

TWO NON-EMENDATIONS IN OVID

Am. 3. 7. 55-6

Sed, puto, non blanda non optima perdidit in me
oscula, non omni sollicitavit ope?

blanda YPS.

IN view of the overwhelming weight of the manuscript evidence, including most recently the testimony of Y, it is perhaps about time to stop the attempts at emendation that began in the sixteenth century with *sed non blanda puto*. The weaknesses, too, of the argument in favour of lengthening *metri gratia* the final vowel of *blanda* have been clearly pointed out by Housman,¹ who just as clearly pointed out that *blanda* must therefore be an ablative.

Housman ingeniously associated the word with *puella*, situated two lines above, making sense but giving some strain to the Ovidian couplet. It would, I think, much more obviously have to agree with *ope*, thus giving *non blanda . . . non omni sollicitavit ope*, a perfectly natural progression from a particular kind of help (particularly appropriate to the situation) to a more desperate general aid. Although *blanda ope* is not found elsewhere in Ovid (but cf. *A.A.* 1, 362 *blanda arte*, 2. 334 *blanda sedulitate*, 2. 477 *blanda voluptas*, 3. 315 *blanda res*) it is a perfectly natural and Ovidian combination.

The difficulty in the passage has arisen, I think, from considering *non blanda . . . non optima . . . non omni* as introducing three distinct, equally balanced points. But by means of the characteristically Ovidian device of parenthesis apparent difficulties are removed, and a perfectly clear and appropriate reading is obtained. *Non optima . . . oscula* should be placed in parenthesis, being an illustration of one particular type of *blanda ope* that the poet calls vividly to mind. (For a parenthesis separating adjective and noun, or for explanatory parentheses separating a list of points see *R.A.* 720; *Am.* 1. 12. 7; 2. 9. 43-5; 2. 18. 20 ff.)

A.A. 2. 725-6

Sed neque tu dominam velis maioribus usus
desine, nec cursus anteeat illa tuos.

dominam *codd.*: domina *Heinsius, Owen*

desine YRA: defice *Kenney*

Despite, again, the overwhelming weight of the manuscript evidence, the impossibility of associating *dominam* with *desine* has long rightly been felt. But once again I suggest that the manuscripts may provide a perfectly acceptable reading, and that punctuation clears up all apparent difficulties. Ovid's own instructions in fact point the way to this punctuation, for he does not mean to say 'Neither should you stop' (no matter whether logically the male does tend to stop after going too fast!) 'nor should she outrun you', but rather 'Neither should you outrun her nor she outrun you'. If we ignore *desine* the remaining words convey this sense perfectly, and *dominam* depends, quite naturally, on *anteas*, which is understood from *anteeat* (cf. *Am.* 3. 2. 5; 1. 2. 48). *Desine*, inserted now parenthetically with *anteire* understood, provides a highly

¹ *C.Q.* xxi (1927), 1-13.

vivid point of urgency to what is, after all, a very urgent piece of instruction. (For similar uses of *desine* cf. Hor. *Sat.* 2. 3. 323; Cat. 21. 12; Plaut. *Pseud.* 1320, *Rud.* 681; Ter. *Andr.* 972, *Phorm.* 61;¹ and for brief, parenthetical imperatives which add to the urgency of the moment cf. even Virg. *Aen.* 4. 116, 435, and 338.)

University of Texas, Austin

GEORGE DOIG

¹ My distinguished colleague F. W. Lenz, as he kindly informed me, has similarly felt something from *anteat* to be naturally understood in the first part. He, however, under-

stands *anteiens*, retaining *desine* as the main verb. His note appears in *Mnemosyne* xix (1966), 389.