

## TWO NOTES ON APULEIUS

met. 1,9,1–2

*amatorem suum, quod in aliam temerasset, unico verbo mutavit in feram castorem, quod ea bestia captivitatis metuens ab insequentibus se praecisione genitalium liberat.*

Socrates describes the metamorphoses with which Meroe punishes wayward lovers. The combination *feram castorem* is puzzling, both because it offers an unusual adjectival use of *fera*,<sup>1</sup> and because the addition of *feram* gives no extra information about the beaver, since even without it we would expect the beaver to be a wild animal; it is telling that many translators omit *feram*. Heinsius deleted *feram* as a gloss,<sup>2</sup> a suggestion that modern editions might mention; it could indeed be a comment on *castorem*, although there is, in the context, small chance of confusion with the divine Castor. Perhaps, instead, we should see *castorem* as the gloss, intruding on an original *feram Ponticam*. Compare Nux 166 *Pontice castor*; Tert. adv. Marc. 1,1 p. 291,23 (Marcion as a Pontic theologian is compared to the beaver); Isid. orig. 12,2,21 *castores a castrando dicti sunt. . . ipsi sunt et fibri, qui etiam Pontici canes vocantur*.

met. 1,12,2

*infimum deiectus obliquo aspectu quid rei sit . . . opperior.*

Aristomenes has been tipped on the floor at the entry of the witches, with the overturned bed on top of him. Even if *infimum*, 'lowermost', were attested as an adverb,<sup>3</sup> it would still be a bizarre way of saying 'thrown to the floor'; the same objection applies to *(in) infimum*. The inn, though evidently not of the highest quality, is not described in a manner to justify Helm's *in fimum*. A better suggestion is Shackleton Bailey's *in humum*.<sup>4</sup> Alternatively, try *in pronum*, as at Sen. Thy. 728 *cervice caesa corpus in pronum ruit*; this fits nicely with the description (*obliquo aspectu* and, in 1,12,1, *de Aristomene testudo factus*) and is not too far from the transmitted reading, especially if the sign for *pro* were mistaken for an *fi* ligature.<sup>5</sup>

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1) For what it is worth, the passage is the only instance in the TLL article *fera* under the subheading 'additur ad certum nomen animalis' (VI 1, p. 607,52–3). It is not reasonable to suppose that *feram* is an adjective, feminine as appropriate to a castrated animal (cf. for instance Catullus 63,8 with Fordyce ad loc.); this unattractively anticipates both the sequence of events and the point of the sentence. Oudendorp's conjecture, *ferum*, is subject to the second objection given above.

2) At Ov. am. 1,8,19 'vide, ne tō *feram* ex Glossa irrepsit'.

3) TLL VII 1, p. 1397,6 gives only this passage as a possible example.

4) D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *On Apuleius' Metamorphoses*, RhM 131, 1988, 167; Drs. W. Keulen points out to me that the spelling *infumum* could provide an easy stepping stone for the corruption.

5) W. M. Lindsay, *An Introduction to Latin Textual Emendation*, London 1896, 86, notes that early miniscule ligatures give '*si* and *fi* the look of *p*'.