Catullus, *Carmina* 72

Catullus (84-54 BCE) of Verona is the most famous of the so-called neoteric poets, who in the 1st century BCE broke from Roman poetic tradition to explore new poetic modes and often deeply personal subjects. Many of Catullus' poems, as this one, are addressed to Lesbia (identified since antiquity with a famously independent woman named Clodia), and depict a tempestuous and emotionally complex relationship between her and the speaker of the poems ("Catullus").

Dicebas quondam solum te nosse Catullum,  
Lesbia, nec prae me velle tenere Iouem.  
Dilexi tum te non tantum ut vulgus amicam,  
sed pater ut gnatos diligit et generos.  
Nunc te cognoui: quare etsi impensius uror,  
multo mi tamen es vilior et leuior.  
Qui potis est, inquis? Quod amantem iniuria talis  
cogit amare magis, sed bene velle minus.

**VOCABULARY**

*quondam* (adv.) – once  
*nosco, nocere, novi, notus-a-um* – to get to know (*nosse* = *novisse*)  
*prae* – before, in front of (+ abl.)  
*volo, velle, volui* --- – to want  
*Iuppiter, Iovis, m.* – Jupiter (chief god of the Roman pantheon)  
*diligo, diligere, dilexi, dilectus-a-um* – to esteem, to love  
*tantum* (adv.) – so much, only  
*ut* – “as”  
*vulgus, vulgi, n.* – (common) people, the general public  
*gnatus, gnati, m.* – son  
*gener, generi, m.* – son-in-law  
*cognosco, cognovere, cognovi, cognotus-a-um* – to get to know  
*quare* – “therefore”  
*etsi* (conj.) – although, even if  
*impensius* – more excessively, intensely (comparative adv.)  
*uro, urere, ussi, ustus-a-um* – to burn  
*mi* = *mihi*  
*vilior, vilioris* – cheaper, more contemptible (comparative adj.)  
*levior, levioris* – lighter, more insignificant (comparative adj.)  
*Qui potis est* – “How is it possible?”  
*inquis* – “you say”  
*quod* (conj.) – because  
*amans, amantis, m.* – lover  
*iniuria, iniuriae, f.* – injustice, slight  
*talis, tale* – such  
*cogo, cogere, coegi, coactus-a-um* – to drive, to compel
magis (adv.) – more
minus (adv.) – less