It has recently been suggested by Kennedy\textsuperscript{1}) that the first of Ovid's \textit{Heroides} seems to take its starting point from a specific moment in the \textit{Odyssey}, and that the messenger to whom Penelope's letter is apparently going to be given is in fact its addressee, the returned Ulysses disguised as a traveller (Kennedy, 417). His interpretation opens the poem up to interesting ironies of situation and character. Such a reading of \textit{Her.} 1 implies a very close attention to the Homeric details by the poet. At times he seems to deviate from the original; but Dr Kennedy shows that these very discrepancies demand detailed consideration if the full subtlety of the Ovidian treatment is not to be missed. "Reference to the \textit{Odyssey} in reading Penelope's letter is unavoidable, and the resonance of the poem and the complexity of Penelope's character seem largely to arise from recognition of Ovid's deviation from the canonical Homeric account." (Kennedy, 421, my emphasis). I would like to suggest that in \textit{Ars Amatoria} 2.123-42 Ovid has again taken a specific starting point in Homer\textsuperscript{2}). There are a number of factors which suggest that we are witnessing a scene in the last few days of Ulysses' and Calypso's seven year relationship.

A succession of scenes from \textit{Od.} 5 are of interest here. The first is when Calypso goes to Odysseus on the shore and tells him that

\textsuperscript{1}) I am very grateful to Dr J. G. W. Henderson, Dr D. F. Kennedy and Dr S. E. Hinds for their valuable assistance in reading and criticising earlier drafts of this paper.

\textsuperscript{2}) Duncan F. Kennedy, \textit{The epistolary mode and the first of Ovid's \textit{Heroides}}, \textit{CQ n.s.} 34 (1984), 413-22, hereafter referred to as 'Kennedy'. I follow Kennedy in referring to the poems as \textit{Heroides} (abbreviated as \textit{Her.}).

This article arises from work currently in progress on \textit{Ars} 2, where I consider in more detail the complicated erotodidactic context of this exemplum. Here, however, I will confine myself to the Homeric setting of the scene, which I believe brings a straightforward mythological interlude into sharp focus.
she will let him go (Od. 5.151-91); the next is on the evening of the same day in the house of Calypso (Od. 5.192-227), when the goddess tries again to tell the hero how much better it would be for him to stay; and the final one is the next day when Odysseus is making his raft and Calypso brings him a sail (Od. 5.237-61). I would suggest that we are to see Ars 2.125-8 as prompted in general by the first two Homeric scenes; but that 129-42 specifically takes its starting point from the boat building scene.

We are given a few pointers which invite us to consider the ‘date’ of the scene. Ulysses has been there a long time. We are told that he is on the point of leaving, ituro in 141. How often Calypso is distressed at the thought of him going (Ars 2.125)! o quotiens illum doluit properare Calypso! She requests the story of the fall of Troy again and again (Ars 2.127); so much so that he has to think of many different ways of telling an already well worn tale (Ars 2.128) ille referre aliter saepe solebat idem). An artful deviation from Homer, this. In the very last sentence of his four book narrative the Homeric Odysseus says that he does not like telling the same thing twice. Od. 12.452 f.3) εχθρόν δὲ μοι ἔστων αὐτὸς ἀριζήλως εἰρημένα μυθολογεύειν. What he does not want to repeat is precisely the tale of the Ovidian passage, the story of his time with Calypso. Od. 12.447-52 Ἕνθεν δὲ ἐννήμαρ φερόμην, δεκάτη δὲ με νυκτὶ/ νῆσον ἐς Ὄμηγην πέλασαν θεοῖ, ἐνθα Καλυψῶ/ ναίει ἐὔπλοκαμος, δεινὴ θεὸς αὐθήσεσα, /ἡ μ᾽ εὑρεῖ τ᾽ ἑκόμει τε. τι τοι τάδε μυθολογεύειν; / ἡδη γάρ

3) I should, however, say that some elements are transposed and that there is a certain amount of conflation. This need not be an obstacle to an interpretation which involves a very close reading of the Homeric account if we remember Ovid’s practice of transposing details at Her. 3.23 f., discussed by Kennedy (419 f.). Cf. also Henderson’s note on Ovid Rem. 470.

4) This fascinating line expresses the sum of uariatio, that great rhetorical and Ovidian technique. Cf. L. P. Wilkinson, Ovid Recalled (Cambridge 1955), 88. But on the other hand cf. Eust. 1530.27-30 (on Od. 5.206) εἰκός δὲ ἀγωνίσαν τὴν Καλυψῶ μή ἑνεκαίρειν ἐπικύρων νομίσαν, ἀλλὰ συχνὰ ταυτολογεῖν. οἱ μέντοι ἐπίτηρο 'Οδυσσεύς τοσοῦτον ὀπέχει τοῦ οὕτω πολύλογειν, ὡστε καὶ τὰς ἀμφὴτους πράξεις τε καὶ πάθης, δυσὶν ἔμφιε ὁ θεὸς τὰ ἑώρασα τῷ 'ὑμεῖς καὶ τῷ 'πολέμῳ'. If Eustathius’ comment derives from Hellenistic times then another dimension is added to Ovid’s literary tease. On this question generally cf. R. R. Schlunk, The Homeric Scholia and the Aeneid (Ann Arbor 1974).

5) I am grateful to Dr J. C. McKeown for reminding me of Odysseus’ statement of his dislike for telling the same story twice.