Like Munro's emendation, mine assumes a considerable corruption, but that a considerable corruption has occurred is suggested by the absence of a convincing emendation closer to the transmitted text. I assume that *sumant oculi* emerged from *si iam hoc tibi.* Although most of the individual letter-changes can be paralleled from the manuscripts of Lucretius,[15] the corruption is most likely to have been due to a general similarity between the two readings. *dem* may have been omitted, because, after the emergence of *sumant oculi,* it was seen to fit neither the metre nor the sense. The possibility that the text in the middle of the line had been partly obscured by damage cannot be ruled out.

Obviously I do not claim that my suggested reading must be correct. But I do claim that, unlike most other proposals, it is appropriate to the context. Now we have Lucretius characteristically making a concession to an imaginary opponent whom he identifies with the reader, which means that *si iam hoc tibi dem* is in tune not only with *id quoque uti concedam* in 2.541, but also with *sic tibi si . . . constitues* in 2.560–1.[16]

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[15] *siiamh* → *sumant*: confusion of *i* and *u* and of *m* and *n* is common (see W. A. Merrill, 'Corruption in the manuscripts of Lucretius', *Univ. Calif. Public. Class. Philol.* 2 [1914], 237–53); *octibi* → *oculi*: for *u* for *ti,* see 4.1240, where Q has *parum* for *partim*; for *l* for *b,* see 3.553, where OQ have *tali* and V has *tale* for *tabe.*

[16] I am very grateful to Leofranc Holford-Strevens and to *CQ*'s anonymous referee for their constructive criticisms. I have adopted several of their suggestions.

OVID'S SYRINX

At *Metamorphoses* 1.689ff. Ovid embeds the tale of Syrinx within the episode of Io. At Jupiter's behest Mercury, disguised as a herdsman, tries to close Argus' eyes by piping to him and telling him the pipes' origin. He describes how the virginal Syrinx was spotted by Pan, and he is about to tell the rest (she fled, was slowed by the river Ladon, appealed to its nymphs and was changed into reeds, which Pan grabbed in place of her; his sigh in the reeds was so musical that he made them into pan-pipes), but Argus' eyes close first. Mercury deepens Argus' sleep with his wand and kills him. Enraged, Juno puts his eyes into her peacock's tail and then sends a Fury against Io, who flees to the Nile, where she begs Jupiter for release. He wins over Juno and restores her original form to Io, who becomes a goddess. The Syrinx insert has not received much scholarly attention, which is a pity, because it contains much that is interesting from a narratological point of view, and much of its humour, cleverness, and complexity has been missed.

The passage has impact *per se*. It has a recherché appeal. Apart from the fact that it is the earliest account to survive and one of the few detailed versions that we have,[1] no other author puts the story in the mouth of Mercury or uses it as a way of making Argus fall asleep.[2] That may well be an Ovidian innovation.[3] In addition, among the

[1] Only Ach. Tat. 8.6 and Longus 2.34 are comparable in length.

[2] Elsewhere Mercury puts Argus to sleep with either pipes or his wand (Aesch. *P.V.* 574–5, Nonn. *D.* 13.25ff., V. Fl. 4.388–9, Serv. *A.* 7.790). Ovid seems to be alone in employing both the pipes and the wand, and also the tale of Syrinx (various methods are needed to ensure success in the case of somebody who has a hundred eyes and is fighting sleep).

[3] So F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso Metamorphosen Buch I–III* (Heidelberg, 1969), 205; B. Otis,

thirty-one rapes described at length by Ovid, this is the only one that is embedded, has two narrators (Mercury and Ovid), and has an ulterior purpose (to assist a rapist within another rape tale).[4] This is also a boldly experimental new kind of narrative: nowhere else in Classical literature does an author assign a story to a speaker in his narrative, cut short that speaker, and then complete the story in his own voice, summarizing what the speaker would have gone on to say.

Ovid has set himself a challenge—to produce a story that would send Argus to sleep but not his readers. He rises to the challenge well. There is listener deception here. Argus is already drowsy from the piping (686), and might well find the start of the tale (as related by Mercury at 689–700) somewhat dry and dull. The god does not mention that it concerns an attempted rape; in fact he puts stress on Syrinx's dedicated virginity and resemblance to Diana (694–8). It is a slow and wordy beginning, with not much action, but lots of names, minor detail (e.g. a full line on types of bow, half a line on Pan's garland), and description (although not the type to make Syrinx come alive at all[5]). Generally the style and sound in these lines are rather plain and unexciting too.[6] Argus, who obviously does not know the story and apparently cannot guess how it will progress, might well nod off at line 700.[7] However, for Ovid's readers (who are given the whole account) there are the unusual and innovative aspects of the narrative (mentioned above) and much more to interest and entertain them.

For a start, we can appreciate the antithesis between Mercury's leisurely lines and Ovid's own (summarizing) lines at 700ff., which have much more action and drama and marvel (all of this highlighted by the contrast with what precedes). Ovid cheekily cuts short the eloquent god of speech himself, and finishes his story for him, in a livelier narrative, reserving for himself the bulk and meat of the tale (and also the *aetion*). Argus drops off at the very moment when Pan enters and the story is about to become absorbing. There is wit as well in the word order at 705–6 (*Panaque, cum prensam sibi iam Syringa putaret, / corpore pro nymphae calamos tenuisse palustres*[8]), with the suggestive separation of Pan and Syrinx in 705 and juxtaposition of *nymphae* and *calamos* in 706. There is also a witty (and imaginative) touch with *querenti* in the onomatopoeic 708 (which describes the sound that Syrinx makes in reed form at Pan's sigh: *effecisse sonum tenuem similemque querenti*). And there is a diverting little surprise in the sudden switch back to direct speech at 710 in the midst of reported speech.

There may also be generic interest, if the lines tell of the origin not only of the pipes but also of pastoral poetry (which they may symbolize here[9]). If this is the case,

Ovid as an Epic Poet (Cambridge, 1970), 385; D. Konstan, 'The death of Argus, or what stories do: audience response in ancient fiction and theory', *Helios* 18 (1991), 17–18; and W. S. Anderson, *Ovid's Metamorphoses Books 1–5* (Norman and London, 1997), 215.

[4] On Ovidian rapes, see my 'Plotting in Ovidian rape narratives, *Eranos* 98 (2000), 75–92.

[5] See Anderson (n. 3), 215.

[6] Only the four-word hexameter with *spondeiazon* in 690, some alliteration in 691–2, and some assonance in 693 and 696–7 are worthy of any note.

[7] H. Fränkel, *Ovid: A Poet Between Two Worlds* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1945), 85 suggested that the fact that the lines on Syrinx resemble those earlier (at 452ff.) on the rape of Daphne makes the reader drowsy like Argus. This may subtly mirror the effect on Argus for the reader, but certainly it would not contribute to sleepiness on the part of Argus himself (who has not been told about Daphne) as some scholars have suggested (e.g. G. K. Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* [Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975], 174). See also S. M. Wheeler, *A Discourse of Wonders* (Philadelphia, 1999), 2.

[8] The text used is that of W. S. Anderson, *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998).

[9] As they do at Virg. *Ecl*. 2.32, 10.51; Tib. 2.1.53–4; Prop. 3.3.30; Calp. *Ecl*. 1.93, 2.28, 31.

there would be a particular aptness to the pastoral and Hellenistic elements, such as aetiology, the story within a story, frustrated love, the herdsman singing on the hill,[10] a glance at the literary sense of *tenuis* in 708[11] and in 711–12 a clear echo of Virg. *Ecl.* 2.32–3. There would also be typically complex play with such an *aetion*, with Ovid having already begun a bucolic interlude (Io's story) prior to explaining pastoral's origins; with these origins being given the bucolic ambience noted above and being relayed in the pastoral setting of a *locus amoenus* (680–1) in Arcadia; with them being related by a fake herdsman to a herdsman guarding a fake cow; and with this explanation of a genre's beginnings leading to Argus' end.

The passage on Syrinx gains extra impact from the fact that it is embedded.[12] It has an important pivotal role in the plot of the Io episode as a whole (leading to the sleep and death of Argus, which in turn leads to Juno's persecution of Io, her appeal, and the resolution). In addition to drawing out the fatal moment at which Argus' eyes all close, it builds suspense: when Mercury's speech is interrupted at 700 with *restabat verba referre*, etc., one suspects that the break is due to Argus falling asleep, but confirmation of that suspicion is withheld until 714; also the inset story (especially the long summary of what Mercury was going to say but did not actually say) delays the murder of Argus (and the end of the entire Io section). The mood of the insert is also affected by the frame narrative: the surrounds of the Syrinx passage (668ff., 717ff.) are rather grave and grim, and we know from 670 and 684 that Mercury is telling the story as a soporific so that he can murder Argus; this means that the humour of 689ff. stands out in contrast but also acquires a dark tinge.[13] The inner story also receives from the outer story its setting—one of great visual force: Mercury himself (disguised as a herdsman!) is speaking to the extraordinary Argus (during the last moments of his life, as his hundred eyes are shutting), high up on a mountain top (666), in a *locus amoenus* (680–1) apt for Syrinx and the lovely countryside she moved in (693–4, 702), while Io the cow is in a pasture below within sight (665ff.).

The embedding also makes for an engaging and at times amusing structural intricacy. There are numerous parallels between the two narratives. For example, both have mountains and rivers in common, contain much humour and develop the theme of divine lechery; in particular, in both there is a rape attempt in the country by a god on a nymph who rejects his advances, flees, is pursued, and is metamorphosed.[14] Some of these links foreshadow (within a flashback) what will happen to Argus and Io after the insert. For instance, Syrinx enjoys some sort of continued existence (converted to pipes by a deity), as Argus will (converted to an adornment of the peacock's tail by a deity); like Syrinx, Io will later flee to a river and pray for release there and have her prayer answered; and the more or less happy ending and metamorphosis for Syrinx look forward to the joyful conclusion and change back to her original form for Io. At the same time there is much antithesis. Most obviously the Syrinx account is much

[10] As at Theoc. *Id.* 7.51, 85ff. [11] Cf. Virg. *Ecl.* 1.2, 6.8.

[12] On such interpolated narrative in general, see especially G. Genette, *Figures III* (Paris, 1972), 238–43; T. Todorov, *The Poetics of Prose*, trans. R. Howard (Ithaca, 1977), 66–79; M. Bal, 'Notes on narrative embedding', *Poetics Today* 2 (1981), 41–59; and L. Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. J. Whitely and E. Hughes (Oxford, 1989), and for it elsewhere in Ovid, cf. M. Pechillo, 'Ovid's framing technique: the Aeacus and Cephalus epyllion (*Met.* 7.490–8.5)', *CJ* 86 (1990), 35–44; and B. R. Nagle, 'A trio of love-triangles in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', *Arethusa* 21 (1988), 75–98.

[13] And the killing at 717ff. seems even more brutal after the foregoing humour.

[14] For further parallels, see Anderson (n. 3), 216–17. Note also that the Syrinx section is framed by references to Argus' eyes and sleepiness (at 684ff. and 714ff.).

shorter (while itself contributing to the expansiveness of the Io narrative), contains no pathos (contrast e.g. 642ff.), and concerns an ineffectual rape attempt, and in it Pan, foiled in an act of violence, creates (the pipes), whereas Mercury, successful in an act of violence, destroys (Argus). There are other complexities as well, which at times border on the kaleidoscopic: the story of a would-be rape is told to further the interests of an actual rapist; a tale of (unsuccessful) intended violence is used to perpetrate (successfully) violence; a god posing as a herdsman with goats tells of Pan (god of goats and herdsmen) to the herdsman Argus; a god starts to describe a frustrated rape by a god to the guard of the victim of an effected rape by a god, while the victim is in the vicinity; and so on.[15]

Mercury was an inspired choice as narrator, making for much ingenuity and wit. He begins a dry account of Pan's pursuit of a nymph, when according to many he was Pan's father and not above pursuing nymphs himself.[16] An explanation of the origins of the pipes is put in the mouth of one who was famed for inventing the lyre and in some accounts invented the pipes.[17] A divinity who was born on an Arcadian mountain (cf. *Cyllenius*, 713) by a minor goddess who accepted a god's amatory advances is here placed on top of a mountain to relate how a minor goddess returning from an Arcadian mountain rejected a god's amatory advances. And the son of one of Jupiter's mistresses is addressing the guard of another of Jupiter's mistresses.

The crafty Mercury plays his part in all of this with panache (the disguise as a non-threatening fellow herdsman, the intriguing new pipes which lead into the rather pedestrian opening of the *aetion*, and so on). Then there is Mercury's choice of bedtime story. The whole idea of putting somebody to sleep with any anecdote concerning a god trying to rape a beautiful nymph and involving a remarkable mutation is a great joke. And with this particular tale the god is mischievously mocking Argus' ignorance about the bovine Io. For he has the cheek to come out with what is in fact an obvious echo of Io's own experiences (another attractive virgin nymph on her return from somewhere in the country was propositioned by a god, fled, was chased, and was transformed). Teasingly, this is the truth about the cow in the pasture down below, and Mercury not only tells such a highly pertinent story to Argus but actually uses it as a soporific.

There is further point in having Argus as the narratee here and further relevance for him in the Syrinx narrative. It clearly shows him that gods can be predatory, violent, and no respecters of a person's devotion to another deity (Syrinx's to Diana, and Argus' to Juno). Lines 695ff. (on how much Syrinx was like Diana and passed for her) underline the fact that appearances can be deceptive (which is true of both Mercury and Io). When the nymphs turn Syrinx into reeds, this is a reminder that divinities (like Jupiter and Mercury) are capable of transformations. The insert also demonstrates that a beautiful quiet spot can be the site of the end of one's existence as a person, like the banks of the river Ladon (702) for Syrinx and the lush and shady (680–1) mountain top for Io's guard. The narratee really should have paid close attention and stayed awake, but Argus *panoptes* saw none of the above points.

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[15] Add to this the fact that Syrinx is just one of a whole complex of rape victims in *Met*. 1 and 2 (Daphne, Io, and Syrinx in 1, and Callisto, Coronis, and Europa in 2). Cf. Otis (n. 3), 93 and S. Mack, *Ovid* (New Haven and London, 1988), 113.

[16] See e.g. *h. Hom.* 19.1; Aelian, *V.H.* 10.18; Ov. *Fast.* 2.608ff.

[17] See e.g. *h. Hom.* 4.511–12, Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.2, Hor. *Carm.* 1.10.6, and see Bömer (n. 3), 206.