

Ovid *Metamorphoses* setting workshop

Read the following passages.

a] "...Dryope, the most beautiful of all the Oechalian maids. Her, a maid no more through the violence of him [Apollo] who rules at Delphi and at Delos, Andraemon took and was counted happy in his wife. There is a pool whose shelving banks take the form of sloping shores, the top of which a growth of myrtle crowns. Dryope had come hither innocent of the fates and, that you maybe the more indignant, with the intention of gathering garlands for the nymphs. In her arms she bore a pleasing burden, her infant boy not yet a full year old, and nursed him at her breast. Near the margin of the pool a plant of the water-lotus grew full of bright blossoms, the harbingers of fruit. To please her little son the mother plucked some of these blossoms, and I was in the act to do the same (for I was with her), when I saw drops of blood falling from the flowers and the branches shivering with horror. For, you must know, as the slow rustics still relate, Lotis, a nymph, while fleeing from Priapus' vile pursuit, had taken refuge in this shape, changed as to features but keeping still her name.

"But my sister knew naught of this. And when she started back in terror and, with prayers to the nymphs, strove to leave the place, her feet clung, root-like, to the ground; she struggled to tear herself away, but nothing moved except the upper part of her body; the slow-creeping bark climbed upward from her feet and covered all her loins. When she saw this, she strove to tear her hair with her hands, but only filled her hands with leaves; for leaves now covered all her head. But the boy, Amphissos (for so his grandsire, Eurytus, had named him), felt his mother's breast grow hard, nor could he any longer draw his milky feast. I stood and saw your cruel fate, my sister, nor could I bring you any aid at all. And yet, so far as I could, I delayed the change by holding your growing trunk and branches fast in my embrace; and (shall I confess it?) I longed to hide me beneath that selfsame bark.

"But lo, her husband, Andraemon, and her most unhappy father came seeking for Dryope; and in response to their search for Dryope I pointed out to them the lotus-tree. They printed kisses on the warm wood and, prostrate on the ground, they clung about the roots of their darling tree. And now my dear sister had only her face remaining, while all the rest was tree....

[Dryope speaking, of son] And when he learns to talk, have him greet his mother and sadly say: "Here in this tree-trunk is my mother hid." Still let him fear the pool, pluck no blossoms from the trees, and think all flowers are goddesses in disguise! Farewell, dear husband, and you, sister, and my father! Do you, if you love me still, protect my branches from the sharp knife, my foliage from the browsing sheep. And, since it is not permitted me to bend down to you, reach up to me and let me kiss you while I may; and reach me once more my little son! Now I can say no more; for over my white neck the soft bark comes creeping, and I am buried in its overtopping folds. You need not close my eyes with your hands; without your service let the bark creep up and close my dying eyes!' In the same moment did she cease to speak and cease to be; and long did the new-made branches keep the warmth of the transformed body." (*Met.* 9.330-93)

b] "It chanced his hounds, following a well-marked trail, roused up a wild boar from his hiding-place; and, as he was rushing from the wood, the young grandson of Cinyras pierced him with a glancing blow. Straightway the fierce boar with his curved snout rooted out the spear wet with his blood, and pursued the youth, now full of fear and running for his life; deep in the groin he sank his long tusks, and stretched the dying boy upon the yellow sand. Borne through the middle air by flying swans on her light car, Cytherea had not yet come to

Cyprus, when she heard afar the groans of the dying youth and turned her white swans to go to him. And when from the high air she saw him lying lifeless and weltering in his blood, she leaped down, tore both her garments and her hair and beat her breasts with cruel hands. Reproaching fate, she said: 'But all shall not be in your power. My grief, Adonis, shall have an enduring monument, and each passing year in memory of your death shall give an imitation of my grief. But your blood shall be changed to a flower. Or was it once allowed to thee, Persephone, to change a maiden's¹ form to fragrant mint, and shall the change of my hero, offspring of Cinyras, be grudged to me?' So saying, with sweet-scented nectar she sprinkled the blood; and this, imbued with the nectar, swelled as when clear bubbles rise up from yellow mud. With no longer than an hour's delay a flower sprang up of blood-red hue such as pomegranates bear which hide their seeds beneath the tenacious rind. But short-lived is their flower; for the winds from which it takes its name² shake off the flower so delicately clinging and doomed too easily to fall." (*Met.* 10.710-739)

c] "There is between Cyane and Pisaean Arethusa a bay of the sea, its waters confined by narrowing points of land. Here was Cyane, the most famous of the Sicilian nymphs, from whose name the pool itself was called. She stood forth from the midst of her pool as far as her waist, and recognizing the goddess cried to Dis: "No further shall you go! Thou canst not be the son-in-law of Ceres against her will. The maiden should have been wooed, not ravished. But, if it is proper for me to compare small things with great, I also have been wooed, by Anapis, and I wedded him, too, yielding to prayer, however, not to fear, like this maiden." She spoke and, stretching her arms on either side, blocked his way. No longer could the son of Saturn hold his wrath, and urging on his terrible steeds, he whirled his royal sceptre with strong right arm and smote the pool to its bottom. The smitten earth opened up a road to Tartarus and received the down-plunging chariot in her cavernous depths.

"But Cyane, grieving for the rape of the goddess and for her fountain's rights thus set at naught, nursed an incurable wound in her silent heart, and dissolved all away in tears; and into those very waters was she melted whose great divinity she had been but now. You might see her limbs softening, her bones becoming flexible, her nails losing their hardness. And first of all melt the slenderest parts: her dark hair, her fingers, legs and feet; for it is no great change from slender limbs to cool water. Next after these, her shoulders, back and sides and breasts vanish into thin watery streams. And finally, in place of living blood, clear water flows through her weakened veins and nothing is left that you can touch." (*Ov. Met.* 5.409-61)

Question: If victims become inscribed in the landscape, what is the effect when the landscape is disturbed in some way?

Question:

raptus in Latin literally means "seizure". Ovid recounts the seizure of Proserpina: does he recount what we would think of as a rape?

Question: how does the Cyane passage reflect on the abduction of Proserpina?