Cui dono lepidum novum libellum arido modo pumice expolitum?
Corneli, tibi; namque tu solebas meas esse aliquid putare nugas,
iam tum cum ausus es unus Italorum omne aevum tribus explicare chartis,
doctis, Iuppiter, et laboriosis!
quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli qualecumque, quod, o patrona virgo,
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo.

To whom do I give a fine new small book
Having just now been polished with dry pumice?
To you, Cornelius [Nepos]: And for you were accustomed
To think that my trifles were something
Already then, when you alone of the Italians dared
To explain all history with three scrolls,
Learned and labored over, [by] Jove.
Therefore have for yourself whatever of a book this [is],
Of whatever sort [it is], which, O patron maiden,
Let remain enduring for more than one generation.

Passer, deliciae meae puellae,
quicum ludere, quem in sinu tenere,
cui primum digitum dare adpetenti et acris solet incitare morsus,
cum desiderio meo nitenti
carum nescio quid libet iocari
(et solaciolum sui doloris, credo, ut tum gravis adquiescat ardor),
tecum ludere sicut ipsa possem et tristis animi levare curas!
... Tam gratum est mihi quam ferunt puellae
pernici aureolum fuisse malum,
quod zonam solvit diu ligatam.

Sparrow, delight of my girl,
With whom she is accustomed to play,
whom she is accustomed to hold in her lap,
To whom seeking she is accustomed to give her fingertip [first finger]
And to incite fierce bites,
When with my longing shining,
It pleases her to joke I don't know some thing,
And I believe a little comfort of her grief,
So that the serious flame of passion may then calm:
If only I were able to play with you as she herself
And to lighten the cares of her sad soul.
It is as pleasing to me as they say
The golden apple was for the swift girl,
Which untied her girdle too long bound.
Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque et quantum est hominum venustiorum! passer mortuus est meae puellae, passer, deliciae meae puellae, quem plus illa oculis suis amabat; nam mellitus erat, suamque norat ipsa tam bene quam puella matrem, nec sese a gremio illius movebat, sed circumsiliens modo hic modo illuc ad solam dominam usque pipiabat. qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum illuc unde negant redire quemquam. at vobis male sit, mala tenebrae Orci, quae omnia bella devoratis; tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis. o factum male! o miselle passer! tua nunc opera meae puellae flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

Mourn, O Venuses and Cupids, And however many of more beautiful men there are, The sparrow of my girl has died, The sparrow, delight of my girl, Which that girl loved more than her own eyes. For he was honey-sweet and had known his Master as well as a girl her mother, Nor did he move himself from the lap of that girl, But hopping around this way, that way, To the lone girl it chirped, Who now goes through that dark journey, From which they deny that anyone returns. But let it be bad for you, evil spirits Of Orcus, who devour all beautiful things: You have taken so beautiful a sparrow from me. O bad deed! O poor little sparrow! Now by your work the little swollen eyes Of my girl are red with crying.

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus, rumoresque senum severiorum omnes unius aestimemus assis. soles occidere et redire possunt: nobis, cum semel occidit brevis lux, nox est perpetua una dormienda. da mi basia mille, deinde centum, dein mille altera, dein secunda centum, deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum, dein, cum milia multa fecerimus, conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus, aut ne quis malus invidere possit, cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

Let us live, my Lesbia, and let us fuck, Let us evaluate all the rumors of stricter old men, As worth a single penny! Suns are able to rise and to set: When once the brief light has fallen down, There is one perpetual night to be slept by us. Give to me a thousand kisses, then a hundred, Then another thousand, then a second hundred, Then another thousand continuously, then a hundred, Then, when we will have made many thousands, We will confuse these things, lest we know, Or lest any person be able to cast an evil eye upon us, Because he knows that there are so many of our kisses.
Quaeris quot mihi basiationes tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque. quam magnus numeros Libyssae harenae laspiciferis iacet Cyrenis, oraculum Iovis inter aestuosi et Batti veteris sacrum sepulcrum, aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox, furtivos hominum vident amores, tam te basia multa basiare vesano satis et super Catullo est, quae nec pernumerare curiosi possint nec mala fascinare lingua. 

You ask how many kisses of yours, Lesbia, are enough and more than enough for me. As many as the number of Libyan sands Lie in asafetida-bearing Cyrene Between the oracle of very hot Jove And the sacred ground of old Battis; Or as many as the stars, when the night is still, See the stolen loves of men. To kiss you so many kisses Is enough and more for insane Catullus., Which the busybodies are able neither to count Nor to bewitch with their bad tongues. 


Sad Catullus, stop making a fool of yourself, And you should consider that what you see has gone through, destroyed. Suns once shined for you bright, When you kept on following where the girl led, Loved by us as much as nothing will be loved. There those many playful things were then done, Which you wished, and the girl did not reject. The suns truly shined for you bright. Now no longer does she girl want those things: you too powerless, Do not run after her who flees, and do not live miserable, But endure with a determined mine; persevere. Be strong, girl! Yet Catullus endures, And he will not seek you again nor ask you, unwilling: But you will grieve, when you will be asked nothing. Wretched, alas you! What life remains for you! Who now seeks you? To whom will you seem beautiful? Whom will you now love? Whose will you be said to be? Whom will you kiss? Whose lips will you nibble on? But you, Catullus, persist fixed in mind.
Important People/Places

- **Neoterics** - "new poets" in Rome, including Catullus; imitate/influenced by Alexandrians, including Callimachus
- **Callimachus** - Alexandrian poet who influenced Neoterics, including Catullus
- **Sappho** - female poet from Lesbos who also influenced Catullus
- **Cornelius Nepos** - Roman historian to whom Catullus dedicated his poems in Catullus 1, from the same town as Catullus, attempted to write all history in three volumes
- **Bithynia** - Where Catullus's brother died; poem four is about trip there