

A NOTE TO THE STUDENT

What is the appeal of Ovid's *Amores* and *Metamorphoses*? His collection of love poems, the *Amores*, is written with the wit and humor, and sometimes the regret, of one who has seen love at first hand. His epic story of transformations from creation to the reign of Augustus, the *Metamorphoses*, is the work of a consummate storyteller. Ovid speaks to us today through a voice as clear at the beginning of the third millennium as it was to his contemporaries on the eve of the first.

This book is organized to help you to read, comprehend, and enjoy the poetry of Ovid. The textbook begins with eight of the *Amores*, each with an introduction that highlights the main theme of the poem and places it within the context of love elegy in general. Seven selections from the *Metamorphoses* follow, each illustrating a different type of metamorphosis or change. The introductions to the selections place the characters and their metamorphoses in the larger context of the work.

Each page provides help with vocabulary, grammatical structures, and a variety of poetic devices. We hope that by the end of the text you will have developed an eye and ear for picking up the more obvious ones on your own. A full vocabulary is provided at the back of the book as well as a list of all words occurring five or more times in the Latin text. Appendices include explanations of metrical terms and figures of speech that also occur in the on-page glosses in small capital letters.

Ovid's language and style are not difficult. You should note, however, the following points as you begin to read his poetry:

- Latin poetry was written to be heard as well as to be read. You should practice reading each poem aloud and look for the ways by which the sound of words reinforces the meaning expressed.
- Your reading aloud will be enhanced by an understanding of the meters employed and the many possibilities the poet used to vary the metrical pattern so that a line moves faster or slower. Macrons are provided in the glossed vocabulary and in the full glossary at the end.

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