

FURTIVUS AMOR: THE STRUCTURE OF TIBULLUS 1.5

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Earlier commentators, from the days of J. J. Scaliger and C. G. Heyne, although appreciating the sentiment, have not always understood the structural artistry of Tibullus 1.5,¹ which on analysis reflects a patterned balance in perfect accord with the sharply changing moods of this delightful poem. Here Tibullus reiterates the age-old complaint over the agony of unrequited love (1-2):

Asper eram et bene discidium me ferre loquebar,
at mihi nunc longe gloria fortis abest.

At the opening of the piece we find the poet alone, probably at home,

¹ The following editions of Tibullus have proven useful in the analysis of 1.5: C. G. Heyne (ed. 4, Leipzig 1817); P. A. De Golbéry (Paris 1826); E. Hiller (Leipzig 1885; repr. Hildesheim 1965); A. Cartault (Paris 1909); K. F. Smith (New York 1913; repr. Darmstadt 1964); J. P. Postgate (ed. 2, Oxford 1915; repr. 1959); F. W. Lenz (ed. 2, Leiden 1964); M. Ponchont (ed. 5, Paris 1961); M. Michael Wilson, *Select Elegies of Tibullus* (London 1967). For concordances, besides the *index verborum* in Hiller (by A. Brinck, 61-805), I have used E. N. O'Neil, *A Critical Concordance of the Tibullan Corpus* (Amer. Philol. Assoc. Mon. 21, 1963), and S. Govaerts, *Le Corpus Tibullianum: Index verborum et relevés statistiques* (The Hague 1966). For the literature, see especially M. Schuster, *Tibull-Studien* (Vienna 1930, repr. Hildesheim 1968); E. Riess, "Étude sur le folklore et les superstitions. VIII. Les poètes élégiaques romains," *Latomus* 2 (1938) 164-89; F. O. Copley, *Exclusus Amator: A Study in Latin Love Poetry* (Amer. Philol. Assoc. Mon. 17, 1956) 91-112; J. P. Elder, "Tibullus: Tersus atque Elegans," in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature: Elegy and Lyric* (ed. J. P. Sullivan, Cambridge 1962) 63-105; H. Musurillo, "The Theme of Time as a Poetic Device in the Elegies of Tibullus," *TAPA* 98 (1967) 253-68, with the bibliography there cited.

For the text of the elegy it is difficult to choose between Postgate and Lenz, but I have followed Lenz in general except for 47, where a full stop should be printed after *haec nocuere mihi* (but see Lenz's note *ad hoc.*); and 61, where his text, *praesto semper, te pauper*, seems still unsatisfactory: see Schuster 129. For an excellent, modern translation (though a different text is occasionally followed), see Elder 97-9, with the notes. Cf. also G. Luck, *Properz und Tibull: Liebeselegien* (Zürich 1964) 328-35.

gloomily brooding over his separation (*discidium*, 1) from Delia. And yet not once, even in the depths of his despair, will he utter a word of recrimination against her; rather, he will blame all others, including himself. The source of their separation in 1.5 is a new and wealthy lover (47), who has been introduced to Delia by a spiteful old crone (*callida lena*, 48; *sagae . . . rapacis*, 59), who, acting perhaps as the girl's *custos*, was apparently bribed to turn Delia's mind away from the impecunious Tibullus. A poem of primitive emotions of guilt, self-torture, and hate, the elegy has in many respects (as F. O. Copley has reminded us) the character of a *paraclausithyron*, insofar as Tibullus is truly the *exclusus amator*, the poor lover who has here been supplanted by a wealthier rival.

Thus the mood of the poem is tense, rising and falling, swiftly changing. The poet at first thought he could bravely endure the separation, but now *gloria fortis abest* [the superficially attractive *sortis* of A and other MSS is merely a scribal error], and he is in torment like a whip-top spun by a boy (3-4). The vivid image of the whip-top, which R. Hornsby feels is the central symbol of the piece, is unique in Tibullus' poetry,² and delicately evokes the confusion, delirium, and disorientation of the poet's frustrated love. But the whipping of the top further suggests the idea of torture, and this leads to the next image. For now (5-6) he is an unruly slave (*ferum*) being punished by his mistress, or perhaps better, being tortured for evidence on the rack by the *quaestio per tormenta* or *in equuleo*. Thus we must attempt to clarify the image from what we know of the Roman practice of the *quaestio*,³ and these vivid lines are not to be deleted with the sixteenth-century scholar Achilles Statius. Slaves were regularly tortured to

² For the image, see also Vergil, *Aeneid* 7.378-80 (*volitans sub verberibus turbo, / quem pueri magno in gyro vacua atria circum / intenti ludo exercent*) to describe the frenzy of queen Amata, the wife of Latinus. For a discussion of the Tibullus passage, see K. F. Smith (above, note 1) 290-1, and Elder 76. In a brief analysis, R. A. Hornsby, *Reading Latin Poetry* (Norman, Oklahoma 1967) 96, considers the top spinning and the top at rest as the basic image of the poem, but this is difficult to establish.

³ See A. Berger, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law* (Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc. 43, Philadelphia 1953) 738-39, and his article, "Torture," in *OCD* (Oxford 1949) 914, for the examination of slaves either as criminals or as witnesses in Roman law. For the objection of Achilles Statius to lines 5-6, because of the abrupt shift from the previous lines, see the note of Golbéry (above, note 1) 57. Smith 291 and, following him, Wilson 48, take the image rather as the punishment of an unruly slave. See also note 4 below.

admit a crime or to tell what they knew as witnesses, though normally they were not allowed to give evidence against their masters save in the case of *maiestas*. Here the torturer, in this case Delia, forces her slave to retract his proud boast, that he could live without her; and the *horrida verba* (6), or "harsh words," that are to be suppressed, must be the poet's disavowals of his love or something similar, although they would recall the screams of pain that the tortured victim utters as lighted torches or hot metal plates (*laminae*) are applied to his sides.⁴ Normally the torture would continue until the slave either collapsed with pain or else humbly and quietly admitted the truth. But *parce tamen*, Tibullus begs (7-8),⁵

per venerem quaeso compositumque caput;

she must not continue the heartless torture. For it is Tibullus who is on the rack, the young man she once loved, whose prayers and magical rituals once saved her from a *tristis morbus* (9), when she lay ill, obsessed with disturbing dreams. And now another suitor enjoys her love, after the poet did so much to restore her health. In the ritual of healing, while Tibullus used sulphur as a fumigant to drive away all evil influences from the house, an old witch (ironically perhaps the same who later betrayed him) sang an incantation. It may have been thought that Delia's fevered nightmares came from the *manes* or the *lemures*; this would perhaps explain why Tibullus, his head veiled, with ungirt tunic, made his prayer to Hecate-*Trivia* nine times—a ritual thrice three—at the dead of night.⁶ In Tibullus, as we are aware, magical

⁴ The verb *uro* is very frequent in Tibullus for the torment of love: see, e.g., 1.9.21-22 (of torture with fire, iron, and whips), and for the frequencies see the concordances of O'Neil and Govaerts (above, note 1), s.v. For the torture of Propertius' slave, Lygdamus, with hot metal plates for an alleged plot on Cynthia's life, see Propertius 4.7.35 (*candescat lamina vernae*), and cf. Luck (above, note 1) *ad loc.*

⁵ In begging Delia *per compositum caput* (8), Tibullus is appealing to her head "laid to rest (in sleep)," as well as "laid next to (mine)." The love-connotation was already seen by Golbéry 57; and see the various meanings of the word in the entry by Hoffmann in *TLL* (1912) 2116, and cf. the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, fasc. 2 (Oxford 1969) 379 s.v.

⁶ Smith 294, whom Wilson 48 follows, suggests that Delia might have been suffering from a bout of malaria. Ponchont 36 also inclines to seeing this as a real illness. For the use of sulphur as a fumigant in religious rituals, see Pliny, *Hist. nat.* 35.177: *habet et in religionibus locum ad expiandas suffitu domos*; cf. Theocritus 24.96. On the use of sulphur in the elegiac poets, see Riess (above, note 1) 188. For the ritual exorcising of the *manes* on the occasion of the *Lemuralia*, see G. Dumézil, *La religion romaine archaïque* (Paris 1966) 360-2. Hecate, however, was associated with the *ἄωποι*, or the spirits of men and

rites are usually linked with love (as in 1.2.41-56, 1.3.17-22); and this is why Delia's good health is so important to the poet, and why he is so angry that, once she has regained her health, another profits by it (17-18):

fruitur nunc alter amore
et precibus felix utitur ille meis.

After this 18-line introduction, we now have an 18-line idyllic vignette (19-36), enclosed within the repeated refrain, *fingebam* (20, 35). Here the poet describes a small farm with wheat-fields, sheepfolds, and vineyards—we must remember that he speaks of himself farther on as *pauper* (61 ff.)—very likely the same estate he had inherited from his forebears (1.1.35-42), who had cultivated it in more prosperous times. He had often dreamed of bringing Delia to his country home (cf. 1.1.45-48, 1.2.71-74), and this dream-fantasy forms the stuff of his most charming poetry. Now too, in his dream, he wants Delia to be the mistress of his estate, like the classic, Catonian *vilica*,⁷ to oversee his slaves, his wheat-harvest, his wine-making, his sheep, and the ritual offerings to the rustic gods. He sees her as the all-competent *amans domina* (25-26) and it gives him pleasure; she will supervise the entertainment for the great M. Valerius Corvinus Messalla—*tantum venerata virum* (33; the reading should be retained)—planning and serving his modest meal. And, like the humblest slave, the poet glories in his anonymity (30): *at iuvat in tota me nihil esse domo*. For a Roman woman to take complete charge of an estate would show how much confidence her husband had in her, and it recalls the great eulogy of the unknown matron, called the *Laudatio Turiae*,⁸ written perhaps about the year 8 B.C., wherein a husband tells how his dutiful wife managed the household while he was in exile until recalled by Octavius.

women who died prematurely, by illness, suicide, etc., and these were often thought to haunt the living; or else they could be invoked in a *devotio* to harass an enemy. See note 11, below. For an extensive discussion see E. Rohde, *Psyche* (London 1925) 590-95 and cf. also the notes of Riess 169-71.

⁷ On the diligent qualities of the *vilica*, see Cato, *De agri cultura* 143 (ed. A. Mazzarino, Leipzig 1962), and see K. Schneider, "Vilicus," *RE* 8 A (1958) 2139-40. On Horace's friendship with his *vilicus*, see his *Epist.* 1.14. For an earlier discussion of the passage see Smith 295-97; and on the *otium amoureux*, or "leisure of love" in Tibullus, see now J.-M. André, *L'Otium dans la vie morale et intellectuelle romaine des origines à l'époque augustéenne* (Paris 1966) 403-8.

⁸ For the text, see M. Durry, *Eloge funèbre d'une matrone romaine* (Paris 1960) 13-15.

But for the unfortunate poet, this vision of a loving *domina* and efficient wife or *vilica* was not to be, *renuente deo* (20).

Such are the tragic, dark shadows of the first half of the poem (1-36). The second part, however, reacts sharply against the gloom of the first and the entire atmosphere is changed (37-76). The key to the second part is the poet's counterreaction, once he realizes he has failed in trying to forget his beloved Delia, pained as he is by the frustrated dream of their happiness together. The first stage in this dramatic reversal is the destruction of the *rapax saga* by a potent curse (49-56); the second is the dual warning to the unwary lovers, milder to Delia, stronger to the rival (59-76).

In an attempt to forget, Tibullus had at first tried wine (37-38), as many lovers do; and, indeed, a good example of this questionable remedy is the moody drinking passage in Tibullus' other *paraclausithyron*, 1.2.1-4 (*Adde merum . . .*); but now he finds his sorrow, by a kind of sad magic, merely turns his wine to tears (38). Next, in a delightful interlude (and extraordinarily realistic for Tibullus), the poet tells of his half-hearted attempt to make love to another woman (39-46). *Saepe aliam tenui* (39): how often, he does not say; but at least on one typical occasion he admits that Venus deserted him with a sober reminder, and his enraged companion told him that he must be under a spell, a *devotio*, and that Delia had bewitched him.⁹ But even in his humiliation he can bear no criticism of Delia; if she has bewitched him, it was by her beauty, rivalling even that of the divine Thetis when Peleus first beheld her charms. Thus he will not hold Delia guilty for her new liaison, but places the blame on the conniving duenna, who first introduced the new lover into the household. So (47-48, in the better punctuation of Postgate, Ponchont, Luck, and later Lenz):

haec nocuere mihi. quod adest huic dives amator,
venit in exitium callida lena meum.

All this was my bane. But her having a wealthy suitor
Was a havoc wreaked on me by a clever crone.

⁹ On the passage see the comments of Elder 77, 100. The correct reading of 1.5.42 is *et pudet et narrat . . .*, as Golbéry, Smith, Ponchont, and Lenz, among others, have seen, despite the difficulties raised by Scaliger and Heyne, whom Hiller, Postgate, Elder, and Wilson follow. For an explanation see Golbéry 62, Smith 299 ("and in her shame she says . . ."), and Ponchont 39.

It is noteworthy that in the two *paraclausithyra* (1.2 and 1.5), Tibullus should confront two different rivals for Delia's affection. Is the *dives amator* of 1.5 the same as the *coniunx* of 1.2 and 1.6, to whom (e.g., in 1.6.15 ff.) the poet addresses a similar warning? It seems wiser not to attempt such identifications, for it is possible that the poet has deliberately confused us, thus preventing our identifying the real Delia (or Plania, if Apuleius is right) or ever recovering her real status, whether of *matrona* or *meretrix*.¹⁰ Still, Tibullus does not reproach Delia for being wooed away by expensive gifts; he merely admits somewhat sadly (60): *donis vincitur omnis amor*, "there is no love that cannot be won by gifts." It is the crafty bawd who, richly bribed, has told Delia not to commit herself to a lover of Tibullus' class (*sagae praecepta rapacis*, 59). And so for the *lena*, as he calls her, Tibullus prepares his most elaborate *devotio* (49–56), the meaning of which remains obscure. If we understand it rightly, the poet's curse would transform this avaricious, prying woman into the frenzied, screaming witch of folklore, pursued by Hecate's attendant spirits.¹¹ Feeding like a ravening wolf on bloody carcasses, and slaking her thirst with gall, she is pursued by the souls of the prematurely dead, while an ominous owl

¹⁰ We may not presume to settle this ancient question here. The *gentilicium* suggested by Apuleius, *Apologia* 10 (ed. R. Helm, Leipzig 1959) is an uncommon one—see F. Münzer, *RE* 20 (1950) 2186—but there is no reason to suspect it. For Copley 101–3, Delia is merely a courtesan, and the *coniunx* of 1.2 and 1.6 is merely her most favored lover of the moment. Yet Gordon Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford 1968) 538, tends to doubt whether Delia was a real woman, although he suggests that Tibullus imagines her as married. Very likely both real and fictional-traditional elements are combined in Tibullus' portrait of Delia, but we do not know enough about the ancient poet's method of composition to say how far this is true. The truth was glimpsed by F. Leo, "Ueber einige Elegien Tibulls," *Philol. Unters.* 2 (Berlin 1881) 19–21, and F. Marx, "Albius," *RE* 1 (1894) 1321.

¹¹ Compare Horace's portrait of the witches Canidia and Sagana in *Sat.* 1.8 and *Epodes* 5 as they go about their gruesome tasks. In *Sat.* 1.8.22–27 they gather bones and noxious herbs from a cemetery with tunics girt up, and they tear apart a black lamb with their teeth. Thus in Tibullus' *defixio*, Delia's *duenna* is to become a maddened witch pursuing her disgusting habits, haunted by the spirits of the prematurely dead. See also Rohde, *Psyche* 594, and cf. note 6, above. For Heyne 66, Golbéry 64, and Smith 301–4, the *animae fata querentes* are the ghosts of dead lovers who have been harmed by the witch's wiles; and, eating raw flesh and drinking gall, she is to be finally afflicted with "lycanthropy," a disease in which a mad person was thought to have the characteristics of a wolf. See Riess 183, Elder 102, Lenz 67 (on lines 49 ff.); and for the Greek references, Liddell-Scott-Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (with Supplement, Oxford 1968) 1064, s. v. *λυκανθρωπία*.

hoots from the roof-top.¹² Maddened by hunger, she will pick wild herbs and gnaw the cast-off bones from burial-places; and, finally, in naked shame she will fly screaming through Italy from city to city, while stray dogs (or, perhaps, Hecate's hounds) drive her, like something unclean, from the crossroads. It is a shocking *defixio*—unequalled save by Horace's portrait of his enemy, the witch Canidia—and Tibullus' feeling for the *lena* leaves little to the imagination. The poet is proud, here as elsewhere, of his prowess in witchcraft and in Hecate's rites. *Venus furtiva* has respected his achievements in the past, and will assist him now; still, his comment, *eveniet: dat signa deus* (57), suggest that his elaborate curse is not seriously intended and is more in the nature of a poetic joke. In any case, the poet feels that the god of love, *furtivus Amor*, is sending forth omens prosperous for his final victory.

In accord with his newly found hope, the last section of the poem contains a mock-solemn address to Delia and her lover (59–66 to Delia; 67–68, an interlude of lament; 69–76 to the *amator*). After warning Delia to reject the pernicious influence of the *duenna*, Tibullus writes a witty, engaging eulogy of himself as the *pauper*, the lover of slender means (61–66). The poor lover has nothing to give but his personal services, and they mark the depth of his affection, more precious than any gift. He acts, in fact, like the *stipator*, the attendant-slave who walks before his mistress in the thickest crowds, clearing a path for her—recalling the way Horace suggests that the ambitious young man should act when trying to impress an elderly gentleman of substance.¹³ In a strange and still controverted line, Tibullus says that the poor lover will introduce his girl secretly (*furtim*) to his "secret friends" (*occultos amicos*), so that their rendezvous there will not be known abroad;¹⁴ and, again, like a slave before dinner, he will untie her

¹² The witch's downfall is heralded by the disturbing cry (*violenta*) of the screech-owl, traditionally of bad omen. See the note of Smith 302–3; Riess 188; and E. S. McCartney "Superstitions Concerning the Roof," *Mélanges Marouzeau* (Paris 1948) 409–20, especially (on this passage) 410–11.

¹³ In the cynical *Ars senes captandi*, which Horace puts into the mouth of Teiresias returned from Hades, speaking with Ulysses: see *Sat.* 2.5.94–95, *extrahe turba / oppositis umeris*. On the attendant, cf. also Horace, *Sat.* 1.3.138–39: *neque te quisquam stipator . . . sectabitur*.

¹⁴ The line (65), *pauper ad occultos furtim deducet amicos*, has occasioned difficulty both because of its apparent tautology and (in the case of Heyne) its immoral suggestions. Heyne could not accept the line because he thought that it meant that Tibullus was here

sandals. The formal eight-line address to Delia and the similar address to the rival are interrupted by a distich reminiscent of the true *paraclausithyron* (67–68, though, against Copley, the dramatic setting of the poem is more likely not before Delia's door): the door will not open unless it is pounded by a "full" hand, that is, unless the lover's hand is full of gifts.

At last, in the apostrophe to the wealthy rival, *at tu . . .* (69–76), we have the dramatic dénouement of the poem, consisting of a mild yet vaguely menacing warning. Yet Tibullus does not reveal his hand completely, lest he put his rival on his guard. But the eight lines are clearly an integral part of the elegy, and thus are not to be transposed (in part) to elegy 1.6 with J. J. Scaliger, or deleted with C. G. Heyne and Wunderlich,¹⁵ none of whom understood the poem's structural symmetry. The poet begins by bidding his rival beware of the turn of Fortune's wheel (69–70).¹⁶ And here, *mea furta timeto* (69), "beware

playing the part of the *leno* with his friends; in fact, H. Kraffert (1883), cited in the edition of Hiller xi, would change *amicos* to *amores*. Postgate would emend the line completely to fit line 66, thus: *pauper adhuc luteos suris deducet amictus*, "the poor man will draw the still muddy coverings from thy calves"; see the *apparatus criticus* to Postgate's edition *ad loc.*, and his translation in the Loeb Library *Tibullus* (Cambridge 1913, repr. 1962) 220 n.1. As Smith 305–6 correctly explains, *ocultos* refers to the poet's cautious young friends; *furtim* to Delia's efforts to escape unnoticed from home. So substantially Wilson 52, and Elder 98 (although his "privately escort you" is not quite right for the subtle *furtim*). On the love-intrigue connotation of *furtim*, so frequent in Tibullus, see note 17 below. The implication in *ocultos* would seem to be that, because these were Tibullus' "secret friends," the news of Delia's attendance at the banquet would not be spread abroad. Ponchont 40 translates *ocultos* as *réunis en cachette*. Lenz 68 accepts the line without comment and does not print the suggested emendations; cf. also Luck 332.

¹⁵ Heyne suggested that the elegy ended at line 68, and that lines 69–76 formed a fragment of a lost poem: see his comments *ad loc.*, 69–71, and his view is followed in the appended *Observationes* of E. C. F. Wunderlich (Leipzig, 1817, *pars posterior*) 127–28. J. J. Scaliger ended the poem at 70, and transposed 71–6 to fit after elegy 1.6.32; see the comments of Golbéry, who correctly understood the passage. But Scaliger's theory was adopted without comment in the Bohn Library translation of W. F. Kelly, *Erotica: The Poems of Catullus and Tibullus and the Virgil of Venus* (London 1854) in his version of 1.6, p. 122. L. Havet unnecessarily transposed lines 72–74 as follows: 74–73–72: see Ponchont, Introduction, xl.

¹⁶ On the image of the wheel of Fortune, see Smith 306. For the two different ancient conceptions of *Fortuna* or *Tyché*, as a wheel laden with good and evil gifts which spins indiscriminately, or as the moon's orb whose waxing and waning suggest man's ever-changing prosperity, see the note in H. Musurillo, *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in the Dramatic Poetry of Sophocles* (Leiden 1967) 67. In Tibullus, however, *rota* is regularly a chariot- or wagon-wheel, or (as in 2.3.48) a potter's wheel. See O'Neil, and Govaerts, s. v.

of my intrigues [*or stolen love*]," seems the far better reading in the context (and so Cartault, Ponchont, Postgate, and others), preferable to the easier *fata*, an emendation first suggested in the 1558 Venice edition of M.-A. Muret and adopted by many later editors. For *furtum* and its cognates, *furtim* and *furtivus*, are regularly associated with love's intrigue in Tibullus.¹⁷ And so, "Beware," he seems to say, "of my successful intrigues in the past, and [with a play on the meaning of *furtum*] of my ability to steal Delia away from you in the future." Thus *furta*, the reading of the manuscripts, is the most apt in the passage, the tone of which is deliberately obscure and almost prophetic. So too, the commonplace and oracular reference to the wheel of Fortune seems precisely right and suited to the level of Tibullus' retort.

The six final lines (71-76) of the address to the *amator* are somewhat difficult and have not been discussed as extensively as they should. In accord with the threatening mood of the lines, Tibullus warns his rival that already a strange, nervous figure stands outside Delia's door. It is a witty and amusing concept, and the very obscurity of the reference seems to suit the oracular tone of the passage.¹⁸ The *ignotus amator* (as we may call him) first looks up (*prospicit*, 72) to see if anyone is coming along the street; he then withdraws out of sight (*refugit*), as in a comedy, so that no one will see him. Next, he blithely makes believe he is an ordinary passer-by (*simulat transire domum*, 73); but, when the coast is clear (cf. *solus*), he again takes up his position at the door and keeps constantly clearing his throat (*excreat usque*, 74) to gain

¹⁷ On *furta*, in the sense of "love-intrigues," cf. Tibullus 1.2.34 (*celari vult sua furta Venus*), with the note of Smith 215, although he strangely refuses to read *furta* at 1.5.69. Cf. also, in the Garland of Sulpicia, 3.11.7-8, very probably by Tibullus: *mutuus adsit amor, per te dulcissima furta / . . . rogo*. In Tibullus' use of *furtim*, the love-connotation is fairly constant (as, e.g., in 1.2.10, 19; 1.6.5; 1.8.35, etc.). On this connotation in *furtivus*, see 1.5.7 and 75 (*furtivus Amor*), 1.8.57 (*furtiva Venus*), and 1.9.55 (*furtivo usu*). For the frequencies in Tibullus, see O'Neil and Govaerts, s.vv. Consult also the articles of Bubenbauer, "Furtim," "Furtivus," and "Furtum," in *TLL* 6 (1926) 1641-49. It was a misunderstanding of this connotation of *furtum* that had led editors and commentators since Muret to change the text at 1.5.69 to the prosaic *fata*: so, for example, Heyne, Golbéry, Hiller, Smith, Lenz (and see his note *ad loc.*, 68), Wilson, Elder, and others.

¹⁸ Most editors do not discuss the passage in detail. Smith 290 simply speaks of "another man," and Elder 100 of a "rival"; Ponchont 36-37 speaks of "*un autre galant*," and says, "*le tentateur n'est pas loin*." Copley 108 departs from the common view by identifying the *quidam* with Tibullus himself, probably because he imagines the entire elegy to be set poetically before Delia's door.

the attention of Delia, and, very likely, of her rich lover as well. And so the poet concludes: "The trickster Love¹⁹ is up to something; so enjoy it while you can. Your skiff sails (*nat*) on water that is smooth [*now*, but may be troubled later]."

But who is the *ignotus amator*? Four possibilities present themselves. It is (1) the god himself, *furtivus Amor*, come to announce that a change of fortunes and lovers is due, in accordance with Tibullus' prayers. It is perhaps (2) a definite young man, a new lover, who threatens to take the rich man's place as proof of Delia's fickleness. It is (3) Tibullus himself, shyly waiting for Delia to remember his devotion and past love, the *furta* of other days. It is, finally (4), an unidentified person, whom Tibullus merely pretends is present, invented in the poet's prophetic mood, perhaps with some of the poet's own characteristics, in order to threaten the rich lover and make him feel insecure in Delia's love.²⁰

Against the first hypothesis, that the strange figure is the god himself, speaks the peculiar conduct of the man in front of Delia's house, his unwillingness to be seen or noticed by others, and his constant clearing his throat to attract the attention of those within. Whoever he is, he is human and not divine. Nor need we, on the other hand, postulate a third, new, lover in the relationship. Though the lines are ambiguous, it would seem that the mysterious figure before Delia's door, if not the impatient Tibullus himself, is merely an invented lover (perhaps with the shy hesitancy of the poet) waiting outside the closed door for his time to come. Portrayed so indefinitely, the figure of the *ignotus amator* appears more ominous, more of a threat. Thus the fourth hypothesis seems poetically the most suitable in the context. Finally, the last two lines addressed to the lover are the

¹⁹ Partly because of the verb *parat* here, and also because of the parallel use of *Venus furtiva* (cf. 1.8.57: *nota Venus furtiva mihi est*), it would seem that *Amor* should be capitalized, either as a personification or, more likely, as referring to the god himself, although most editors do not advert to the problem. Copley 100 and *passim* does not personify *furtivus amor*, and associates it with the forbidden intrigue of the love elegy and the *paraclausithyron*; Elder 99, similarly, speaks of "furtive love." Postgate, however, correctly translates: "Steady Love has some scheme afoot," in his Loeb Library version (above, note 14) 223.

²⁰ The tone of the reference is notably close to the mood of Horace, *Odes* 1.5, with its imagery of the changeable sea of a woman's mood and possible shipwreck, when a *gracilis puer* supplants Horace in Pyrrha's affection.

poet's Parthian shot:

utere quaeso
dum licet: in liquida nat tibi linter aqua.²¹

Again the tone is oracular, but the reason for Tibullus' confidence is precisely in the nature of love itself, like a fragile skiff on the sea, the surface of which (*liquida*) is always susceptible of sudden change.

The structural symmetry of Tibullus 1.5 will emerge from the following outline:

Part I (1-36): The poet in despair

- 1-8 Love's torment: the spinning top, the rack
- 9-18 Tibullus' claim to Delia's love: his part in her cure
- 19-36 The poet's idyllic dream of future happiness frustrated

Part II (37-76): The poet's attempt to retaliate

- 37-46 He tries to forget Delia with wine, with other women
- 47-58 A poetic *devotio* for the *callida lena*
- 59-66 A final message to Delia: she must resist the *lena* and return to Tibullus; eulogy for the *pauper* (61-66)
- 67-68 Interlude: the poet still frustrated by the closed door
- 69-76 A final message to the rival: beware of Fortune's change; already a new rival is at the gates; enjoy smooth seas while you can.

Thus, part of the solution in understanding the final section (59-76) is the symmetry of the two parting messages, of eight lines each, beginning *at tu* It is striking that the curse of the *saga* occupies eight lines (49-56), as does the poet's own protestation of his love (9-16).

²¹ The line has not always been clearly understood. *Liquida* . . . *aqua* suggests that the water is, for the moment, "clear," and therefore "calm," but hints that it is also by its nature changeable. See the note of Smith 307. There has been much discussion of the choice of the readings *nam* (with MSS AV, and others cited by Lenz 69) or *nat* (with *Guelferbytanus* and others). The reading *nam* would here lay stress on the reason for the poet's ironical advice to his rival to enjoy love while he can (*utere*, etc.). But against *nam*, apart from the need to supply a verb, is Tibullus' general avoidance of the postponed position for *nam*: 3.4.43 is by the poet Lygdamus, and in 2.4.12 *omnia nunc* seems by far the more preferable reading to *omnia nam*. See the definitive discussion in Schuster (above, note 1) 130, which has convinced most editors. Thus *nat* is read, e.g., by Heyne Golbéry, Hiller, Smith, Havet, Lenz, Elder, and others; while *nam* is retained by Ponchont (though with some misgivings), Postgate, and Wilson. Emendations like Cartault's *non* and Rossberg's *nunc* have little to recommend them, although if we reject the evidence of the *Guelferbytanus* the correction *iam* for *nam* is not impossible. L. Havet would read *et liquida nat*, changing the punctuation of the line to link it with the previous one, and Ponchont 41 finds this solution attractive, although (I feel) unnecessary.

Structurally, the elegy falls naturally into two almost equal halves (of 36 and 40 lines, respectively). In the first half, the poet agonizes over his despair, and the section ends with his frustrated dream of happiness. But in the second part Tibullus reacts against his black fortune: the turning point is the elaborate curse of the old witch as his first step towards liberation; there follows the warning of the lovers and the mysterious threat against the *dives amator*.

Throughout the poem we detect the typical Tibullan pattern of past, present, and future:²² Delia's past illness and the poet's rejection after her cure; his present nadir of despair; and his dream of a happier future, especially when his foes, both witch and lover, will be discomfited, and Delia will be restored as his jewel and sole possession. Important, too, for the emotional tone and charm of the elegy is the transformation of the poet's self-image: now he is the whirling top, the slave of love upon the rack, the priest garbed for a magical ritual, the happy farmer on a flourishing estate, and finally the poor lover who performs a slave's offices for his lady as she dines in secret with his friends or walks the busy streets of Rome. The power of Tibullus' witchcraft, based on his loyalty to *furtivus Amor*—Delia's witchery was in her beauty alone—is another vivid element in the thematic and emotional development of the poem. For it is Tibullus' *devotio* which leads to the turning-point and final dénouement of the piece. Emboldened by his past success, the poet invents a solemn curse for the traitorous crone and then confidently proceeds to prophesy the downfall of his rival in a way that resembles, though it is much superior to, his warning to anyone who mocks his love in 1.2.89–90:

at tu, qui lactus rides mala nostra, caveto
mox tibi: non uni saeviet usque deus.

But the close of 1.5 is especially striking for the portrait of the mysterious figure, the *ignotus amator*, who, in manner resembling Tibullus, haunts Delia's doorstep threatening to turn the tide of Fortune against his presently more successful rival. In the oracular close, it is the fragile, tentative nature of love, like the fickleness of *levis Fors* (70), that is precisely the source of Tibullus' guarded optimism. His rival is

²² For a discussion, see Musurillo, "The Theme of Time," (above, note 1) 162, with the literature there cited.

sailing a bark on smooth seas; but women's moods, like sea-weather, will soon change, and Tibullus will be back in favor again. Light, engaging, but not profound, elegy 1.5 is a tiny masterpiece rich in vivid imagery and primitive, sharply contrasted moods, skillfully constructed within the ancient tradition of the *paraclausithyron*.