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Title: 2.6 Vulpis et Uva

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Document:

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Vulpis et Uva

- 1 Uvam impendentem nequiens comprehendere saltu,
- 2 Omnia tentasset cum iam, vulpecula dixit,
- 3 "Immatura etiam gallaque es plena virenti!
- 4 Nos, nisi decoctis Phoebos, non vescimur uvis."
- 5 *Ridicule haec homines, nequeunt quae prendere, temnunt.*

Notes

1. **uvam**. The singular noun is used as a collective, meaning "grapes."

2. **tentasset** = *tentavisset*. The pluperfect subjunctive in a *cum* clause (*cum iam tentavisset omnia*).

3. **galla**. Ablative case; *plena* takes an ablative complement.

4. **Nos**. The royal we is emphatic here; the verb *vescimur*, already expresses the first-person plural subject.

4. **Phoebos**. This refers to Phoebus, i.e. Apollo, the Sun.

5. nequent prendere. Notice how the epimythium picks up on the verbs from the first line: *nequiens comprehendere*.

Vocabulary

galla (*gallae*). harsh, sour wine.

immaturus (-a, -um). unripe, immature.

nequeo (*nequire*). to be unable

saltus (*saltus*, from the verb *salire*). jump, leap.

vescor (*vesci*). to feed on, to eat; takes an ablative complement (*uvis*).

virens (*virentis*). green.

vulpecula (*vulpeculae*). diminutive of *vulpis*, fox.

Commentary

This classic fable about the fox and the supposedly sour grapes gives rise to the English saying, "Sour grapes!" In this poem, the sour grapes are associated with sour wine, *galla*, made from green grapes that are not yet ripe.