It's spring, and the poets celebrate the renewal of love, travel and work.

It ver et Venus, et Veneris præmantium ante pennatus graditur, Zephyri vestigie propter Flora quibus mater praesagrens ante viai cuncta coloribus egregiis et odoribus opplet.

Lucretius, 5.737-740.

eam veris comites, quae mare temperant, impellunt animae linteum Thraciae; eam nec prate rigent nec fluvii strepunt hiberna nive turgidi.


Vere novo, gelidus canis cum montibus umor liquiditur et Zephyro putris se glæba resolvit, depresso incipiat iam tum mihi taurus aratro ingemere, et sulco attribus splendescere vover.

Vergil, Georgics, 1.43-46.

Whether it's spring or not, for Ibykos love is always in season.

Ἡρ., -ου, τὸ spring; Κυδώνιος, ἀ-, -ον Cydonian; μηλίς, -ίδος, η (Cydonian apples = quinces); ἀρδώ water; mid., drink; ῥοῦ, -ας, η stream; ποταμός, - οῦ, ὁ river; ἱνα where; παρθένος, ou, η virgin; κῆπος, -ου, ὁ garden; ἀκήρατος, -ov pure; οἰνονθής, -ίδος, ἡ young vine shoot; αἰχμο increase; pass., grow; σκιέρος, -ἀ, -ῶν shady; ἔρυξ, -εως, τὸ sprout; οἰνόπεος, -ου, τὸ vine leaf; δαλάθω bloom, flourish; ἔρος, -ου, ὁ love, desire; κατάκοιτος, -ον at rest; ὥρα, -ας, ἡ season; ἄτε just as; στεροτή,-ης, ἡ lightning flash; φλέγω flame, make flash; ἄσωσ dant; ἄζαλες, -α, -ον parching; μανία, -ας, ἡ mad passion; ἔρημος, -η,- ὁν dark; ἀθαμβής,-ες fearless; παιδόθεν from childhood; ἐγκρατεῖα strongly.
Of Adjectives and Nouns

One of the earliest points made about Latin adjectives is their readiness to do the work of nouns. English, too, has the capacity to use adjectives as nouns, but who will deny that such a use seems literary, removed from daily life? "The beautiful and damned," "the free and the brave," "a word to the wise" are phrases which vibrate too much on the prosaic tongue, perhaps in part because they are too indeterminate in gender, and so not precise enough for useful speech. Consider: Boni nostram laudem merent. In translating this sentence we could say, "The good deserve our praise," but are we not more likely to render, "the good men"? Thus we readily turn boni back into an adjective, while implicitly assuming the ellipsis of--say--"viri." Perhaps we have no choice, if we are to render the force of the masculine plural ending. Dull, but precise; or is it? Lacking a context, cannot the masculine plural be construed as the plural common gender? Recall liber: "children"; were not little Romans of both sexes? (Or were males alone counted?!) Perhaps we should consider "good people" or "good persons." Precise, but still dull.

The English adjective-as-noun seems to be plural common gender ("the old," "the rich") or singular neuter ("the red and the black"). In this view, then, English does not have the resources to translate--let us say--bonus . . . meret as "the good deserves," since bonus, a singular, more than likely has a personal referent (whether male or female), not a neuter one. But one thing is certain about this English construction: however its gender or number may be construed, an adjective is changed into a noun by placing a magical "the" before it. The Latin construction, indeed the language, has no such noun-marker; consequently, might not many apparent cases of adjective-as-noun equally well be termed adjective used as adjective, with the ellipsis of the modified noun? (Perhaps bona, a neuter plural, cuts short these speculations, since no possibly ellipsed neuter plural noun springs to mind.) And so by all means let us continue to render bonus, bona, boni, bona, etc. as "good men," "good woman," "good men/people," "good things," etc.--dull, but precise, and perhaps in keeping--largely!--with the ellipsis theory.

Contrarily, one of the miraculous features of English is the absolute ease with which it turns nouns into adjectives: "the Iran crisis," "the organization men," "garage door," "Brooklyn Bridge." Latin, too, has the power to use nouns as adjectives, but who will deny that we try not to believe it? In Caesar's phrase, tantum exercitum victorem, we squeeze an appositive noun out of victorem, rather than see it as an adjective. But with Vergil's populum late regem, we cannot possibly deny regem the status of adjective; and for two reasons: the collective noun populum and the singular regem do not jibe; late, an adverb, modifies regem. Render it as "ruling." But why, if English uses nouns as adjectives so readily, should we translate regem not as "king" but as "ruling"? Because, although under the right (rare) circumstances "king people" might be made to work, "widely king people" is a mere impossibility, showing that nouns-as-adjectives in English still mysteriously retain their identity as nouns. Martial's virginis pater chartae supplies a good case for the English noun-as-adjective to shine: "the father of the virgin poem" (by metonymy); no need for "virginal" here. The strangest noun-as-adjective in Latin is the indeclinable frugi, the frozen dative singular of frux. Is a dative of purpose lurking in Cicero's frugi homo "honest man"? Probably not, if we compare Horace's tam frugi tamque pudica [said of Penelope]. Will we be so perverse as to render "so for fruit"? Or give in and admit that Latin—perhaps the more literary Latin, removed from daily life—did make sparing use of the noun-as-adjective?
HANSEN & QUINN COMES OUT

The abundant materials developed for the Institute's Greek program by Hardy Hansen and Gerry Quinn are now available in book form. Fordham University Press has just released Greek: An Intensive Course in a two-volume format.

You say you've used this text and are pleased with its sensible and thorough presentation? Then why not whisper sweet somethings into the ear of a colleague or friend?

Cornelius Nepos (c.99-c.24 B.C.), Roman historian, once a standard author in beginning Latin, is now famous for being mentioned by Wallace Stevens in "The Man on the Dump."

is enjoying a fellowship at the U. of Texas, Austin where, he reports, the ancient philosophy program is very impressive. Peg Escher L79 has a fellowship at NYU. Alan Richardson L79 was one of two people (out of 11) who passed the Latin exam for his departmental classical language requirement at Princeton. Jon Fleming L79 has been quite busy since November as associate editor of Paper Trade Journal. He writes to share the great good news of his acceptance into the Columbia School of Journalism for the coming year. Jon also reports that Kenny Morrell L79 is back in Germany and, among other things, working in Bonn as a waiter in a French restaurant.

UBI HABITANT? We need addresses for Ann Marie Dimino L76 and Harold Veeser L77. Can you help?

RAISE YOUR HAND if you did not receive the winter issue of Postscript. Let us know; we'll send it right out.

ADVANCED LATIN IN JEOPARDY

The new advanced Latin Institute might be held this summer. If you or someone you know is interested, call the Institute at 790-4284. The planning has been done, the readings chosen, the personnel primed and the seats dusted off. A good number of students have already applied, but more applicants are needed to meet CUNY Graduate Center requirements for minimum program size.

The proposed topic is Roman Love Poetry and the Rise of European Love Lyric; classes will run for seven weeks (7 July to 26 August). Fred J. Nichols (Comparative Literature, CUNY Graduate Center) and John Arthur Hanson (Classics, Princeton) have worked out the course format as follows:

First week: Intensive review of Latin grammar with an orientation toward reading Latin poetry.

Second, third, and fourth weeks: Chronological survey of the Latin love lyric, distributed as follows (100 ll. per day):

Ancient (6 days): Catullus, Propertius, Ovid; Medieval (3 days): Pervigilium Veneris, Soliaric poetry; Renaissance (6 days): Fontana, Johannes Secundus, Celtis, Milton.

Fifth, sixth, and seventh weeks: Non-chronological survey of three topics (200 ll. per day): the persona of the poet; the Apollo-Daphne myth; the self-reflexive love lyric.

This last would serve to synthesize the main themes of the course.

There are two good reasons for studying lyric poetry: you understand it and wish to know more; you don't understand it and wish to be enlightened.
Horace, I.5

Pyrrha,
What sleek-limbed youth, awash in perfume,
Presses you close among the roses
Beneath that pleasant, trellis’d bower?

For whom do you bind back your golden hair
You of simple elegance?
I know how often he will weep
For broken faith and estranged gods.
A sea embittered with black tempest
Will astound his callow eyes.

Such credulous fools
As now enjoy, golden, loving, free,
Think you ever so,
Ignorant of false gold.

Woe to those wretches before whose eyes
You shine, untouched, untasted:
As for me,
On Neptune’s votive wall
My dripping garments hang, in thanks,
To the potent god of the sea
For my salvation.

tr. Joseph Salemi L75

Sermo Abditus

CFCHD YQLSUCIPSY RCAC TCAUICLDU

ACERNOVSC ULDPS TMAKYDSY RYNPSU.

--C. GQQAPPDSX XNREESU

Last issue’s puzzle answers:

Μήνιν άειδε, Θεά, Πηληπάδεω Άχιλῆσ... "Ομήρος

ΑΠΛΟΓΡΑΦΙΑΙ

ΜΑΝΘΑΝΕΙΝ: μανθάνει τανέιν.
ΜΗΤΕΡΑΙ: μήτερα ἐράω.
ΜΕΜΝΗΜΑΙΑΣ: μέμνημαι μαίας.
ΑΙΕΙΜΙΟΣ: αἰε ἐμί μίας.
ΑΣΤΥΤΕΛΕΙΟΣ: ἀστυ τετελευσε γεωργός.
ΗΔΑΥΡΩΝ: ἡδω ἄδωρ δάρων.

ΤΕΧΝΟΦΑΕΝΝΙΑ (artful play-things), dreamt up by the
Alexandrions, are noted for being better to like at than
to read. Ecce are!

ΔΩΣΙΑΔΑ
ΒΩΜΟΣ

Εἰμάρσενόι με στήτας
πόσις, μέροι δίσαρος,
τεῦξ', οὐ σποδεύνας Ίνις Ἡμπούντας. μόρος
Τεῦκροσ βοῦντα και κυνός τεκνώματος,
Χρύσας δ’ αίτας, ἀμος ἐμφάνισα
τὸν γυνηκάλκου οὖρον ἔρησαν,
ἐν ἀπάτωρ δίσευνος
μόγητοι ματρόριπτος,
ἐμιόν δέ τεῦξ’ ἀριστας
Θεοκρίτιο κτάντος
τριεστέριο καύστας
θώουξα ἀν’ ἱδες,
χάλεμε γάρ ναυ ίδο
σύργακτος ἐκδύς γήρας.
τὸν δ’ αἰλινδέντ’ ἐν ἀμφικλύτσῳ
Πανός τε ματρός εὐνέτας φῶρ
δίζος ίνις τ’ ἀνδροβρότος ‘Πλοορασισθαν
ἡρ’ ἄρβιον ες Τευκρις’ ἄγαγον τριπάρβητου.