This manuscript is a selection from Ovid's Metamorphoses, with commentary added around the edges. This particular passage comes from the story of Arachne, a skilled weaver who according to myth boasted that she could weave more beautifully than even the goddess Minerva. When Minerva heard of this, she assumed the form of an old woman and attempted to convince Arachne that her claims were foolish. Arachne ignored her advice, and instead challenged Minerva to a weaving contest. The goddess then revealed her true form, and the contest began. Both Minerva and Arachne weaved tapestries depicting various myths, but in the end Arachne's weaving was so beautiful that even Minerva had to acknowledge it. This angered the goddess, and as a result she destroyed Arachne's loom and struck the girl. As a result, Arachne hanged herself. Pitying Arachne, Minerva turned her into a spider, and the rope into a web.

The commentary which was added to this particular part of the myth is divided by vertical bars, which indicate that a new comment is beginning. Each comment begins with a lemma from the Ovid selection, indicating what part of the text is being commented upon. This commentary will focus less on the Ovid passage, and more on the commentary section of the manuscript, as *The Metamorphoses* is very well known and another commentary on it could be found quite easily.

**Raphael**: This seems to be the name of the person who wrote the commentary for this passage. Both sides of the manuscript have the marginal note "Raph." in the upper left hand corner, most
likely to ensure Raphael was given credit for all his work. The reverse side of the manuscript gives us his full name, Raphael Regius. Raphael Regius was a Venetian known for his reputation as a Classical scholar. His commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was one of the most widely circulated versions of the poem in the sixteenth century.

**Deceptive: imitated:** Much of the commentary seems to give alternate ways of interpreting a word Ovid used, either by explaining a phrase or giving an alternative Latin word which was probably more commonly used. This was most likely to assist those who were less knowledgeable in Latin to translate the text, by clarifying those sections which would be most difficult for them. As a result a comment on a word is often simply a synonym for the word chosen by Ovid, which can create some repetitive sounding translations.

**Mygdonia:** The marginal notes of the manuscript serve as a sort of bookmark, indicating what is being commented on at that point and allowing one to find relevant comments more quickly based on their relative positions in the passage from the *Metamorphoses*. The relevant comment provides a small amount of information about Mygdonia, giving the reader some context for this section of the myth.

**who seeing Pallas, except for one, Arachne: they adore the goddess:** This section is rather awkwardly translated in order to preserve the colon in this line. This particular comment on Mygdonia contains many colons, which could imply that they were meant to be interpreted in some other way. This colon could also simply be a mistake by the writer. If the colon is ignored, then we can give a much more intuitive translation of this line: "The women, except for Arachne, upon seeing Pallas adore the goddess."
**When Aurora is first moved**: Aurora is the name of the goddess of dawn, and so is usually interpreted to mean dawn. Ovid uses "Aurora" as such several times in *The Metamorphoses*, as does Vergil in *The Aeneid*.

**They call this the weft**: The commentary here attempts to clarify some of the terms used by Ovid, for those who have no experience working with a loom. Several other parts of the loom are similarly clarified here.

**the poet elegantly describes all things**: "The poet" here refers to Ovid, and this comment seems to be a compliment to him and his ability to make even the mundane task of weaving sound poetic.

**the comb is an instrument of the weaver which is too well known to be described**: This offers an explanation as to why Ovid does not feel the need to elaborate upon the comb he mentions during his description of weaving: the comb was simply such a well known tool for weaving that there was no need to explain what it was. This could also be intended to indicate why there is only a brief mention of the comb in the commentary: it was also well known enough in the commentator's time that he did not feel the need to explain it either.

**For Tyre...**: This comment provides some geographical context for the city of Tyre, and mentions that it was well known for its purple dyes. The idea of Tyre as the source of purple dye is also found in other ancient writings, such as *The Aeneid*.

**what it touches is the same**: This comment is intended to clarify Ovid's description of the shading of the tapestries. The shades of colors used are so similar that if the two were placed next to each other, they would appear to be the same color. But if the two shades were separated, it would be clear that they were actually different. Ovid compares this to the changes in color in a rainbow.
an approval of the artist: This could also be translated as a claim of the artist. The inclusion of this statement seems to imply some doubt that one could create such similar shades of colors in their weavings, or is there to emphasize how difficult such a feat would be.

the contest to inhabit Athens between her and Neptune: This is a reference to another myth involving Minerva. Minerva was competing with Neptune to become the patron deity of Athens, which had not yet been named. The two agreed to a contest: each would give the people of Athens one gift, and the people of the city would choose the winner based on which gift they preferred. Neptune provided the people with a spring of water, but it was salty and not good for drinking. Minerva however gave them an olive tree. The Athenians decided that Minerva's gift was best, and the city was therefore named for her.

Thrace of Rhodes and Hemum: This also seems to reference another myth, in which a couple take the names of Jupiter and Juno for their own and are transformed as a result. Minerva chooses to depict myths which display her triumphs and those of the other gods, while in sections of the myth not found in this manuscript Arachne chooses to weave scenes of the transgressions of the gods. This fits with the character's goals: Arachne wishes to prove herself greater than a goddess, and so points out the flaws of the Olympians, while Minerva shows the triumphs of the gods as she seeks to prove their superiority.