

Virgil Extracts 10¹



*'nam qualis quantusque cavo Polyphemus in antro
lanigeras claudit pecudes atque ubera pressat,
centum alii curva haec habitant ad litora vulgo
infandi Cyclopes et altis montibus errant.
tertia iam lunae se cornua lumine complent
cum vitam in silvis inter deserta ferarum
lustra domosque traho vastosque ab rupe Cyclopas
prospicio sonitumque pedum vocemque tremesco.
victum infelicem, bacas lapidosaque corna,
dant rami, et vulsis pascunt radicibus herbae.'
omnia conlustrans hanc primum ad litora classem
conspexi venientem. huic me, quaecumque fuisset,
addixi: satis est gentem effugisse nefandam.*

1 The picture shows Cornelian Cherries. See below.

Reminder before we start this lesson. Look for a main verb in each chunk that I give you below. The tense will tell you when the action happened. Look for any nouns in the nominative case. They will be the subject of the verb. If there is no nominative the subject will be a pronoun (I, you, he, we, you, they) which you will usually need to supply. Look for adjectives. They must agree with whatever noun they qualify in case, gender (masculine, feminine, neuter) and number (singular or plural). Or is the verb an imperative, a command? All these things will enable you to translate. It is not just a case of knowing the root meaning of each word! Also remember that this is **harder than anything you will have on the unseen paper**. You are not expected to be able to translate at the level unprepared on your own. All you have to do for set works to is remember it! So don't worry if you don't get it correct when you attempt the translation. Just make sure you memorize the **correct** translation using your flashcards.

Achaemenides has a good reason for his warning to Aeneas and his Trojan band:

nam qualis quantusque cavo Polyphemus in antro
see note below.

lanigeras claudit pecudes atque ubera pressat,
ubera pressat “milks [their] udders”

centum alii curva haec habitant ad litora vulgo
For *curva litora* see picture left.

infandi Cyclopes et altis montibus errant.
Errare “to wander”



My old commentary says: '*Nam qualis quantusque, &c.* “For such and as great as Polyphemus in his hollow cave pens up his fleecy flocks, &c., a hundred other direful [*infandi*] Cyclopes [notice the plural of Cyclops] commonly [*vulgo*] dwell,” &c. The full expression would be as follows: *Qualis quantusque Polyphemus est, qui claudit, &c., tales et tanti sunt centum alii Cyclopes qui vulgo habitant.*'

You will have to translate this somewhat freely because what Virgil writes is rather compressed. Have a go and then compare with my attempt over the page.

For a hundred other direful Cyclopes as great as Polyphemus, who in his hollow cave pens up his fleecy flocks, commonly dwell on this curved shore [i.e. bay] and wander on the high mountains.

(Not a good place to linger then!)

tertia iam lunae se cornua lumine complent

tertia “for the third time” *complere* “to fill up” “to fill out”. This strange phrase just means that Achaemenides has been on the island for three months (i.e. moons). My old commentator (always keen to point out Virgil's inconsistencies) says: “Homer makes Odysseus (Ulysses) come to the island of the Cyclopes in the first year of his wanderings after the Trojan war; Virgil makes Aeneas visit it and rescue Achaemenides in the sixth year after that event, yet calls it the third month.”

cum vitam in silvis inter deserta ferarum

After *cum* (“while”) go for the next verb. *Vitam* is the object of the verb. *In silvis* says where,

lustra domosque traho vastos

as does *inter deserta* (“deserted”) *lustra* (*lustrum* “a bog”) ***que domos vastos ferarum*** (*ferus* “wild” i.e. wild thing. Note the case.)

que ab rupe Cyclopas prospicio

rupes “cliff” *prospicere* “to watch”

sonitumque pedum vocemque tremesco.

Tremescere “to dread”. *Pedum* is genitive plural.

Translate and compare.

Now the third time the horns of the moon filled themselves with light. While I drag out my life in the woods and among the deserted bogs and great homes (= lairs?) of wild creatures. I watch the Cyclopes from the cliffs and dread their voices and the sound of their feet.

victum infelicem, bacas lapidosaque corna, dant rami,

Rami “branches” (this is the subject) *victus* “living” *baca* “berry” *lapidosa corna* “stony cornelian cherries”

et vulsis pascunt radicibus herbae.

Herbae vulsis radicibus “grasses pulled up by the roots” (subject) *pascere* “to feed [me]” “to nourish [me]”.

The picture at the head of this lesson shows you what cornelian cherries look like.

Translate and compare.

The branches give a miserable living: berries and stony cornelian cherries,
and grasses pulled up by the roots nourish me.

(No wonder he looks so lean and hungry! And no wonder he has been looking out for any sign of
rescue – see below.)

omnia conlustrans hanc primum ad litora classem conspexi venientem.
conlustrans “scanning” *primum* “for the first time” *Venientem* “approaching”.

Translate and compare.

Scanning everything, for the first time, I caught sight of this fleet approaching the shore.

Achaemenides has been on the look out (you could use that phrase instead of “scanning everything”) for rescue all this time. When he says “for the first time” he means “for the first time in all these months”.

huic me, quaecumque fuisset, addixi: satis est gentem effugisse nefandam.
Adicere “to yield, resign, surrender” This, my old commentary says “indicating complete subjection. The word being used in Roman law courts when a debtor was made over as a slave to his creditor.” It was also used of those who sold themselves for life or death such as gladiators.
Quaecumque “whatever”. *Effugere* “to escape from” *nefandus* “impious” “abominable”.

Translate and compare.

Whatever might be, I surrender myself to you: it is enough to have escaped from [such] a wicked race [i.e. the Cyclopes.]

Did you spot the subjunctive, *fuisset*?

Below are some English words related to Latin words in the passage we have just looked at. Write the Latin words on the correct lines.

- altitude* _____
- century* _____
- complete* _____
- cornucopia* _____
- enclose* _____
- errant* _____
- feral* _____
- habitat* _____
- herb* _____
- lapidary* _____
- lunar* _____
- mountain* _____
- nefarious* _____
- prospector* _____
- radical* _____
- sonic* _____
- tractor* _____
- tremor* _____
- vulgar* _____

Keep up the good work of memorizing. <https://quizlet.com/gb/617807965/aeneid-cambridge-international-igcse-2023-25-flash-cards/> has flashcards or you can make your own. You only have to be able to translate the text when you see it. You do not need to be able to quote the English without seeing the Latin nor do you need to memorize the Latin itself.