated with virginity, olive-cultivation, domestic arts (spinning, weaving, and pottery etc) wisdom, learning, technology and the mind.

[Book II: February 3](#) The owl was her sacred bird.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Identified with Minerva. The patron goddess of Athens.

Pan, see also [Faunus](#)

The god of woods and shepherds. He wears a wreath of pine needles. He pursued the nymph Syrinx and she was changed into marsh reeds. He made the syrinx or pan-pipes from the reeds. He is represented by the constellation Capricorn, the sea-goat: a goat with a fish's tail.

[Book I: January 9](#) Identified with his followers the [fauns](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) Worshipped in [Arcadia](#). The origins of the [Lupercalia](#).

[Book IV: April 15](#) A grove, untouched by the axe, sacred to him.

Panope

The sea-nymph.

[Book VI: June 11](#) She and her hundred sisters receive [Ino](#).

Pantagias

A river in eastern Sicily flowing into the bay of [Megara](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Parentalia, see [Feralia](#)

[Book II: February 21](#) The Festival of the Dead.

Parilia

The Festival of [Pales](#), also called the [Palilia](#). The festival, a rustic rite, pre-dated the foundation of [Rome](#), which was also ascribed to April 21. No animal sacrifice was allowed. It was the traditional date of [Numa](#)'s birth also.

[Book IV: April 21](#) The Festival celebrated on this day.
[Book VI: June 9](#) Associated with the founding of Rome.

Paris

Prince of Troy, son of [Priam](#) and Hecuba, brother of [Hector](#). His theft of Menelaüs's wife Helen provoked the Trojan War.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) He judged between the three great goddesses, Minerva, Juno, and Venus, and gave [Venus](#) the prize.

Parrhasian

Of the town and tribe in [Arcadia](#), hence Arcadian.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book I: January 15](#) [Book II: February 15](#) Arcadian.

Pasiphae

The daughter of the Sun and the nymph Crete (Perseis). She was the wife of King Minos of Crete and mother of [Phaedra](#) and [Ariadne](#). She was inspired, by [Poseidon](#), with a mad passion for a white bull from the sea, and Daedalus built for her a wooden frame in the form of a cow, to entice it. From the union she produced the Minotaur, Asterion, with a bull's head and a man's body.

[Book III: March 8](#) The mother of Ariadne. Her shame.

Patroclus

[Achilles](#) beloved friend whose death causes him to re-enter the fight against the Trojans. Called Actorides from,

in one version of myth, his mother Philomele, daughter of Actor.

[Book II: Introduction](#) He was cleansed of his killing of Cleitonymus, in a quarrel over a dice game, by [Peleus](#).

Patulcius

[Book I: January 1](#) A name for [Janus](#), from *pateo*, I open.

Peace

The goddess Pax, with a temple in Rome only after AD75.

[Book I: January 24](#) [Book I: January 30](#) [Book III: March 30](#)
Celebrated.

Pegasus

The winged horse, created by [Neptune](#)'s union with [Medusa](#) and sprung from her head when Perseus decapitated her. At the same time his brother Chrysaor the warrior was created. He is represented in the sky by the constellation Pegasus, with fifteen main stars. The sacred fountain of [Hippocrene](#) on Mount Helicon, haunt of the [Muses](#), sprang from under his hoof.

[Book III: March 7](#) Pegasus would be in the morning sky just before dawn, and setting in the West at dusk.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The fountain of Hippocrene created by him.

Pelasgians

An ancient Greek people (Pelasgi) and their king Pelasgus, son of Phoroneus the brother of [Io](#). He is the brother of [Agenor](#) and Iasus.

[Book II: February 15](#) The Greeks.

Peleus

The son of Aeacus, king of Aegina, and brother of Telamon and [Phocus](#). As the son of Aeacus, called Aeacides. The husband of Thetis and father by her of [Achilles](#). (See Joachim Wttewael's – The Wedding of Peleus and Thetis - Alte Pinakothek, Munich: see W.B Yeats poem 'News for the Delphic Oracle, verse III)

[Book II: Introduction](#) He killed his brother Phocus, and was absolved of blood guilt by [Acastus](#), King of Iolchos.

[Book V: May 3](#) The father of Achilles.

Pelion

A mountain in Thessaly in Northern Greece.

[Book I: January 3](#) [Book III: March 7](#) The Giants piled up the mountains during their assault on the gods.

[Book V: May 3](#) The home of [Chiron](#).

Pelignian

The region of Ovid's birth, at Sulmo. The Paeligni were an Italian people and Sulmo was their ancient capital.

[Book IV: April 19](#) His native land.

Pelops

The son of [Tantalus](#), and brother of Niobe. He was cut in pieces and served to the gods at a banquet by his father to test their divinity. [Ceres](#)-Demeter, mourning for [Persephone](#), did not perceive the wickedness and ate a piece of the shoulder. The gods gave him life again and an ivory shoulder. He gave his name to the Peloponnese.

[Book III: Introduction](#) King of [Mycenae](#).

[Book IV: April 4](#) The Peloponnese passed by [Cybele](#).

Pelorias, Pelorus

The modern Cape Faro, the north-east corner of Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Pentheus

The son of Echion and Agave, the grandson of [Cadmus](#) through his mother. He was King of [Thebes](#). Tiresias foretold his fate at the hands of the Maenads. He rejected the worship of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus and orders the capture of the god. He was torn to pieces by the Bacchantes, who included his own mother, Agave.

[Book III: March 17](#) Mentioned.

Persephone

Proserpine, daughter of [Ceres](#)-Demeter. Ceres searched for her after she was abducted by [Dis](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Abducted by Dis.

Phaedra

The daughter of King Minos of Crete and [Pasiphaë](#), and sister of [Ariadne](#). She loved [Hippolytus](#) her stepson, and brought him to his death. (See Racine's play – Phaedra).
[Book VI: June 21](#) Her passion for Hippolytus.

Phaethon

Son of Clymene, daughter of [Oceanus](#) and [Tethys](#) whose husband was the Ethiopian king Merops. His true father is Sol, the sun-god ([Phoebus](#)). He asked his mother for proof of his divine origin, and went to the courts of the Sun to see his father who granted him a favour. He asked to drive the Sun chariot. He lost control of the chariot, and was destroyed by [Jupiter](#) in order to save the earth from being consumed by fire.

[Book IV: April 21](#) Associated with fire.

Philippus, Lucius Marcius

He restored the temple of [Hercules Musaeum](#) (of the Muses) in the reign of [Augustus](#). His daughter was [Marcia](#) wife of Paullus Fabius Maximus, from whose household Ovid's own third wife (possibly Fabia) came (See Ex Ponto I.2 and III.1) and who was a friend and patron of Ovid. The Marcian family claimed descent from King [Ancus](#) Marcius, and added the surname *Rex* to their family name. Lucius later married Atia the younger sister of Augustus' mother, Atia the Elder.

[Book VI: June 30](#) The temple dedicated.

Philomela

The daughter of Pandion, sister of [Procne](#), raped by her sister's husband [Tereus](#). Tereus violates her, and she vows to tell the world of his crime. He severs her tongue and tells Procne she is dead. Philomela communicates with Procne by means of a woven message, and is rescued by her during the [Bacchic](#) revels. She helps Procne to murder Itys, the son of Tereus and Procne. Pursued by Tereus she turns into a swallow, with a red throat. (*pectus* is translated here as throat, to correspond with the English swallow, *hirundo rustica*, though in Egypt and elsewhere this bird has a chestnut red underbody as well). Having no tongue, the swallow merely screams and flies around in circles.

[Book II: February 22](#) An example of crime.

Phineus

King of Salmydessus in Thrace, a blind prophet, who had received the gift of prophecy from [Apollo](#). He was blinded by the gods for prophesying the future too accurately, and was plagued by a pair of Harpies.

[Book VI: June 1](#) Mentioned.

Phocus

The brother of [Peleus](#).

[Book II: Introduction](#) Killed by Peleus, and his other brother Telamon.

Phoebe

A title of [Diana](#) as the moon goddess.

[Book II: February 11](#) [Book V: May 2](#) [Book VI: June 7](#)

Diana.

[Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of [Leucippus](#), Phoebe and [Hilaira](#), were raped and abducted by [Castor](#) and [Pollux](#).

They were betrothed to [Idas](#) and

Phoebus

A familiar name for [Apollo](#) as the sun-god, and so the sun itself.

[Book I: January 1](#) The sun, renewed at the midwinter solstice.

[Book I: January 17](#) The sun, moving from [Capricorn](#) to [Aquarius](#) at this date.

[Book II: February 3](#) Apollo as god of music and the lyre.

[Book II: February 14](#) Ovid relates the myth of [Corvus](#), [Crater](#) and [Hydra](#).

[Book II: February 24](#) Consulted as an oracular god.

[Book III: Introduction](#) The laurel is his sacred bough.

[Book IV: April 10](#) [Book V: May 9](#) The sun.

[Book IV: April 28](#) His temple on the [Palatine](#), containing a famous library.

[Book VI: June 13](#) His contest with [Marsyas](#).

Pholoe

A mountain in Arcadia, the source of the river [Ladon](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) In Arcadia, a site of the worship of [Pan](#).

Phrixus

The Golden Fleece was that of the winged ram on which Phrixus son of [Athamas](#) and [Nephele](#) and brother of [Helle](#), escaped, with his sister, from his stepmother [Ino](#), and fled to Colchis, in order to avoid being sacrificed. Helle fell into the sea and the [Hellespont](#) is named after her. Phrixus reached Colchis where [Sol](#) stables his horses, and sacrificed the ram to Zeus, or in other versions Ares ([Mars](#)), and it hung in the temple of Mars where it was guarded by a dragon. Its return was sought by [Jason](#) and the Argonauts.

[Book III: March 23](#) The sun entered [Aries](#), the Ram, the previous day.

Picus

The son of [Saturn](#), and ancient king of [Latium](#), husband of Canens.

In the *Metamorphoses* he is loved by Circe, and turned by her into a woodpecker that bears his name. (*Picus viridis* is the green woodpecker, distinguished by its red nape and crown, and its golden-green back.)

[Book III: March 1](#) A pre-Roman god. The father of [Faunus](#).

Pisces

The constellation of the fishes, the twelfth sign of the Zodiac. An ancient constellation depicting two fishes with their tails tied together

(by the star α Piscium). It represents [Venus](#) and [Cupid](#) escaping from the monster [Typhon](#). It contains the spring

equinox, formerly in [Aries](#). The vernal equinox has moved into Pisces since ancient times due to the effects of precession (the ‘wobble’ of the earth on its polar axis). The last sign of the solar year, preceding the spring equinox in ancient times. A water sign.

[Book II: February 15](#) At this date the sun was moving into Pisces.

[Book III: March 3](#) The two fishes were named Νότιος and Βόρειος for the South and North respectively. At this date one half of Pisces was just visible rising before dawn, and setting after sunset, the other being hidden.

Plautius

Censor in 312BC, his colleague being Appius Claudius who Livy says prompted the self-exile of the flute-players.

[Book VI: June 13](#) Mentioned.

Pleiads, Pleiades

The Seven Sisters, the daughters, with the [Hyades](#) and the Hesperides, of [Atlas](#) the Titan. Their mother was [Pleione](#) the naiad. They were chased by [Orion](#) rousing the anger of [Artemis](#) to whom they were dedicated and changed to stars by the gods. The Pleiades are the star cluster M45 in the constellation [Taurus](#). Their names were [Maia](#), the mother of [Mercury](#) by [Jupiter](#), [Taygeta](#), [Electra](#), [Merope](#), [Asterope](#), [Alcyone](#) (the brightest star of the cluster), and [Celaeno](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

[Book IV: April 2](#) The Pleiades were below the horizon at dawn on this date, in the north-north-east, rising just after dawn.

[Book V: Introduction](#) The daughters of Atlas and Pleione. Seven in number, like the strings of the lyre.

[Book V: May 13](#) The Pleiades were visible on the eastern horizon just before dawn on this date.

Pleione

The Naiad, the daughter of [Oceanus](#) and [Tethys](#) and mother of the [Pleiads](#).

[Book V: Introduction](#) Mother of the Pleiades.

Pluto, see [Dis](#)

Pollux

The putative son of Tyndareus of Sparta and [Leda](#), and twin brother of [Castor](#). He was in fact fathered by [Jupiter-Zeus](#). They were brothers of Helen. Castor was an expert horseman, Pollux a noted boxer. They came to be regarded as the protectors of sailors, and gave their names to the two major stars of the constellation [Gemini](#), The Twins.

[Book I: January 27](#) Their temple in the Forum was close to that of the deified [Julius Caesar](#). It was rebuilt by [Tiberius](#) in AD6 and dedicated in his and his brother [Drusus](#) the Elder's names.

[Book V: May 20](#) The daughters of [Leucippus](#), [Phoebe](#) and [Hilaira](#), were raped and abducted by the two brothers. The daughters were betrothed to [Idas](#) and [Lynceus](#) who took

revenge on Castor and Pollux, who in turn became stars, when Pollux chose to share his immortality with Castor.

Polyhymnia

The [Muse](#) of Sacred Song.

[Book V: Introduction](#) She derives May (*Maius*) from Majesty (*Maiestas*).

Pompey

Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, the triumvir. Defeated at Pharsalus (48BC) he sought refuge in Egypt but was killed on arrival, and his severed head was sent to Caesar. The headless corpse was left on the sand.

[Book I: January 13](#) Mentioned.

Pontifex Maximus

The High Priest.

[Book III: March 6](#) Augustus assumed the title.

[Book III: March 15](#) [Julius Caesar](#) had assumed the title.

Porrina

Apparently a goddess of the historic past.

[Book I: January 15](#) Named in the rituals to Carmentis.

Portunus

The Roman equivalent of [Palaemon](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Postumius, Consul

Consul in 173BC.

[Book V: May 2](#) Mentioned.

Postumus, see [Silvius](#)

Postverta

Apparently a goddess of prophecy.

[Book I: January 15](#) Named in the rituals to Carmentis.

Priapus

The Pan of Mysia in Asia Minor, venerated as [Lampsacus](#), from the town of that name which was his original cult centre, where he was born of the goddess Aphrodite-[Venus](#). God of gardens and vineyards. His phallic image was placed in orchards and gardens. He presided over the fecundity of fields, flocks, beehives, fishing and vineyards. He became part of the retinue of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus.

[Book I: January 9](#) His desire for [Lotis](#).

[Book VI: June 9](#) His desire for [Vesta](#).

Proca

King of Latium.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Successor to [Aventinus](#), succeeded by [Numitor](#).

[Book VI: June 1](#) As a child, attacked by birds, but saved by [Cranaë](#).

Procne

The daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, married to [Tereus](#), king of Thrace. Tereus raped and mutilated her sister, and told Procne that [Philomela](#) was dead. Philomela communicated with her by means of a woven message, and she rescued her during the [Bacchic](#) rites. She murdered her son Itys and served the flesh to Tereus. Pursued by Tereus she turned into a swallow or nightingale. The bird's call, mourning Itys, is said to be 'Itu! Itu!' which is something like the occasional 'chooc, chooc' among its wide range of notes.

[Book II: February 22](#) An example of crime.

[Book II: February 24](#) Ovid takes Procne here as transformed into the swallow.

[Book IV: April 12](#) She grieves for Itys.

Proculus

Julius Proculus, a Roman who claimed to see the deified [Romulus](#).

[Book II: February 17](#) Ovid tells the story, also told by Cicero (De Rep. ii.10.20) and by Livy (i.16.5)

Proteus

The sea-god who could change his shape.

[Book I: January 9](#) Yielded to [Aristaeus](#).

Public Fortune, Temple of

Fortuna publica populi romani, Fortuna's name at Rome.

[Book IV: April 5](#) Her temple dedicated on the Quirinal Hill on this day.

Publician Road

The road up the [Aventine](#) Hill.

[Book V: May 2](#) Made by order of the [Publicii](#), in 240BC.

Publicius Malleolus, Lucius and Marcus

The *aediles* of 240BC.

[Book V: May 2](#) The *aediles*.

Pygmalion

The brother of [Dido](#).

[Book III: March 15](#) Feared by [Battus](#).

Pyrrhus

King of Epirus (318-272BC) who campaigned against the [Carthaginians](#) in Sicily, and against the Romans (his costly victory at Asculum led to the expression ‘a Pyrrhic victory’) was defeated by the Romans under Curius Dentatus at Beneventum in 275BC.

[Book VI: June 3](#) After his prior defeat in 280BC, Pyrrhus offered peace terms, but [Appius](#) Claudius the Blind has himself carried into the Senate to urge rejection.

Supposedly one of Pyrrhus’ soldiers was caught and forced to buy a piece of land, a pillar was set up there in front of [Bellona](#)’s temple. This was deemed to be enemy territory. The ritual of the *fetialis* or sacred herald advancing to the enemy boundary and casting a spear to indicate was, was then transferred to the land in front of the pillar.

[Book VI: June 20](#) Mentioned.

Pythagoras

The famous Greek philosopher of Samos, the Ionian island, who took up residence at Crotona in Italy, where [Numa](#) (anachronistically in legend, since he lived over a century before Pythagoras) came to be his pupil. His school was later revived at Tarentum. He flourished in the second half of the 6th century BC.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Believed in metempsychosis.

Quinquatrus

The five-day festival of [Minerva](#).

[Book III: March 19](#) Celebrated from the 19th to the 23rd March. Ovid was born on March 20th 43 BC, during the Quinquatrus.

[Book VI: June 13](#) The Lesser Quinquatrus.

Quintilis

The month of July.

[Book III: Introduction](#) The fifth (*quintus*) month (inclusive) from March.

Quirinus

The name for the deified [Romulus](#).

[Book I: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

[Book II: February 17](#) The day dedicated to him.

[Book III: Introduction](#) The story of his birth as Romulus.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Romulus as the son of [Mars](#) and [Ilia](#).

[Book IV: April 5](#) The Quirinal Hill named for him. The temple of [Public Fortune](#) dedicated there on this date.

[Book IV: April 21](#) Invoked by Ovid concerning the founding of [Rome](#).

[Book VI: June 9](#) He speaks on behalf of the Roman people.

[Book VI: June 29](#) A temple dedicated to him on this date. See February 17. A temple was dedicated by Lucius Papirius Cursor in 293BC, and rebuilt by Augustus in 16BC.

Quirites

An ancient Italian tribe, the origin of the Romans.

[Book II: February 17](#) Gave their name to [Quirinus](#)?

[Book II: February 24](#) Expelled [Tarquin](#).

[Book III: March 1](#) Restrained by [Numa](#).

Raven, constellation, see [Corvus](#)

Regifugium

A ceremony in which, according to Plutarch, the King of the Sacred Rites offered a sacrifice in the *Comitium* (place of assembly) and then fled from the Forum. Ovid interprets it as a commemoration of the flight of [Tarquin](#) the Proud, last king of the Romans.

[Book II: February 24](#) The date of the Regifugium.

[Book V: May 24](#) The letters QRCF signify *Quando Rex Comitiavit Fas*. Ovid suggests they might alternatively stand for '*Quod Rex Comitio Fugerat*'.

Remulus

The son of [Agrippa](#). Struck by lightning.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The father of [Aventinus](#).

Remuria

The original name of the [Lemuria](#), derived from [Remus](#).

[Book V: May 9](#) Ovid suggests the name altered into Lemuria.

Remus

The son of [Mars](#) and [Ilia](#), hence Iliades, twin brother of [Romulus](#).

He leapt the new walls Romulus was building to found Rome, in derision, and Romulus killed him.

[Book II: February 5](#) [Book IV: April 21](#) Leaping the walls.

[Book II: February 15](#) He competes with his brother. The [Fabii](#) are his followers.

[Book II: February 17](#) He is mentioned as having been killed.

[Book III: Introduction](#) The story of his birth. As a youth he leaps the fledgling walls of Rome.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The son of Mars and Ilia.

[Book V: May 1](#) Associated with the [Aventine](#) Hill.

[Book V: May 9](#) His spirit visits [Faustulus](#) and [Acca](#).

Rhea

The Greek Great Goddess, wife of Cronus ([Saturn](#)).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Ovid equates her to [Cybele](#).

Rhine

The River in Europe, scene of Roman frontier battles.

[Book I: January 1](#) The activities of [Germanicus](#) on the Rhine are mentioned.

Rhoetum

A promontory in the Troad.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Passed by [Cybele](#).

Robigalia, Robiginia

The festival of the goddess Mildew (*robigo*) personified as were many natural agents and virtues in ancient Rome.

[Book IV: April 25](#) Prayers for a successful harvest.

Romaea, see [Parilia](#)

Romana Salus

The personification of the Health and Safety of Rome.

[Book III: March 30](#) Venerated on this day.

Rome

The city on the [Tiber](#), capital of the Empire. Founded by [Romulus](#) in 753BC on the feast of [Pales](#), the [Palilia](#), April 21st.

[Book III: March 1](#) The early origins of the city.

[Book IV: April 21](#) Founded on the [Parilia](#).

[Book VI: Introduction](#) The ancient Greek cities under Roman rule.

Romulus

The mythical founder of [Rome](#) with his twin brother [Remus](#). They were the children of [Ilia](#)/Rhea Silvia, daughter of [Aeneas](#), or in the more common tradition [Numitor](#) the deposed king of Alba Longa. [Amulius](#), Numitor's brother usurped his throne and made Ilia a [Vestal](#) Virgin, but she was visited by [Mars](#) himself. Thrown into the [Tiber](#) the twins cradle caught in a fig tree (the *Ficus Ruminalis*) and they were rescued by a she-wolf and fed by a woodpecker, creatures sacred to Mars.

Brought up by peasants the twins built the first walled settlement on the [Palatine](#). Romulus killed his brother for jumping over the wall. He reigned for forty years and then vanished, becoming the Roman god [Quirinus](#).

[Book I: Introduction](#) [Book IV: Introduction](#) He initiated the Roman calendar. His supposed hut, the *casa Romuli* was preserved on the [Palatine](#) Hill.

[Book II: February 5](#) His building of the first walls of Rome.

[Book II: February 15](#) He competes with his brother. His birth story. His [Rumina](#) fig-tree.

[Book II: February 17](#) Deified as Quirinus.

[Book III: Introduction](#) The story of his birth. He kills [Amulius](#).

[Book III: March 7](#) He created an asylum for fugitives on the [Capitol](#).

[Book V: Introduction](#) He selected the City Fathers from the old and wise. Grandson of [Numitor](#) through his mother [Ilia](#).

[Book V: May 1](#) Associated with the [Palatine Hill](#).

[Book V: May 9](#) Declares the Remuria.

[Book V: May 12](#) He defeated Acron and took the *spolia opima*.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) [Juno](#)'s grandson, through her son Mars.

[Book VI: June 27](#) The temple of Jupiter the Stayer in front of the Palatine. Vowed by Romulus if Jupiter stayed the flight of the Roman troops during a battle between the Romans and Sabines.

Rumina

Rumina or Ruminialis, from *ruma* or *rumis*, a teat. Rumina was the goddess of nursing mothers.

[Book II: February 15](#) The fig tree of [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#).

Rutilius Lupus, Publius

Consul, killed by the Marsians at the River Tolenus in 90BC.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Sabines

The Sabines, a people of Central Italy who merged with the people of [Romulus](#). (See Giambologna's sculpture – The Rape of the Sabines – Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence)

[Book I: January 1](#) Their assault on the citadel.

[Book I: January 9](#) *herba Sabina*, savine: a kind of juniper.

[Book II: February 17](#) A derivation for the name [Quirinus](#).

[Book VI: June 5](#) They worshipped [Semo](#) Sancus.

Sagaritis

A nymph loved by [Attis](#). Possibly named from a Phrygian river, Sagaris.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Mentioned.

Salii

The dancing priests. They carried a spear and a sacred shield (one of the *ancilia* said to have fallen from heaven in [Numa](#)'s reign). There were originally twelve [Palatine](#) Salii with a shrine on the Palatine Hill, twelve more were created by King Tullus Hostilius, the Colline, Agonalian or Agonensian Salii with a shrine on the Quirinal. They wore embroidered tunics, bronze belts, purple edged cloaks and high conical caps. They also had swords at their sides. The festival lasted thirty days of March, and the sacred shields were kept in the sacrarium of [Mars](#). Other colleges of dancing priests existed at [Tibur](#) and elsewhere in Italy.

[Book III: March 1](#) Named by Numa from their dancing and leaping (*saltus*) according to Ovid, and mentioned here.

Sancus, see [Semo](#)

Sapaeans

A Thracian tribe, mentioned by Herodotus.

[Book I: January 9](#) Sacrificed dogs to Diana [Trivia](#).

Saturn

Son of Earth and Heaven (Uranus) ruler of the universe in the Golden Age. Mother Earth persuaded her sons to attack Uranus, and depose him. Saturn the youngest was given a sickle and castrated Uranus. The [Furies](#) sprang from the shed blood. Saturn was deposed by his three sons [Jupiter](#), [Neptune](#) and [Pluto](#) who ruled Heaven, Ocean and the Underworld respectively. He was banished to [Tarturus](#). He was the father also of [Juno](#), [Ceres](#) and [Vesta](#) by [Ops](#).

[Book I: January 1](#) Given refuge in [Latium](#).

[Book III: March 17](#) Dethroned by Jupiter. Saturn stirred up the Titans against him.

[Book V: Introduction](#) King of the Gods after the first Chaos.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) [Juno](#) was his eldest child.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Father by [Ops](#) of [Juno](#), [Ceres](#) and [Vesta](#).

Saturnia

A title for [Juno](#) as the daughter of [Saturn](#).

[Book II: February 11](#) Pursues [Callisto](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Visits [Flora](#).

[Book V: May 14](#) [Book VI: Introduction](#) An ancient name for Roman Italy.

Satyrs

Demi-gods. Woodland deities of human form but with goats' ears, tails, legs and budding horns. Sexually lustful, they are followers of [Bacchus](#)-Dionysus.

[Book I: January 9](#) [Book III: March 17](#) Followers of Bacchus.

[Book IV: April 1](#) They saw [Venus](#) naked.

Scorpio, Scorpius

The constellation and zodiacal sun sign of the Scorpion. It contains the red giant Antares ('like Mars'), one of the four Babylonian guardian stars of the heavens, lying nearly on the ecliptic. (The others are Regulus in [Leo](#), Aldebaran in [Taurus](#), and Fomalhaut 'the Fish's Eye' in Piscis Austrinus. All four are at roughly ninety degrees to one another). Scorpius, because of its position, is one of the two 'gateways' to the Milky Way, the other being the opposite constellation of [Orion](#). The Scorpion men attacked Osiris in Egyptian legend, and the Scorpion's sting killed Orion in Greek myth.

[Book III: March 16](#) Scorpio would be almost setting in the south-west just before dawn, on this date.

[Book IV: April 1](#) Scorpio was setting in the south-west at dawn on this date.

[Book V: May 6](#) Scorpio was setting in the south-west just after dawn at this date.

[Book V: May 11](#) Sent by [Earth](#) to attack [Latona](#), and stopped by [Orion](#).

Scylla

The daughter of Phorcys and the nymph Crataeis, remarkable for her beauty. [Circe](#), jealous of [Neptune](#)'s love for her changed her into a dog-like sea monster, 'the Render', with six heads and twelve feet. Each head had three rows of close-set teeth. Her cry was a muted yelping. She seized sailors and cracked their bones before slowly swallowing them. She was changed by Circe's poisons into a monster with a circle of yelping dogs around her waist. Finally she was turned into a rock. (The rock projects from the Calabrian coast near the village of Scilla, opposite Cape Peloro on Sicily. See Ernle Bradford 'Ulysses Found' Ch.20)

[Book IV: April 12](#) Avoided by [Ceres](#). Ovid here identifies her and confuses her with Scylla daughter of Nisus.

Semele

The daughter of [Cadmus](#), loved by [Jupiter](#). The mother of [Bacchus](#) (Dionysus). (See the painting by Gustave Moreau – Jupiter and Semele – in the Gustave Moreau Museum, Paris) She was consumed by Jupiter's fire having been deceived by [Juno](#). Her unborn child Bacchus is rescued.

[Book III: March 17](#) [Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Semo Sancus Dius Fidius

Semo Sancus was served by the company of priests called the Bidental. He was likely a pre-Roman sky god. His name as Dius Fidius was used as an oath, the oath being taken in the unroofed *compluvium* of a house, under the open sky, and the god's temple had a hole in the roof open to the sky also. Fidius is therefore connected to Jupiter.

[Book VI: June 5](#) His shrine on the Quirinal Hill.

Servius Tullius

King of Rome. Son of [Vulcan](#) and [Ocresia](#) of Corniculum. When young his head was seen surrounded by flame, taken as an omen, see Livy 1.39. Killed by his son-in-law [Tarquin](#) the Proud.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Dedicated temples to [Matuta](#) and [Fortuna](#). Killed by Tarquin. His veiled statue. Its preservation from fire. His origins.

[Book VI: June 24](#) Built the shrines to Fors [Fortuna](#).

Sibyl

The priestess of [Apollo](#) in the temple at Cumae built by Daedalus. She prophesied perched on or over a tripod. She guided [Aeneas](#) through the underworld and showed him the golden bough that he had to pluck from the tree. She told him how she was offered immortality by Phoebus, but forgot to ask also for lasting youth, dooming her to wither away until she was merely a voice.

[Book III: March 15](#) Her longevity.

[Book IV: April 1](#) Consulted by the Romans.

[Book IV: April 4](#) [Book VI: June 4](#) The Sibylline books (supposedly written on leaves) were consulted by the priests in 204BC, the 549th Year of Rome. Cumae was deemed a Euboean Greek colony.

[Book IV: April 23](#) She prophesied the transfer of [Venus](#)' cult from [Eryx](#) to Rome.

Sidon

The city of the Phoenicians in the Lebanon. Home of [Europa](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) The Phoenician sailors steered by the little Bear, [Cynosura](#).

[Book III: March 15 Dido](#) who founded [Carthage](#) came from Sidon, linked by Ovid with its companion city Tyre.

Sigeïus, Sigeüs

A promontory in the Troad, near Troy, and by the mouth of the Scamander. The scene of the debate over the arms of [Achilles](#) in front of the Greek ships.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Passed by [Cybele](#).

Silenus

Silenus and his sons the [Satyrs](#) were originally primitive mountaineers of northern Greece who became stock comic characters in Attic drama. He was called an autochthon, or son of [Pan](#) by one of the nymphs. He was [Bacchus](#)'s tutor, portrayed usually as a drunken old man with an old pack-ass, who is unable to tell truth from lies.(See the copy of

the sculpture attributed to Lysippus, ‘Silenus holding the infant Bacchus’ in the Vatican)

[Book I: January 9](#) [Book III: March 17](#) Follows Bacchus.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Attends [Cybele](#)’s feast.

Silvia, Ilia

The daughter of [Aeneas](#) (Greek myth) or [Numitor](#) (Roman version), the [Vestal](#) who bore [Romulus](#) and [Remus](#), to the god [Mars](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) The story of Romulus and Remus.

[Book II: February 21](#) Her haunts along the [Tiber](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) [Book III: March 1](#) Her liaison with Mars. She and her sons were descendants through

[Aeneas](#), of [Ilus](#), the founder of Troy.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The mother of Romulus ([Quirinus](#)).

Silvius

[Faunus](#), the son of [Iulus](#), born in the deep woods.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Father of [Latinus](#).

Sisyphus

The son of [Aeolus](#), and brother of [Athamas](#), famous for his cunning and thievery. He was punished in Hades, continually having to push a stone to the top of a hill, and then pursuing it as it rolled down again.

[Book IV: April 2](#) He married [Merope](#) the [Pleiad](#).

Solymus

A companion of [Aeneas](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) He founded [Sulmona](#).

Sparta

The chief city of Laconia on the River Eurotas, and also called Lacadaemon.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Worshipped [Juno](#).

Sterope, Asterope

One of the [Pleiads](#). She slept with [Mars](#), and bore him Oenomaus.

[Book IV: April 2](#) Mentioned.

Steropes

One of the three Cyclopes who forged [Jupiter](#)'s thunderbolts.

[Book IV: April 4](#) Mentioned.

Stimula

The Roman goddess who incites passion in women (especially in the [Bacchae](#)). She is equated with the Greek [Semele](#).

[Book VI: June 11](#) Her grove mentioned.

Stymphalian Waters

Stymphalus, a district in [Arcadia](#) with a town, mountain and lake of the same name, near Mount [Cyllene](#). It was a haunt of [Diana](#) and [Arethusa](#). (Pausanias says, VIII xxii, that there were three temples of [Juno](#)-Hera, at ancient Stymphelos, as the Child, the Perfect One, and the Widow,

the moon phases.) In the Sixth Labour [Hercules](#) killed or dispersed the brazen beaked and clawed man-eating birds of the Stympthalian Lake that killed men and animals and blighted crops. According to some accounts they were bird-legged women sacred to Artemis-Diana.

[Book II: February 15](#) In Arcadia, a site of the worship of [Pan](#).

Styx

A river of the underworld, with its lakes and pools, used to mean the underworld or the state of death itself. The [Arcadian](#) river Styx near Nonacris forms the falls of Mavroneri, plunging six hundred feet down the cliffs of the Chelmos ridge. Pausanias says, VIII xvii, that Hesiod (*Theogony* 383) makes Styx the daughter of [Ocean](#) and the wife of the Titan Pallas. Their children were Victory and Strength. Epimenedes makes her the mother of Echidna. Pausanias says the waters of the river dissolve glass and stone etc.

[Book II: February 21](#) The underworld.

[Book III: March 1](#) The gods swore their oaths on the Styx.

[Book III: March 17](#) Imprisoned the bull born of mother Earth.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The abode of the [Furies](#).

Sulla

Lucius Cornelius Sulla (c139-78BC) Roman dictator. He stormed Rome in 87BC forcing Marius and Cinna to flee. Subsequently outlawed he took Rome in 83BC. As

dictator he butchered his opponents, but retired in 79 after restoring the Senate's power.

[Book VI: June 4](#) He dedicated the statue of [Hercules Custos](#) in the Circus.

Sulmona, Sulmo

Sulmo was the chief town of the Paeligni, and [Ovid](#)'s birthplace, about ninety miles from Rome. Modern Sulmona.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Founded by [Solymus](#).

Summanus

A nocturnal Jupiter, god of the night sky and its storms.

[Book VI: June 20](#) His temple dedicated, possibly in 278BC.

Symaethus

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Syphax

Syphax and [Hasdrubal](#) son of Gisco were defeated by Masinissia and Scipio in 203BC.

[Book VI: June 23](#) On this day.

Syracuse

Founded (734 BC) by Greek colonists from Corinth, Syracuse grew rapidly and soon founded colonies of its own. Its democratic government was suppressed by Gelon, tyrant of [Gela](#), who took possession of the city in 485 BC.

Under his rule, marked by a great victory (480 BC) over Carthage at [Himera](#), Syracuse took the lead among the Greek cities of Sicily. Gelon's successor, Hiero I, made it one of the great centers of Greek culture; the poet Pindar and the dramatist Aeschylus lived at his court.

[Book IV: April 23](#) Later sided with Carthage and was captured by Marcus Claudius [Marcellus](#) in 212BC.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Ovid describes the orrery of [Archimedes](#), which Cicero says was brought to Rome from Syracuse by its conqueror, [Marcellus](#) in 212BC.

Syrians

The people of Syria, in the Middle East.

[Book II: February 15](#) Fish a taboo food.

Syrtes

A dangerous series of sandbanks on the north coast of Africa between Tunis and Cyrene.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Avoided by [Ceres](#).

Tacita

Dea Muta, or Mania, or [Lara](#). The mother of the [Lares](#) (The public gods of the crossroads, the *Lares Compitales*, providing protection as the single family *Lar* provided household protection) and of the *Manes* (The ancestral dead, the 'good ones'). Lara was a nymph who talked so much that [Jupiter](#) cut out her tongue. She was then called [Muta](#), or Tacita, the mute or silent one. Mania took part in the Compitalia and [Feralia](#) festivals, a kind of ogress who

frightened little children. *Maniae* were grotesque figures representing the dead: woollen dolls were *maniae*, hung on doors in honour of the Lares.

[Book II: February 21](#) Ovid gives the background story of Muta.

Tanaquil

Wife of the elder [Tarquin](#). [Ocresia](#) became her handmaid.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Mentioned.

Tantalides

The descendants of [Tantalus](#).

[Book II: February 22](#) [Atreus](#) and [Thyestes](#), noted for wickedness.

[Book V: May 2](#) [Agamemnon](#).

Tantalus

The king of Phrygia, son of [Jupiter](#), father of Pelops and Niobe, who served his son Pelops to the gods at a banquet and was punished by eternal thirst in Hades. His descendants include [Atreus](#) and [Thyestes](#), and in the next generation the [Atrides](#), [Agamemnon](#) and Menelaus.

[Book II: February 22](#) His descendants.

Tarpeia, Tarpeius

The Tarpeian Heights were the cliff-edge in [Rome](#) from which certain criminals (murderers and traitors) were thrown. Ovid calls the whole [Capitoline](#) Hill, Tarpeian, but strictly it applied to the western cliff, the Tarpeian

Rock, named from Spurius Tarpeius who commanded the citadel in the Sabine War or his daughter Tarpeia who betrayed the citadel to the Sabines or from Lucius Tarpeius whom [Romulus](#) caused to be hurled from the rock. Not located it was placed by ancient sources close to the Roman Forum, the Temple of Saturn, or the Temple of [Jupiter](#), which places it south-west of the Capitol. The heights were climbed by the victor in a triumph. The Tarpeian Altars were those of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline.

[Book I: January 1](#) New consuls climbed in procession to the Capitol. Tarpeia's betrayal is mentioned. The Roman girl treacherously opened the citadel on the [Capitoline](#) to the Sabines, and was killed beneath the weight of the weapons, which were thrown on her.

[Book VI: Introduction Juno](#)'s shrine linked to that of Tarpeian Jupiter.

Tarquins, Superbus (the Proud) and his son Sextus Tarquinius Superbus (the Proud) was the (possibly mythical) seventh and last King of Rome, and son of Lucius Tarquinius Priscus. He ruled according to Roman tradition from 534 to 510BC. He was finally expelled from the city. He took Gabii by a trick with the help of his son Sextus, see Livy i.53.

[Book II: February 24](#) The siege of Ardea, and Sextus' rape of [Lucretia](#). This is the date of the [flight of the king](#) which Ovid supposes to be a commemoration of Tarquin the Proud's expulsion from Rome.

[Book VI: June 11](#) Tarquin the Proud usurped the throne from [Servius](#) his father-in-law urged by his wife [Tullia](#).

Tarquinius Collatinus

Tarquinius of Collatia, the husband of [Lucretia](#).

[Book II: February 24](#) Precipitates her rape, unwittingly.

Tartarus

The underworld. The infernal regions ruled by [Pluto](#) (Dis).

[Book III: March 15](#) [Aeneas](#) visited the underworld.

[Book IV: April 12](#) [Mercury](#) seeks [Persephone](#) there.

Taenarus was the promontory and town in Southern Greece, near Sparta, said to be the entrance to the underworld.

Tatius

A king of the [Sabines](#) who fought against [Romulus](#), but afterwards made peace and ruled jointly with him.

[Book I: January 1](#) His assault of the Citadel.

[Book II: February 5](#) Mentioned.

[Book VI: Introduction](#) He instituted the worship of Juno *Curitis* at Rome.

Tauromenium

A city on the eastern coast of Sicily, modern Taormina.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Taurus

The constellation and zodiacal sun sign of the Bull. It represents the white 'Bull from the Sea', a disguise of Jupiter when he carried off Europa. Its glinting red eye is the star Aldebaran one of the four Babylonian guardians of the heavens, lying near the ecliptic. (The others are Regulus in [Leo](#), Antares in [Scorpius](#), and Fomalhaut 'the Fish's Eye' in Piscis Austrinus. All four are at roughly ninety degrees to one another.)

[Book IV: April 20](#) The sun entered Taurus on this date. Only the front half of the animal is depicted in the sky, and at sunset on this date only the horns would have been visible after the sun had gone below the horizon. Ovid speculates the sign represents [Io](#) as a heifer, or [Jupiter](#) as the bull that carried off [Europa](#), in either case indicating Jupiter's *amours*, and offending [Juno](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) The head of the constellation is formed by the V-shaped cluster of stars known as the [Hyades](#). The sun was virtually conjunct the Hyades at this date.

[Book V: May 14](#) The sun was rising conjunct the head of the Bull at this date. Taurus itself would therefore not be visible, but was indeed raising its head.

[Book VI: June 2](#) [Book VI: June 15](#) The Hyades were rising at dawn.

Taygete

One of the [Pleiads](#). She slept with [Jupiter](#), and bore him Lacedaemon.

[Book IV: April 2](#) Mentioned.

Telegonus

The son of [Ulysses](#), by [Circe](#), who in one variant of myth kills Ulysses his father and marries Penelope.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Legendary builder of [Tusculum](#).

Temesa

A site in Bruttium.

[Book V: May 9](#) The copper mines there.

Tempe

The vale of Tempe, the ancient name of a narrow valley in N. Thessaly, through which the river Peneus (mod.

Salambria) reaches the sea. It is about four, miles and a half long. Tempe was sacred to [Apollo](#), to whom a temple was erected on the right bank. Every ninth year a sacred mission proceeded to the valley to pluck the laurel for the chaplets for, the Pythian games. Owing to its widespread fame, the name Tempe was given also to the valley of the Velinus near Rea (Italy) and that of the [Helorus](#) in Sicily.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Tempest

Tempestatas, the personification of storm at sea.

[Book VI: June 1](#) A shrine was dedicated to the goddess by Lucius Cornelius Scipio in 259BC, after the Carthaginians were driven from Corsica.

Tenedos

An island in the Aegean near the Trojan coast. (See Homer's Iliad).

[Book IV: April 4](#) Passed by [Cybele](#).

Tereus

The king of Thrace, husband of [Procne](#). Brings her sister, [Philomela](#), to stay with her, while conceiving a frenzied desire for the sister. He violates the girl. He cuts out her tongue, and tells Procne she is dead. Procne serves him the flesh of his murdered son Itys at a banquet. Pursuing the sisters in his desire for revenge, he is turned into a bird, the hoopoe, *upupa epops*, with its distinctive feathered crest and elongated beak. Its rapid, far-carrying, 'hoo-hoo-hoo' call is interpreted as 'pou-pou-pou' meaning 'where? where? where?'.

[Book II: February 22](#) An example of crime.

[Book II: February 24](#) Rejoicing in Procne's pain.

Terminus

God of property, boundaries and frontiers. Formerly a title of [Jupiter](#). Depicted later as a column surmounted by a human head.

[Book II: Introduction](#) His rites closed the year.

[Book II: February 23](#) His festival, the *Terminalia*. He shares Jupiter's temple on the [Capitol](#) since a boundary stone once set up was sacred and immovable. His altar stood under the open sky.

Tethys

A Titaness, co-ruler of the planet Venus with [Oceanus](#). She reigns over the sea. The sister and wife of Oceanus, in whose waters some say all gods and living things originated, she is said to have produced all his children. Her waters receive the setting sun.

[Book II: February 11](#) The [Bear](#) never sets in her waters in northern latitudes.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Wife of Oceanus, mother of [Pleione](#).

[Book V: May 2](#) Grandmother of the [Hyades](#).

Thalia

The [Muse](#) of Comedy.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Mentioned.

Thapsus

A low peninsula, now known as Magnisi, joined by a narrow isthmus to the mainland of Sicily, about 7 m. N.N.W. of [Syracuse](#). The founders of [Megara Hyblaea](#) settled here temporarily, according to Thucydides, in the winter of 729/728 B.C, but it seems to have remained almost if not entirely uninhabited until the Athenians used it as a naval station in their attack on Syracuse early in 414 B.C. The scene of a number of naval battles including that of 46BC when Julius Caesar crushed surviving Pompeian forces under Scipio and Cato.

[Book IV: April 12](#) Ceres passed by.

Thebes

The city in Boeotia founded by [Cadmus](#) who sowed the dragon's teeth.

[Book III: March 23](#) Serpent-born Thebes, the city of [Athamas](#).

Themis

A Titaness, co-ruler of the planet Jupiter, daughter of heaven and earth. Her daughters are the Seasons and the Three Fates. She is the Triple-Goddess of justice with prophetic powers.

[Book III: March 15](#) Identified with [Anna](#), a manifestation of the Great Goodess.

[Book V: Introduction](#) Justice relegated to a lowly place.

Theseus

King of Athens, son of [Aegeus](#), hence Aegides. His mother was Aethra, daughter of Pittheus king of Troezen. Aegeus had lain with her in the temple. His father had hidden a sword, and a pair of sandals, under a stone (The Rock of Theseus) as a trial, which he lifted, and he made his way to Athens, cleansing the Isthmus of robbers along the way. He killed the Minotaur in the Cretan labyrinth, with Ariadne's help, before abandoning her on Dia (Naxos). (See Canova's sculpture – Theseus and the Dead Minotaur – Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

[Book III: March 8](#) [Ariadne](#) gave him a clue of thread to unwind and rewind marking his way through the Labyrinth to kill the Minotaur. He abandoned her on Naxos.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Condemned his son [Hippolytus](#), wrongly of making advances to his wife [Phaedra](#).

Thestiades, see [Meleager](#)

Thyestes

The son of Pelops, whose two sons were cooked and served to him, by his brother [Atreus](#), as a revenge.

[Book II: February 22](#) Noted for his own crimes.

Thyone, see [Hyades](#)

Thyrea

Between Argos and Sparta, disputed by three hundred warriors. [Othryades](#) was the only Spartan survivor.

[Book II: February 23](#) A boundary dispute.

Tiber

The River Tiber on which [Rome](#) is situated, after King [Tiberinus](#) who drowned there. Noted for its yellow sands, carried by the waters.

[Book I: January 1](#) Rome on its left bank (looking downriver).

[Book II: February 1](#) [Book VI: June 1](#) The grove of Alernus near its mouth.

[Book II: February 13](#) The island in the River.

[Book II: February 15](#) The origin of its name.

[Book II: February 21](#) Its nymphs.

[Book III: March 14](#) The [Campus Martius](#) washed by it.

[Book III: March 15](#) The feast of [Anna Perenna](#) held nearby.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Named after Tiberinus.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The port at the Tiber's mouth, Ostia ('mouth') reached by [Cybele](#). A bend in the river called the Halls of Tiber.

[Book V: May 14](#) The rites on its banks pre-date the City.

[Book VI: June 7](#) A festival of the Tiber, on the Campus, for fishermen.

Tiberinus

An Alban King who drowned in the river [Albula](#), giving his name to it as the [Tiber](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) His name given to the river Tiber.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The son of [Calpetus](#).

Tiberius

The Emperor, Tiberius Claudius Nero (42BC-37AD), the elder son of Livia by her first husband. [Augustus](#) adopted the boy and appointed him as his successor after the early deaths of other candidates. He was also Augustus's stepson through his marriage to the elder Julia, Augustus's daughter by Scribonia. Tiberius adopted [Germanicus](#) as his son who thus became a brother to the younger [Drusus](#).

[Book I: Introduction](#) Germanicus' 'father'.

[Book I: January 11](#) Emperor after Augustus' death.

[Book I: January 16](#) Rebuilt the temple of [Concord](#) from his German spoils, AD 10.

Tibur

A small town on the Anio, in the Sabine hills, twenty miles northeast of Rome, the modern Tivoli.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Founded by Greeks according to Ovid.

[Book VI: June 13](#) The self-imposed exile of the flute-players.

Tithonus

The son of [Laomedon](#), husband of [Aurora](#), and father of [Memnon](#).

[Book I: January 11](#) [Book III: March 5](#) [Book VI: June 11](#)

[Book VI: June 20](#) His wife is Aurora, the Dawn.

[Book IV: April 28](#) Homer makes him a distant cousin of [Assaracus](#).

Tmolus

A mountain in Lydia, near the source of the River Cayster, sacred to [Bacchus](#). Named after Tmolus the husband of [Omphale](#) who was killed there by [Diana](#), whose attendant Arrhippe, and sanctuary, he had violated.

[Book II: February 15](#) Husband of Omphale. His vineyard.

Torquatus, Titus Manlius

Titus Manlius Imperiosus Torquatus, fl. 4th cent BC, served against the Gauls (361 BC), one of whom he slew in single combat. He took the Gaul's torque, or collar, hence his name Torquatus. He was dictator twice more, and three times consul. In 340, with his colleague, Publius

Decius Mus, he defeated the Latins near Vesuvius and at Trifanum. He killed his own son for disobeying express orders not to engage in single combat with the enemy. Some of his story is legendary
[Book I: January 13](#) Mentioned.

Tricrene

A mountain in [Arcadia](#).

[Book II: February 15](#) In Arcadia, a site of the worship of [Pan](#).

Trinacria, Sicily

Trinacria is an ancient name for Sicily.

[Book IV: April 4](#) The Sicilian Sea crossed by [Cybele](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) [Book IV: April 23](#) The name from its configuration, with three capes. Ovid has [Ceres](#) traverse many of the sites of ancient Sicily including the famous promontory with the temple of Venus-Aphrodite at [Eryx](#), and the pool of Cyane.

Triptolemus

The son of [Celeus](#) and [Metanira](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Healed by [Ceres](#). The first ploughman and sower of seed.

Tritonia, Athene, see [Minerva](#)

Trivia

An epithet of [Diana](#), worshipped at the meeting of three ways, ‘Diana of the crossroads’.

[Book I: January 9](#) A dog sacrificed to her by the [Sapaeans](#).

Tros

The son of [Erichthonius](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) Father of [Assaracus](#).

Troy

The ancient city destroyed in the ten-war year with the Greeks, and identified by Schliemann with Hissarlik four miles inland from the Aegean end of the Hellespont. The archaeological evidence would indicate destruction by fire between 1300 and 1200BC. The story of the War is told in Homer’s Iliad, and the aftermath of it and the Greek return in the Odyssey. The Troad is the rocky north-west area of Asia Minor along the [Hellespont](#), dominated by the [Ida](#) range, traditionally believed to have been ruled by Troy.

[Book I: January 11](#) Prophesied to rise again as [Rome](#).

[Book III: March 6](#) Source of the Roman race through [Aeneas](#). Its gods represented by the sacred [Vestal](#) fire.

Tubertus, Postumius

Aulus Postumius Tubertus defeated the Aequians and Volscians at Mount Algidus in 431BC.

[Book VI: June 17](#) On this date.

Tubilustria

The festival of the purification (*lustrum*) of trumpets.

[Book III: March 23](#) Sacrifice to [Mars](#).

[Book V: May 23](#) [Vulcan](#)'s day when the trumpets he makes are cleansed.

Tullia

The daughter of [Servius](#) Tullius, and wife of [Tarquin](#) the Proud. A Roman Lady Macbeth.

[Book VI: June 11](#) She conspired to murder her father, and her brother-in-law.

Turnus

The King of the Rutulians, son of [Daunus](#), an Italian people with a capital at Ardea south of [Rome](#), not far from modern Anzio. Brother of Juturna.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Juturna](#) or Diuturna was his sister.

[Book IV: April 23](#) Fought against [Aeneas](#) for the hand of [Lavinia](#).

Tychius

The inventor of shoe-making. See Homer's Iliad vii: 219-223.

[Book III: March 19](#) Mentioned.

Tydeus

The King of Calydon and father of [Diomedes](#), and one of the Seven against [Thebes](#). Mortally wounded he gnawed on the skull and ate the brains of his opponent, incurring [Athene](#)'s anger. She allowed him to die for his barbarity,

having been prepared to save him and render him immortal. Exiled, he fled to Adrastus at Argos.

[Book I: January 11](#) Exiled.

Tyndarides, see [Castor and Pollux](#)

Here, the sons of Tyndareus, Castor and Pollux.

Tyndareus was the son of [Oebalus](#) and Gorgophone, and king of Sparta. He married [Leda](#) who bore him Castor and Clytaemnestra, bearing Helen and Pollux to Jupiter (Zeus).

[Book V: May 20](#) The brothers raped and carried off [Phoebe](#) and [Hilaira](#), the daughters of [Leucippus](#), betrothed to [Idas](#) and [Lynceus](#).

Typhoeus, Typhon

The hundred-handed giant, one of the sons of Earth, who fought the gods. Deposed by [Jupiter](#) he was buried under Sicily.

[Book I: January 11](#) [Cacus](#)' flames analagous to his.

[Book II: February 15](#) He pursues [Venus](#) and [Cupid](#).

[Book IV: April 12](#) Buried under Mount [Etna](#).

Ulysses

The Greek hero, son of Laërtes. See Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

[Book IV: Introduction](#) The Neritonian, after the hill Neriton in Ithaca his home island. Ulysses visited the [Laestrygonians](#), purportedly in Italy, see Homer's *Odyssey*
X:81

[Book VI: June 9](#) He was said to have stolen the Palladium, the statue of Pallas [Minerva](#), from Troy.

Urania

The [Muse](#) of Astronomy.

[Book V: Introduction](#) She explains the possible origin of the month May (*maius*) from the City elders (*maiores*).

Vacuna

Probably a Sabine goddess of Victory.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Sacrifices to her.

Veiovis

An ancient Roman god. The young or little [Jupiter](#).

[Book III: March 7](#) His temple consecrated in the space between the two wooded peaks of the [Capitol](#), by [Romulus](#), who enclosed the *lucus* as an *asylum* for fugitives. Ovid explains the god's attributes.

Veii

An ancient town in Southern Etruria.

[Book II: February 13](#) Attacked by the [Fabii](#).

Velabrum

The low ground between the [Capitoline](#) and [Palatine](#) Hills.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Once marshy ground.

Venus

The Goddess of Love. The daughter of [Jupiter](#) and [Dione](#). She is Aphrodite, born from the waves, an incarnation of Astarte, Goddess of the Phoenicians. The mother of [Cupid](#) by [Mars](#). (See Botticelli's painting – Venus and Mars – National Gallery, London). Through her union with [Anchises](#) she was the mother of [Aeneas](#) and therefore putative ancestress to the [Julian](#) House.

[Book I: Introduction](#) April the second month dedicated to her.

[Book III: March 8 Vulcan](#) gave her the crown she gave to [Ariadne](#).

[Book IV: Introduction](#) April is her month which name Ovid derives from ἀφρός (aphros), sea-foam, since Venus-Aphrodite rose from the sea. Venus as mother of Aeneas is the source with Anchises of the Roman people. In an influential passage, at the end of this section, Ovid describes her power (see Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, the introduction to Book III, for a delightful echo.). She was wounded by [Diomedes](#) at Troy. [Paris](#) judged her first among the three goddesses, her rivals being [Juno](#) and [Minerva](#), at which they bore a grudge.

[Book IV: April 1](#) Venus Verticordia, the Heart-Changer.

[Book IV: April 23](#) Worshipped by prostitutes at the [Vinalia](#). Her temples, as Venus of [Eryx](#), in Rome.

[Book VI: June 9](#) She speaks on behalf of the Roman people.

Vertumnus

An ancient Italian god, of the seasons and their produce. Capable of taking multiple forms (See *Metamorphoses* XIV).

[Book VI: June 9](#) Ovid derives his name.

Vesta

The daughter of [Saturn](#), the Greek Hestia. The goddess of fire. The 'shining one'. Every hearth had its Vesta, and she presided over the preparation of meals and was offered first food and drink. Her priestesses were the six [Vestal Virgins](#). Her chief festival was the Vestalia on 9th June. The Virgins took a strict vow of chastity and served for thirty years. They enjoyed enormous prestige, and were preceded by a *lictor* when in public. Breaking of their vow resulted in whipping and death. There were twenty recorded instances in eleven centuries. A name also for the Tauric [Diana](#) at [Nemi](#) who 'married' her high priest the 'king of Rome', e.g. [Julius Caesar](#). See Fraser's 'The Golden Bough' Ch1 et seq. Vesta's Temple contained the [Palladium](#), the image of [Pallas Athene](#), sacred to the Trojans. The Vestal Virgins tended the sacred flame within the temple, which was not supposed to be quenched.

[Book I: January 11](#) The fire brought from [Troy](#) by [Aeneas](#).

[Book III: Introduction](#) The images of the goddess covered their eyes at [Silvia](#), the Vestal, giving birth. The replacement of the laurel at her sacred hearth.

[Book III: March 6](#) [Book V: May 12](#) [Augustus](#) presided over the [Vestal Virgins](#) having become Pontifex Maximus

on this day in 12BC. He claimed descent from [Aeneas](#), having been adopted by [Julius Caesar](#), also Pontifex Maximus, and so from [Venus](#), [Jupiter](#) and [Saturn](#), brother of [Vesta](#).

[Book IV: April 21](#) Invoked by [Romulus](#) at the founding of Rome.

[Book IV: April 28](#) Augustus built a chapel for her in his house on the [Palatine](#), instead of taking up residence in the *Regia* near her temple, as his position of *Pontifex Maximus* demanded. The chapel was dedicated on this day and the day made a public holiday.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Her festival, the Vestalia. Her temple. Daughter of Saturn and [Ops](#) (Rhea). Identified with fire, no statues or images of her. Her sacred relics removed for safety when the Gauls attacked the Citadel. She speaks on behalf of the Roman people. Her temple caught fire in 241BC. Identified with Mother Earth.

[Book VI: June 15](#) Her shrine cleansed and the sweepings thrown into the Tiber.

Vestal Virgins

The priestesses of [Vesta](#), the six Vestal Virgins. Her chief festival was the Vestalia in June. The Virgins took a strict vow of chastity and served for thirty years. They enjoyed enormous prestige, and were preceded by a *lictor* when in public. Breaking of their vow resulted in whipping and death. There were twenty recorded instances in eleven centuries.

[Book II: February 15](#) [Book III: Introduction](#) Rhea [Silvia](#), a Vestal.

[Book IV: April 15](#) The ritual burning of sacrificed calves at the [Fordicidia](#), by the oldest Vestal, to produce the ashes used at the [Palilia](#).

[Book IV: April 21](#) The ashes of horse and calf, plus the stripped stalks of beans, supplied by Vesta for the purificatory rites of the [Parilia](#).

[Book V: May 14](#) The Vestals threw human effigies into the Tiber, see [Argei](#).

[Book VI: June 6](#) [Book VI: June 15](#) The shrine was purified after the Ides, and the sweepings thrown into the Tiber. Till then the wife of the [Flamen Dialis](#) was subject to taboos.

[Book VI: June 9](#) The penalty for breaking their vows.

Via Nova

The old road from the Porta Mugonia along the north slope of the Palatine, behind the house of the vestals, descending by a staircase to the Velabrum.

[Book VI: June 9](#) Ovid returns by the new path that joins it to the Forum.

Vinalia

A wine-festival, dedicated to [Jupiter](#) and to [Venus](#).

[Book IV: April 23](#) The Festival.

Vindemitor, Vindemiatrix

The Grape-Gatherer or Vintager is the star ϵ (epsilon) Virgo, a magnitude 2.8 yellow giant about 100 light years away.

[Book III: March 5](#) At this date it was just above the horizon in the West as dawn broke, below [Bootes](#).

Virbius

The deified [Hippolytus](#), god of the grove by the Arician Lake Nemi.

[Book VI: June 21](#) Consort of [Diana](#).

Vulcan

The blacksmith of the gods.

[Book III: Introduction](#) Worshipped on [Lemnos](#).

[Book III: March 8](#) Gave [Venus](#) the crown that became [Ariadne](#)'s.

[Book V: May 23](#) The maker of trumpets. This day dedicated to him, when the trumpets are ritually purified ([Tubilustria](#)).

[Book VI: June 11](#) See [Mulciber](#). The Father of [Servius Tullius](#).

Zephyr

The West Wind. Eurus is the East Wind, Auster is the South Wind, and Boreas is the North Wind.

[Book V: May 2](#) Married to [Flora](#), the goddess of Spring.

