

A2 Latin Unseen Verse (OVID) Past Paper: 1999 (Niobe and the slaughter of her children)

- 2 (a) Translate the following passage into English. Write your translation on alternate lines.

The mortal Niobe, who thinks herself superior to the goddess Latona, is punished by her: after killing all Niobe's sons, the goddess shoots her three daughters one by one; Niobe, at first defiant, is finally left paralysed by grief.

The last son vainly stretched out his arms in prayer, but fell smitten by a wound to the heart... His father in grief drove a dagger through his own heart too.

fama mali populique dolor lacrimaeque suorum
 tam subitae matrem certam fecere ruinae.
 corporibus gelidis incumbit¹ et ordine nullo
 oscula dispensat natos suprema per omnes.
 'pascere², crudelis, nostro, Latona, dolore!
 dixerat: insonuit contento³ nervus⁴ ab arcu;
 qui, praeter Nioben⁵ unam, conterruit omnes:
 illa malo est audax. stabant cum vestibus atris
 ante toros⁶ fratrum demisso crine sorores;
 e quibus una trahens haerentia viscere⁷ tela
 imposito fratri moribunda relanguit⁸ ore;
 altera solari miseram conata parentem
 conticuit subito duplicataque⁹ vulnere caeco est.
 ultima restabat; quam toto corpore mater
 tota veste tegens, 'unam minimamque relinque! 15
 de multis minimam posco' clamavit 'et unam.'
 dumque rogat, pro qua rogat occidit: orba¹⁰ resedit 17
 exanimis inter natos natasque virumque
 deriguitque malis; nullos movet aura capillos,
 in vultu color est sine sanguine, lumina maestis
 stant immota genis, nihil est in imagine vivum.

OVID, *Metamorphoses* VI, 267 ff

¹ <i>incumbo, incumbere, incubui, incubitum</i> + dative	I throw myself upon
² <i>pascor, pasci, pastus</i> + ablative	I feast upon
³ <i>contentus -a -um</i>	taut
⁴ <i>nervus -i m.</i>	bowstring
⁵ <i>Nioben</i> : accusative case	
⁶ <i>torus, -i m.</i>	funeral bier
⁷ <i>viscus, visceris n.</i>	flesh
⁸ <i>relanguesco, relanguescere, relangui</i>	I sink down
⁹ <i>duplico, duplicare, duplicavi, duplicatum</i>	I double up
¹⁰ <i>orbus -a -um</i>	childless

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- (b) Write out and scan lines 15 and 17.

[2]

