ment by Dio to the effect that Pansa began his career only in 49: Dio knew that Pansa was the son of a proscripsum, and we could infer that he simply assumed that Pansa started his career in 49. But since Dio neither states nor implies that Pansa was debarred from holding office until 49, no ancient evidence stands in the way of accepting the obvious solution to the problem.

Taken in sum, we know that a certain C. Vibius Pansa was plebeian tribune in 51, that the father of the consul Pansa was proscribed, and that the consul Pansa was a Caetronius by birth. Since we are not told which father was proscribed, and since we are nowhere told that the consul Pansa began his career late, the inference that Pansa was able to begin his career before the civil war by virtue of his adoption is the simplest and most cogent solution. In consequence, we must maintain that there was just one important C. Vibius Pansa in the late republic, not two; and we must erase the name “C. Vibius Pansa” from the list of the proscripsum of 82, and fill the litura with the name “Caetronius.” Our investigation has then yielded something which the Realencyclopädie has always lacked: a republican Caetronius.

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5) That the proscripsum was the natural father of Pansa was suggested by G.V. Sumner, The Lex Annalis under Caesar, Phoenix 25 (1971), 255.
7) P. Willems, Le Sénat de la République romaine (Louvain 1878), 1.526.
8) Hinard, Proscriptions [above note 3], 408.

ON NOT LOOKING AT A GORGON:

OVID, METAMORPHOSES 5.217

Finding himself alone in the midst of his (quite literally) petrified army, Phineus attempts to surrender (Met. 5.210-18)3):

paenitet iniusti tunc denique Phineae belli.

sed quid agat? simulacra uidet duersa figuris

agnoscitque suos et nomine quemque uocatum

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poscit opem credensque parum sibi proxima tangit corpora: marmor erat; auertitur atque ita supplex confessasque manus obliquaque brachia tendens ‘iunicis’, ait, ‘Perseul remoue tua monstra tuaque saxificos uultus, quacuumque ea, tolle Medusae: tolle, precor....’

217 ea ] est ei, est ea W

The variants est and ea in 217 are quite old, since both must have been in some parent of W, which can be dated to 1275\(^2\). Most editors prefer ea, though Slater and Breitenbach prefer est\(^3\), and the parallels which Slater provides (quacuumque es 9.312, quodcumque est 10.405, quicumque est, V. Aen. 5.83) suggest that they are right to do so\(^4\).

However, there is a larger problem with quacuumque, whether we read ea or est. Why should Phineus say of Medusa, ‘whoever she is’? His own words show that he already knows her name, that she is a monster, that Perseus possesses her head, and that that head turns men to stone: the last fact has just been demonstrated to him at great—some might say excessive—length. Any other interesting particulars are surely irrelevant to one in Phineus’ position. Lafaye’s comment serves to illustrate the problem: after translating quacuumque ea “quelle que puisse être ta Méduse”, he remarks in a footnote “Il ne sait d’où elle vient ni comment Persée la possède”\(^5\), as if Phineus would be likely to join Perseus in an aetiological inquiry at this point\(^6\).

It seems to me that auertitur (214) and obliqua brachia (215) provide the clue to understanding this passage. If I am not reading too much into these three words, they create a comical picture of Phineus stretching out his arms in a direction in which he cannot look\(^7\). What Phineus does not know, and very much needs to know, is exactly where Medusa is: if he knew that, he would know where not to look. But the only way to find out for sure where she is is to look for her, and once he spots her it will be too late not to look. That is Phineus’ dilemma, and Ovid’s little joke\(^8\). All Phineus can do is avert his eyes from where he thinks Perseus is, extend supplicating arms obliquely in that general direction, and hope (in vain) that he will be kind enough to keep Medusa out of sight. Consequently, it seems to me that what Ovid wrote was neither quacuumque ea nor quacuumque est, but either quacumque est or quacumque es\(^9\), not ‘take her away, whatever she is’, but ‘take her away, wherever she is’, or ‘wherever you are’—it hardly matters which, since Perseus and Medusa’s head are in very nearly the same place.

It is not at easy to decide between quacumque est and quacumque es. I have a slight preference for the former, which is the lectio facilior, since est is found in two MSS and es in none. On the other hand, the fact that the next word begins with t would have made corruption of es to est particularly easy. Furthermore, if Ovid wrote quacumque es, corruption to quacum-