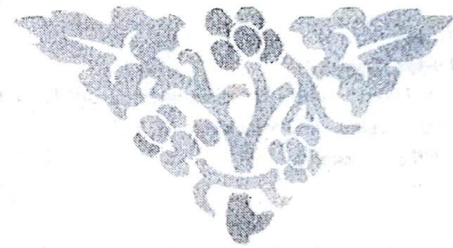


THE
ECLOGUES
OF VIRGIL



A TRANSLATION BY

DAVID FERRY

FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX

NEW YORK

ECLOGA I



[MELIBOEUS / TITYRUS]

MELIBOEUS

Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi
siluestrem tenui Musam meditaris auena;
nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arua.
nos patriam fugimus; tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra
formosam resonare doces Amaryllida siluas.

TITYRUS

O Meliboee, deus nobis haec otia fecit.
namque erit ille mihi semper deus, illius aram
saepe tener nostris ab ouilibus imbuet agnus.
ille meas errare boues, ut cernis, et ipsum
ludere quae uellem calamo permisit agresti.

MELIBOEUS

Non equidem inuideo, miror magis: undique totis
usque adeo turbatur agris. en ipse capellas
protinus aeger ago; hanc etiam uix, Tityre, duco.
hic inter densas corylos modo namque gemellos,
spem gregis, a! silice in nuda conixa reliquit.
saepe malum hoc nobis, si mens non laeua fuisset,
de caelo tactas memini praedicere quercus.
sed tamen iste deus qui sit, da, Tityre, nobis.

ECLOGUE I



[MELIBOEUS / TITYRUS]

MELIBOEUS

Tityrus, there you lie in the beech-tree shade,
Brooding over your music for the Muse,
While we must leave our native place, our homes,
The fields we love, and go elsewhere; meanwhile,
You teach the woods to echo 'Amaryllis.'

TITYRUS

O Meliboeus, a god gave me this peace.
He will always be a god to me, and often
The blood of a newborn lamb will be offered to him.
Because of him, as you can see, my cattle
Can browse in the fields as they please, and as I please,
I idly play upon my slender reed.

MELIBOEUS

It's not that I'm envious, but full of wonder.
There's so much trouble everywhere these days.
I was trying to drive my goats along the path
And one of them I could hardly get to follow;
Just now, among the hazels, she went into labor
And then, right there on the hard flinty ground,
Gave birth to twins who would have been our hope,
Back on our farm. I should have been able to tell
That something like this was going to happen to us,

TITYRUS

Vrbem quam dicunt Romam, Meliboeae, putavi
stultus ego huic nostrae similem, quo saepe solemus
pastores ouium teneros depellere fetus.
sic canibus catulos similis, sic matribus haedos
noram, sic paruis componere magna solebam.
uerum haec tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes
quantum lenta solent inter uiburna cupressi.

MELIBOEUS

Et quae tanta fuit Romam tibi causa uidendi?

TITYRUS

Libertas, quae sera tamen respexit inertem,
candidior postquam tondenti barba cadebat,
respexit tamen et longo post tempore uenit,
postquam nos Amaryllis habet, Galatea reliquit.
namque (fatebor enim) dum me Galatea tenebat,
nec spes libertatis erat nec cura peculi.
quamuis multa meis exiret uictima saeptis,
pinguis et ingratae premeretur caseus urbi,
non unquam grauis aere domum mihi dextra redibat.

MELIBOEUS

Mirabar quid maesta deos, Amarylli, uocares,
cui pendere sua patereris in arbore poma;
Tityrus hinc aberat. ipsae te, Tityre, pinus,
ipsi te fontes, ipsa haec arbusta uocabant.

When the lightning struck our oak the other day.

But Tityrus, what god is this you speak of?

TITYRUS

I used to be silly enough to think the big
City of Rome was comparable to the town
To which we drive our tender lambs to market,
As grown-up dogs are comparable to puppies,
Or grown-up goats are comparable to kids,
But Rome is as much taller than other cities
As cypress trees than the little viburnums below them.

MELIBOEUS

How did it come about that you went to Rome?

TITYRUS

Well, freedom took her own sweet time about it
And waited till my first gray hairs showed up
In the haircut cuttings, but, however late,
She came along at last and favored me.
This was just at the time when Galatea
Left me and just at the time when I became
Possessed by Amaryllis. When I belonged
To Galatea I certainly had no hope
Of saving any money; I wasn't free.
Many a beast I took to town for slaughter,
And carried many a rich cheese there to sell,
And I can't say I ever brought home much
Money to show for what I'd brought to market.

MELIBOEUS

I wondered, Amaryllis, why you grieved so,
And called out to the gods, and why the apples
Were left to hang neglected in your orchards.
For Tityrus was gone; he wasn't there;
The pines called out for him, the springs, the orchards.

TITYRUS

Quid facerem? neque seruitio me exire licebat
 nec tam praesentis alibi cognoscere diuos.
 hic illum uidi iuuenem, Meliboeae, quotannis
 bis senos cui nostra dies altaria fumant.
 hic mihi responsum primus dedit ille petenti:
 'pascite ut ante boues, pueri; summittite tauros.'

MELIBOEUS

Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt
 et tibi magna satis, quamuis lapis omnia nudus
 limosoque palus obducat pascua iunco:
 non insueta grauis temptabunt pabula fetas,
 nec mala uicini pecoris contagia laedent.
 fortunate senex, hic inter flumina nota
 et fontis sacros frigus captabis opacum;
 hinc tibi, quae semper, uicino ab limite saepes
 Hyblaeis apibus florem depasta salicti
 saepe leui somnum suadebit inire susurro;
 hinc alta sub rupe canet frondator ad auras,
 nec tamen interea raucae, tua cura, palumbes
 nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

TITYRUS

Ante leues ergo pascentur in aethere cerui
 et freta destituent nudos in litore piscis,
 ante pererratis amborum finibus exsul
 aut Ararim Parthus bibet aut Germania Tigrim,
 quam nostro illius labatur pectore uultus.

TITYRUS

What else could I do? I couldn't otherwise
 Be free of servitude, and I couldn't find
 Gods anywhere else to help me out, but there
 In Rome I found the young man in whose honor
 We sacrifice at our altars every month.
 He said, "Go feed your flocks as in the old days;
 Herdsmen, raise your cattle as you used to."

MELIBOEUS

Most fortunate old man, no matter if
 Your fields are stony or, by the brook's edge, marshy
 And weedy, still they're yours, and enough for you.
 No unaccustomed fodder there will tempt
 Your pregnant ewes nor will your flock be threatened
 By bad diseases from your neighbor's farm.
 O fortunate Tityrus, lucky old man,
 Here you will seek and find the cool of the shade
 Beside your hallowed springs and the streams you know;
 Often beside the hedge of willows that marks
 This edge of what you own, the humming of bees
 That visit the willow flowers will make you sleepy;
 And over there, at the other edge of your land,
 Under the ledge of that high outcropping of rock,
 The song of a woodman pruning the trees can be heard;
 And always you can hear your pigeons throating
 And the moaning of the doves high in the elm tree.

TITYRUS

Stags will browse in the pastures of the air
 And the sea will cast up its fish on the naked shore,
 The exiled Parthian drink from the river Saône
 And the German drink from the Tigris, before that face,
 The way he looked at me, will fade from my heart.

MELIBOEUS

At nos hinc alii sitientis ibimus Afros,
 pars Scythiam et rapidum cretae uenimus Oaxen
 et penitus toto diuisos orbe Britannos.
 en umquam patrios longo post tempore finis
 pauperis et tuguri congestum caespite culmen,
 post aliquot, mea regna, uidens mirabor aristas?
 impius haec tam culta noualia miles habebit,
 barbarus has segetes. en quo discordia ciuis
 produxit miseros: his nos consequimur agros!
 insere nunc, Meliboe, puros, pone ordine uitis.
 ite meae, felix quondam pecus, ite capellae.
 non ego uos posthac uiridi proiectus in antro
 dumosa pendere procul de rupe uidebo;
 carmina nulla canam; non me pascente, capellae,
 florentem cytisum et salices carpetis amaras.

TITYRUS

Hic tamen hanc mecum poteras requiescere noctem
 fronde super uiridi: sunt nobis mitia poma,
 castanae molles et pressi copia lactis,
 et iam summa procul uillarum culmina fumant
 maioresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae.

MELIBOEUS

But *we* have to leave our homes and go far away,
 Some to the thirsty deserts of Africa,
 Some to Scythia, some to the region where
 Oaxes rushes over its chalky bed,
 Some as far away as among the Britons,
 Utterly cut off from all the world.
 Oh, will it ever come to pass that I'll
 Come back, after many years, to look upon
 The turf roof of what had been my cottage
 And the little field of grain that once was mine,
 My own little kingdom. Have we done all this work
 Upon our planted and fallow fields so that
 Some godless barbarous soldier will enjoy it?
 This is what civil war has brought down upon us.
 So Meliboeus, carefully set out
 Your plants and pear trees, all in rows—for whom?
 For strangers, for others, we have farmed our land.

Come on, my goats, once happy flock, go on.
 Never again will I, stretched out at ease
 In the mouth of some mossy cave, see how, far off,
 Browsing you seem to hang from the high cliff side;
 No longer will I sing my songs; no more,
 My goats, will I watch over you as you crop
 The flowering clover and the acrid willow.

TITYRUS

Nevertheless, tonight you might stay here
 And rest yourself awhile on these green fronds;
 The apples are ripe, the chestnuts are plump and mealy,
 There's plenty of good pressed cheese you're welcome to.
 Already there's smoke you can see from the neighbors' chimneys
 And the shadows of the hills are lengthening as they fall.

ECLOGA II



Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin,
delicias domini, nec quid speraret habebat.
tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos
adsidue ueniebat. ibi haec incondita solus
montibus et siluis studio iactabat inani:

'O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas?
nil nostri miserere? mori me denique cogis?
nunc etiam pecudes umbras et frigora captant,
nunc uiridis etiam occultant spineta lacertos,
Thestylis et rapido fessis messoribus aestu
alia serpyllumque herbas contundit olentis.
at mecum raucis, tua dum uestigia lustris,
sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta cicadis.
nonne fuit satius tristis Amaryllidis iras
atque superba pati fastidia? nonne Menalcan,
quamuis ille niger, quamuis tu candidus esses?
o formose puer, nimium ne crede colori:
alba ligustra cadunt, uaccinia nigra leguntur.
despectus tibi sum, nec qui sim quaeris, Alexi,
quam diues pecoris, niuei quam lactis abundans.

ECLOGUE II



[VIRGIL / CORYDON]

Corydon fell in love with a beautiful boy
Whose name was Alexis, the darling of his master.
So every day of the week he took himself
To the dense and gloomy shade of a beech-tree grove,
And flung out his hopeless ardor in artless verses:

"O cruel Alexis, why are you deaf to my songs?
Have you no pity at all? Or don't you know
That Corydon's going to die for love of you?
Even the cows are seeking out the shade,
The little green lizards are hiding themselves in the bushes,
The laborers are worn out from the heat,
And Thestylis is pounding garlic and thyme,
Getting lunch ready, but under the burning sun
There's only my voice and the voice of the wailing locust.
Oh, wouldn't I have done better to put up with
The anger and haughty disdain of Amaryllis?
Or with Menalcas, swarthy though he is?
O fair Alexis, don't put too much trust
In your complexion. Remember that the blossoms
Of white privet fade and the darker blossoms
Of hyacinths are what the gatherers gather.
Perhaps you do not know, Alexis, who
It is you scorn: how many cows I have,
With all the milk they yield, summer and winter;

mille meae Siculis errant in montibus agnae;
lac mihi non aestate nouum, non frigore deficit.
canto quae solitus, si quando armenta uocabat,
Amphion Dircaeus in Actaeo Aracyntho.
nec sum adeo informis: nuper me in litore uidi,
cum placidum uentis staret mare. non ego Daphnin
iudice te metuam, si numquam fallit imago.
o tantum libeat mecum tibi sordida rura
atque humilis habitare casas et figere ceruos,
haedorumque gregem uiridi compellere hibisco!
mecum una in siluis imitabere Pana canendo
(Pan primum calamos cera coniungere pluris
instituit, Pan curat ouis ouiumque magistros),
nec te paeniteat calamo triuisse labellum:
haec eadem ut sciret, quid non faciebat Amyntas?
est mihi disparibus septem compacta cicutis
fistula, Damoetas dono mihi quam dedit olim,
et dixit moriens: 'te nunc habet ista secundum';
dixit Damoetas, inuidit stultus Amyntas.
praeterea duo nec tuta mihi ualle reperti
capreoli, sparsis etiam nunc pellibus albo,
bina die siccant ouis ubera; quos tibi seruo.
iam pridem a me illos abducere Thestylis orat;
et faciet, quoniam sordent tibi munera nostra.
huc ades, o formose puer: tibi lilia plenis
ecce ferunt Nymphae calathis; tibi candida Nais,
pallentis uiolas et summa papauera carpens,
narcissum et florem iungit bene olentis anethi;

A thousand lambs, my lambs, pasture upon
These hills around; my voice is like the voice
Of Amphion on the slopes of Aracynthus,
Calling his herds. Nor is it that I'm bad-looking.
The other day when the wind was entirely still
And the sea was therefore like a mirror I saw
Myself in the mirror and said to myself that I,
If mirrors tell the truth, you being the judge,
Need never fear comparison with Daphnis.

"O come and live with me in the countryside,
Among the humble farms. Together we
Will hunt the deer, and tend the little goats,
Compelling them along with willow wands.
Together singing we will mimic Pan,
Who was the first who taught how reeds could be
Bound together with wax to make a pipe.
Pan takes care of the shepherd and the sheep.
You oughtn't to mind if the reed bruises your lip;
Think how Amyntas practiced, learning to play.
Damoetas when he was dying bequeathed to me
This pipe I have, of seven hemlock stalks
Of different lengths. 'Now you're its master,' he said,
And foolish Amyntas was full of envy of me.
Besides the pipe I have two fawns I found
In a dangerous nearby valley, still so young
Their coats are speckled with white and eagerly
They feed at the udder of one of my ewes as if
They were really baby lambs; I've saved them for you;
Thestylis keeps telling me she wants them,
And maybe I'll give them to her, since it is clear
How little you think of the gifts I offer you.
O beautiful Alexis, come, see how
The Nymphs are bringing you baskets full of lilies,
See, the lovely Naiad makes a bouquet
Of palest violets and scarlet poppies for you,
Flower of fennel, narcissus blossoms also,

tum casia atque aliis intexens suauibus herbis
mollia luteola pingit uaccinia calta.
ipse ego cana legam tenera lanugine mala
castaneasque nuces, mea quas Amaryllis amabat;
addam cerea pruna (honus erit huic quoque pomo),
et uos, o lauri, carpam et te, proxima myrte,
sic positae quoniam suauis miscetis odores.
rusticus es, Corydon; nec munera curat Alexis,
nec, si muneribus certes, concedat Iollas.
heu heu, quid uolui misero mihi? floribus Austrum
perditus et liquidis immisi fontibus apros.
quem fugis, a! demens? habitarunt di quoque siluas
Dardaniusque Paris. Pallas quas condidit arces
ipsa colat; nobis placeant ante omnia siluae.
torua leaena lupum sequitur, lupus ipse capellam,
florentem cytisum sequitur lasciuia capella,
te Corydon, o Alexi: trahit sua quemque uoluptas.
aspice, aratra iugo referunt suspensa iuueni,
et sol crescentis decedens duplicat umbras;
me tamen urit amor: quis enim modus adsit amori?
a, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit!
semiputata tibi frondosa uitis in ulmo est:
quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,
uiminibus mollique paras detexere iunco?
inuenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexin.'

With yellow marigold and hyacinth,
And bound together with twine of cassia
And other fragrant herbs. And I myself
Will gather chestnuts as an offering,
And also downy peaches, and waxen plums,
Such as my Amaryllis used to love;
And I'll pluck laurel too, and the nearby myrtle,
The mingled perfume of them being so sweet.

"Corydon, you're a yokel. What makes you think
Alexis would care in the least about what you offer?
And as for gifts, would Iollas offer less?
Alas, alas, what have unhappy I
Been hoping for? In my distraction I
Have brought the sirocco down upon my flowers
And let the wild boar in to my crystal springs.
Ah, whom are you fleeing? A madman! Even the gods
Have lived in the woods, and Paris lived there too.
Let Pallas live in the city that she founded.
Let me dwell here lamenting in the forest.
The fierce lioness follows after the wolf,
The wolf pursues the goat, the wanton goat
Seeks out the flowering clover in the field,
And Corydon, Alexis, follows you.
Each creature is led by that which it most longs for.

"Look, here are the oxen come in from the fields,
Dragging the plow behind them, as the sun
Causes the shadows to lengthen and multiply,
And I still burn with love; love knows no limits.
Ah, Corydon, what madness has hold of you?
The vine on the leafy elm is only half-pruned—
Why not at least go about some needful task,
Binding the twigs together with pliant rushes.
There'll be another Alexis, if this one rejects you."

ECLOGA IV



Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus!
 non omnis arbusta iuuant humilesque myricae;
 si canimus siluas, siluae sint consule dignae.

Ultima Cumaei uenit iam carminis aetas;
 magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.
 iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,
 iam noua progenies caelo demittitur alto.
 tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
 desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
 casta faue Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo.
 teque adeo decus hoc aeuu, te consule, inibit,
 Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses;
 te duce, si qua manent sceleris uestigia nostri,
 inrita perpetua soluent formidine terras.
 ille deum uitam accipiet diuisque uidebit
 permixtos heroas et ipse uidebitur illis,
 pacatumque reget patriis uirtutibus orbem.

At tibi prima, puer, nullo munuscula cultu
 errantis hederas passim cum baccare tellus

ECLOGUE IV



[VIRGIL]

Sicilian Muses, sing a nobler music,
 For orchard trees and humble tamarisks
 Do not please everyone; so may your song
 Be of a forest worthy of a consul.
 The last great age the Sybil told has come;
 The new order of centuries is born;
 The Virgin now returns, and the reign of Saturn;
 The new generation now comes down from heaven.
 Lucina, look with favor on this child,
 —Lucina, goddess, pure—this child by whom
 The Age of Iron gives way to the Golden Age.
 Now is the time of your Apollo's reign;
 And, Pollio, in your consulship, begins
 The grand procession of the mighty months,
 Commencement of the glory, freedom from
 Earth's bondage to its own perpetual fear.
 Our crimes are going to be erased at last.
 This child will share in the life of the gods and he
 Will see and be seen in the company of heroes,
 And he will be the ruler of a world
 Made peaceful by the merits of his father.

Dear child, there will be new little gifts for you,
 Springtime valerian, and trailing ivy,

mixtaque ridenti colocasia fundet acantho.
ipsae lacte domum referent distenta capellae
ubera, nec magnos metuent armenta leones;
ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores.
occidet et serpens, et fallax herba ueneni
occidet; Assyrium uulgo nascetur amomum.
at simul heroum laudes et facta parentis
iam legere et quae sit poteris cognoscere uirtus,
molli paulatim flauescet campus arista
incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uua
et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella.
pauca tamen suberunt priscae uestigia fraudis,
quae temptare Thetim ratibus, quae cingere muris
oppida, quae iubeant telluri infindere sulcos.
alter erit tum Tiphys et altera quae uehat Argo
delectos heroas; erunt etiam altera bella
atque iterum ad Troiam magnus mittetur Achilles.
hinc, ubi iam firmata uirum te fecerit aetas,
cedet et ipse mari uector, nec nautica pinus
mutabit merces; omnis feret omnia tellus.
non rastros patietur humus, non uinea falcem;
robustus quoque iam tauris iuga soluet arator.
nec uarios discet mentiri lana colores,
ipse sed in pratis aries iam suaue rubenti
murice, iam croceo mutabit uellera luto;
sponte sua sandyx pascentis uestiet agnos.

Egyptian beans, and smiling acanthus, all
Poured out profusely from the untilled earth.
The goats will come back home all by themselves
Without being called, their udders full of milk;
The browsing herds will have no fear of lions;
Your cradle will be a cornucopia
Of smiling flowers blossoming around you;
Nowhere will there be serpents anymore,
And nowhere plants in which a poison hides;
And everywhere the Assyrian spice will flourish.

As soon as you are old enough to read
The praise of heroes and your father's deeds
And therefore know what excellence consists of,
The grain will yellow and ripen in the fields,
The purple grapes will cluster on wild vines,
And honey will drip like dew from the hard oak tree.
But there will still be vestiges of sin,
And therefore men will still be forced to try
The sea in ships, build walls around their towns,
And labor in their fields to plow their soil.
There will be need for yet another Argo
To carry its chosen heroes on their mission;
There'll be another war, and once again
Another Achilles will be called to Troy.
But when the years have brought your strength to manhood,
No longer then will merchant ships set forth
Laden with things to trade in foreign places;
Each land will bear of itself what it needs for itself;
The earth will suffer the harrow's tooth no longer
Nor vines suffer the claw of the pruning-hook;
No longer need cloth learn to imitate colors;
Out in the meadow the fleece of the ram will change
Of its own accord from purple to saffron yellow;
In the meadow the lambs will graze in bright red coats.

'Talia saecla' suis dixerunt 'currite' fusis
concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.
adgrederere o magnos (aderit iam tempus) honores,
cara deum suboles, magnum Iouis incrementum!
aspice conuexo nutantem pondere mundum,
terrasque tractusque maris caelumque profundum;
aspice, uenturo laetentur ut omnia saeclo!
o mihi tum longae maneat pars ultima uitae,
spiritus et quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!
non me carminibus uincet nec Thracius Orpheus
nec Linus, huic mater quamuis atque huic pater adsit,
Orphei Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo.
Pan etiam, Arcadia mecum si iudice certet,
Pan etiam Arcadia dicat se iudice uictum.

Incipe, parue puer, risu cognoscere matrem
(matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses)
incipere, parue puer: qui non risere parenti,
nec deus hunc mensa, dea nec dignata cubili est.

"So let all ages be like this," the Parcae,
Voicing the gods' unchangeable decree,
Cry out in unison to their whirling spindles.

O you dear child of the gods, increase of Jove,
The time has come about at last for you
To take upon you those great honors foretold;
Behold how the vaulted universe trembles in awe—
Earth and the range of sea and the depth of sky—
Glorying in the new age coming in.
Oh, if I have long life and at the end
Have breath enough and spirit enough to be
The teller of the story of your deeds,
Then neither Linus nor Thracian Orpheus could
Defeat me in the singing contest, though
Orpheus' mother, Calliope, were there,
And Linus' father, Apollo the beautiful;
And Pan himself, Arcadia the judge,
Judged by Arcadia, would admit defeat.
So, little baby, may your first smile be
When you first recognize your mother, whose
Long nine-months travail brought you into the world.
That child who has not smiled thus for his parents
No gods will welcome at their festive table
Nor any goddess to her amorous bower.