

SATIRE 1

How come, Maecenas, that no man lives satisfied with his own lot,
whether given to him by his own choice or thrown his way by fortune,
but looks enviously on those who follow different careers? ‘How lucky
merchants are!’ says the soldier, feeling the years weigh on him, his
frame now worn out by long years of service. But listen to the merchant
in turn, when his ship is being tossed by southern gales: ‘I’d
rather have a soldier’s life. And why, do you ask? Two armies suddenly
close in battle: in the blink of an eye it comes, speedy death or the
joy of victory.’ The farmer attracts the envy of the expert in law and
its statutes, when a client knocks on his door before cockcrow, with
questions to put. The fellow has been hauled up to town from the
country to show himself in court, and claims in a loud voice that only
town-dwellers know happiness. The other examples of this kind are
so numerous they’d exhaust that windbag Fabius*. So as not to bore
you, let me tell you the moral of this, as I see it. Suppose some god
should say, ‘Look! Here I am, ready to carry out your wishes: you, a
soldier before, will now be a merchant; you, a lawyer just now, shall

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be a farmer: off you go now, the pair of you, with your roles reversed!
What’s this? Still standing there?’ They would refuse. And yet they
are being given the chance to be happy. Give me a reason why Jupiter
wouldn’t be justified in puffing out both cheeks in a rage and telling
them he won’t be so obliging as to lend an ear to their prayers in
future?

Another point, not to dash over the topic with a laugh, like someone
telling jokes—and yet what’s the harm in using humour to put across
what is true, just as teachers* sometimes offer their pupils biscuits to
coax them into wanting to learn their ABC?—just the same, joking
aside, let’s turn our attention to serious matters: our friend who turns
over the heavy soil with his stubborn plough, this cheating innkeeper
here, the soldier, and the sailors whose course takes them boldly
over every sea declare they have only one reason for enduring their
toil: they want to retire to a life of secure leisure after piling up for
themselves enough to live on; just as the tiny ant* who works with such
energy—their model—hauls along whatever her mouth can carry
and adds it to the heap she is building, for she knows the future well
and keeps it in mind. But as soon as Aquarius makes the year wheel

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round and wear a gloomy face, she doesn't venture out anywhere and makes wise use of her previously gathered store; not like you, letting nothing deter you from making profit, not scorching summer heat or winter cold, not fire, sea, or sword, and moving heaven and earth to stop another man becoming richer than yourself.

What's the good to you of a vast weight of silver and gold, if you stealthily dig a hole in the earth to bury it there in your nervousness? 'But should you start whittling it away, a worthless penny would be all that was left.' But if you don't spend it, what's the attraction in a piled-up heap? Your floor may thresh out a hundred thousand bushels of grain, but this won't help your stomach hold any more than mine: imagine you were in a gang of slaves and happened to be the one shouldering the heavy bread-bag, you wouldn't get a crust more than the slave with no load to carry.

Or, tell me, what difference does it make to a man who lives within nature's limits whether he has a hundred or a thousand acres to plough?

'But there is the appeal of drawing from a big supply!' Provided you allow me to draw the same amount from my little pile, why should you praise your granaries above my bins? It's as if, when you needed

no more water than a jug or cup holds, you were to say, 'I'd prefer to take what I need from a great river than from this little spring, though the amount is the same.' The result of this is that people who crave more than their fair share are carried off by fierce Aufidus*, swept away together with the bank they stand on. However, the man whose small desires match his needs doesn't swallow water thickened by mud or forfeit his life among the waves.

But a good many people are taken in by a desire that makes them blind to reality. 'Nothing is enough,' they say, 'since a man is rated according to his possessions.' What can you do with such a fellow? Tell him to be miserable; that's what he enjoys doing. He resembles the wealthy Athenian* in the story, a miser, who was in the habit of taking no notice of what the people said about him, declaring, 'The people boo me, but I give myself the applause in my own home the moment I clap eyes on all the cash in my chest.' The thirsty Tantalus* snatches at the water that eludes his lips—why do you laugh? The name has

been changed but you're the one the story is about; you sleep, openmouthed, on top of moneybags piled up all around, compelled to keep your hands off them as though they are sacred, or to take the pleasure in

them as you would if they were paintings on canvas. Don't you know the purpose of money, the enjoyment it provides? Use it to buy bread, vegetables, a pint of wine, and the other things whose absence would make human life less easy to bear.

Or is it more to your taste to stay awake at night half dead with fear, and day and night to live in dread of wicked thieves, of fires, or of slaves stealing your goods and then deserting your house? When it comes to blessings like these my own wish would always be to plumb the depths of poverty. 'But if you go down with some feverish chill or are stuck in bed through some other misfortune, you have someone to sit at your bedside, prepare poultices, and summon a doctor to bring you back to health and restore you to your children and loving family.'

But your wife doesn't want you to get well, and neither does your son; all your friends and neighbours, young and old, men and women, hate you. Are you surprised, when you put money before everything else, that no one shows you affection? Have you earned it? Or, should you wish to keep and retain the affection of relatives given to you by nature with no effort on your part, would it be as pointless and fruitless an ambition as a man trying to train a donkey to run in the races

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on Mars' Field*, obedient to the reins?

So let's put an end to the race for wealth. As you become more prosperous, let your fear of poverty subside, and having gained what you desired, you should make a start at bringing your struggle to an end. You don't want to end up like a certain Ummidius*, whose story can be briefly told: so rich that he weighed, not counted, his cash, so miserly that he never dressed better than one of his slaves, he was afraid right up to the hour of his death that he would die of starvation. In fact he was split in two by an axe wielded by one of his freedwomen, the boldest of Tyndareus' daughters*. 'Well, what advice are you giving me? Should I live my life like a Naevius or Nomentanus*?' Ah, now you are seeking to put together things that are completely opposed to each other. When I tell you not to become a miser, I'm not advocating that you turn into a worthless spendthrift. There's a halfway house between Tanais and Visellius' father-in-law*. A measure exists in all things, as do, in short, prescribed limits; go beyond or fall short of them and you cannot be right.

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I return to my starting point: how it is that greed makes no one satisfied with his lot and encourages a man to envy those in different

careers, pining away if his neighbour's she-goat has udders

more swollen, and, rather than comparing himself with the larger crowd of poorer men, striving to surpass now this man, now that? 110

In a race like that there's always someone richer blocking your path.

It's like a chariot race when the teams break from their stalls, swept on by the animals' pounding hoofs, and the driver presses hard on the horses outstripping his own, caring nothing for the rival he has 115

passed and left at the back of the track. *And so it happens that we*

seldom can find a man who claims to have lived a happy life, who

*quits life in contentment when his time is up, like a guest who has**

dined well.

That's enough now. I won't add a word more, in case you think I've ransacked the writings of Crispinus* with his myopia. 120

SATIRE 2

The Honourable Companies* of flute-girls, purveyors of quack medicines
, beggars, 'actresses*', clowns, and all belonging to that tribe
are in grief and distress at the death of the singer Tigellius*. 'What a
generous soul* he was!' By contrast, we have a fellow who, for fear of
being described as a spendthrift, would refuse to give a needy friend
enough to keep at bay the cold and hunger's pangs. Should you question
another as to why out of **thankless gluttony** he shamelessly strips
away a father's or grandfather's splendid estate, borrowing money
to buy all the delicacies for his appetite, he answers that he wouldn't
like to be thought tight-fisted and mean in spirit. His reward for this
is praise from one side and criticism from the other. Fufidius*, rich in
land and rich in money loaned at interest, fears the reputation of a
worthless spendthrift: he slices away five times the interest from the
principal and, the closer the borrower gets to ruin, the more relentlessly
he presses him to repay; those he targets for entry in his books
are young fellows with stern fathers at home, who have just newly put
on the toga of manhood*. 'Jupiter Almighty!' goes up the general cry

when this is heard. 'But presumably he spends money on himself to
match his gains.' No he doesn't! You'd scarcely believe how poor a
friend he is to himself: why, not even the father in Terence's play* who
is shown to have lived a life of misery after booting out his son put
himself through worse torments than he does.

Suppose someone should now put the question, 'Where is all this
leading?' well, here's my point: in seeking to avoid one fault fools rush
to embrace its opposite. Maltinus* strolls along with his tunic trailing
; another with his hoisted up so high it exposes his private parts,
the height of fashion, he thinks. Rufillus* smells of mouth lozenges,
Gargonius of a billy-goat. There's no middle course. Some men will
have nothing to do with women* whose ankles are not concealed by
a low-hanging flounce; another, by contrast, will only lay hands on a
woman who stands for sale in some foul-smelling brothel. When a
well-known person was emerging from a brothel, 'Bravo! Keep on
that track!' was the godlike verdict of Cato*, 'for the moment that foul
lust makes their members swell, it's right for young men to come
down here, instead of grinding away at other men's wives.' 'That's not
the sort of praise I'd like to have,' says Cupiennius*, who gets his kicks

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from cunts wearing white*.

It's worth your while to lend an ear*, you who wish good fortune to keep distant from adulterers, how on every side they fare badly, how their pleasure is marred by considerable pain, and, seldom coming, 40 is often accompanied by cruel perils. One man flings himself from the roof of a house; another is flogged to death; another while running away falls into a fierce band of robbers; another parts with cash to save his life; another gets himself irrigated* by stableboys; once it actually happened that a husband hacked off with his sword his 45 victim's balls and lustful prick. 'That's what the law prescribes*,' is the general cry; Galba* begged to differ.

But how less dangerous are the wares you get in the second class—freedwomen*, I mean—those Sallust* goes as crazy for as any adulterer. Yet, if Sallust wanted to be courteous and generous, so far as his means 50 and reason dictated, and allowing him to be liberal without excess, he would part with a sum that was sufficient and would spare him the shame of financial ruin. But no; on this one point he prides himself, because of this he basks in self-admiration and praise: 'I keep my hands off all married women.' It reminds me of what Marsaeus* said 55

once, the celebrated lover of Origo, who presented an actress with his ancestral hearth and home: 'I'd never get involved with other men's wives.' But you *are* involved with actresses, yes, and with prostitutes, too, and this damages your reputation more seriously than it does your resources. No doubt you're perfectly happy to avoid the role of 60 adulterer rather than what actually does the harm, whatever the circumstances

! To destroy your good name, to squander an inheritance from your father is bad behaviour at all times. What difference does it make whether you offend with a married woman or with a maid dressed in a toga*?

Villius*, Sulla's 'son-in-law,' was punished richly and more than enough because of his weakness for Fausta; falling, poor fool, for this 65 name alone, he was beaten up and attacked with the sword while the door was shut against him* yet opened wide for Longarenus. Suppose*, as he faced these indignities, he imagined his tool saying these words to him: ¹What are you up to? Do I insist you supply me with a cunt descended from a great consul and wrapped in a matron's robe, when 70 my passion boils over?' What would his reply be? 'The girl is born of a noble father.' But how much better*, how at variance with these

notions, is the advice of nature, rich in her own resources, if only you
 would manage them properly and not confuse what is desirable with
 what should be avoided. Do you think it is immaterial whether your
 problems stem from your own fault or circumstance? And so, in case
 you live to regret it, put a stop to chasing after married women, for
 they'll give you more pain and misery than any real satisfaction from
 the experience. This lady may be draped in pearls and emeralds but,
 though the jewellery is your creation, Cerinthus*, this doesn't make
 her thigh any softer or her leg any straighter, and very often a tart
 in her toga is even better. What's more, she struts her stuff without
 disguise and displays quite openly what she has for sale, and, if she
 has some attractive feature, she doesn't flaunt and parade it, or seek
 some means of hiding blemishes. Kings* have this habit: when they
 are buying horses they have them covered before examining them, so
 that if, as frequently happens, the animal's elegant form is supported
 by a soft hoof, it may not take in the onlooker as he gapes in admiration
 at the splendid haunches, the small head, the imposing neck.
 They are right in this respect: don't study the best physical details
 with the eyes of a Lynceus*, while turning an eye on the faults that

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is blinder than poor old Hypsaea*. 'What a leg*! What arms!' you cry,
 but she hasn't any buttocks, her nose is long, her back of no length,
 and her feet huge. In a matron's case you can't see anything except
 her face, for, unless she's a Catia*, she conceals everything else under
 a full-length robe. If it's forbidden delights you're after, hedged by*
 a rampart—for this is what robs you of all reason—many things will
 then block your progress, attendants, her litter, hairdressers with
 curling-tongs, hangers-on, her robe dropping to the ankles and protected
 by her mantle, all sorts of things to grudge you a clear, unimpeded
 view. But with the other, nothing gets in your way: in her Coan*
 silk you can see her virtually naked and make sure she doesn't have
 bad legs or ungainly feet; you can measure with your eye her length
 from waist to shoulder. Or would you rather have a trick played on
 you and payment snatched from your hand before you get a sight of
 the merchandise? Our friend sings* of how the hunter pursues a hare
 amid deep snow but won't touch it once stretched out at his feet,
 adding 'My love is just like this: what lies to hand it flits past and
 chases what runs away.' Do you imagine verses of this quality can
 drive from your heart the pain, the tides of passion, the burden of

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care? Wouldn't it benefit you more to enquire what limit nature sets upon desires, what she can supply for herself if denied her, what, to her sorrow, she cannot, and to separate void from substance*? When your throat is parched* by thirst, you don't ask for a golden cup, do you? When you're hungry, do you turn your nose up at everything except peacock and turbot? When your groin swells up and a maid or slave-boy* of your household is available to get stuck into there and then, do you prefer to burst with lust? I don't: it's love that's available and easy to come by that I like.

The woman who says, 'A bit later! Well, it'll cost you more! Only if my husband's left the house!' is for the Galli*, says Philodemus*, who prefers for himself the type who doesn't sell her wares too expensively or waste time once she's been summoned. Let her be tall, and with good skin; smartly presented but without wishing to create the appearance of greater height or a paler complexion than nature has given her. When such a girl has slipped her left side under my right, she is Ilia and Egeria*: I give her whatever name I like and don't worry while screwing her in case her husband comes dashing back from the country, the door is broken down, the dog starts barking,

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the house is stormed and echoes to an almighty din on every side, the woman (horrors) leaps out of bed, white as a sheet, her guilty maid screams she is wretched, she fearing for* her legs, her mistress, caught *in flagrante*, for her dowry, and me for myself. Barefoot, I have to run for it, tunic undone, to avert disastrous consequences to bank-balance* or backside*, or, at least, to reputation. To be caught would be misery; I could make that case even if Fabius* were sitting in judgement!

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SATIRE 3

All singers have this fault: when asked to perform among friends
they're never so inclined, when not invited, they never stop. Tigellius*,
the well-known son of Sardinia, was like this. Caesar*, who could have
compelled him, would have got nowhere at all, had he asked him to
remember his father's friendship and his own; but if it took his fancy,
our friend would sing out, 'Ho, followers of Bacchus*, come!' from
hors d'oeuvre straight through to dessert, now in a treble* voice, now
in the one resounding lowest on the lyre's four chords.

The fellow lacked all consistency; often he would tear along* like a
man trying to escape from the enemy, very often proceed like someone
carrying Juno's sacred baskets; often he would keep two hundred
slaves, often just ten; sometimes he would speak of kings and
tetrarchs, nothing but grand affairs, sometimes he'd say, 'All I ask is
a three-legged table, a shell of clean salt and a toga that can keep out
the cold, however coarse the material.' Imagine you'd given a million*
sesterces to this man of thrift, contented with so little, five days later
his pockets were bound to be empty; each night he would be awake

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until dawn, then spend the whole day snoring; never was a man so full
of contradictions. Now someone may say to me, 'What about you?
Are you entirely free from faults?' Well, no, but they are different
ones and perhaps not as great. When Maenius* was having a go at
Novius* behind his back, 'Hang on there,' said someone, 'don't you
know yourself, or do you think you are taking us for fools as though
we don't know you?' 'I know all right, but I'm forgiving myself,' said
Maenius. This sort of self-love is stupid and shameless and deserves
condemnation.

When you examine your own faults with eyes that are inflamed
and covered with ointment, why in the case of friends' faults is your
eyesight sharper than an eagle's or an Epidaurian snake's*? But, on
the other hand, what happens to you is that they also in turn start
examining *your* faults. He's a little too liable to lose his temper, not
particularly in tune with the fastidious standards* of modern society;
he might be laughed at because his haircut is less than fashionable,
his toga trails to one side and his ill-fitting shoe barely stays on his
foot: but he's a good man, none better, and beneath that unpolished
exterior lurk considerable gifts. In short, give *yourself* a shaking and

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see if nature or instead bad habit has at any time planted in you the
35 seeds of any faults; for it's in neglected fields that ferns take root
and need to be burnt away.

Let's turn our minds to the following fact: a lover in his blindness*
fails to note his girlfriend's unattractive defects, or even is actually
charmed by them, as Balbinus* was by Hagna's polyp. My wish would
be that friendship caused us to make the same mistake, and virtue
had given an honourable name to this error. But when dealing with
a friend we should imitate a father's treatment of his son, and not
show disgust at any defect he may have: if a boy is cross-eyed, his
father describes him as 'having a cast', and if a man has a son who's
embarrassingly stunted, like the midget Sisyphus* in earlier days, he
calls him his 'wee chick'; another, with crooked legs, receives the petname
'pigeon toes', while the boy whose deformed ankles can barely
support him becomes 'raw-bones'. This friend lives in a somewhat
penny-pinching fashion: let's call him 'careful with money'. Another
is tactless and a little too prone to showing off: he's expecting his
friends to regard him as 'amusing company'. This one, on the other
hand, is rather aggressive and outspoken: let him be thought of as

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'frank and not afraid to speak his mind'. Another is a bit of a hothead:

let's count him among the men of spirit. It's this attitude, I reckon,
that binds friends together and keeps their friendship intact. But we
turn actual merits upside down and are eager to tarnish a container
that's clean. If someone sharing our circle is a decent fellow and
entirely modest, we give him the nickname 'slowcoach' or 'dense'.

Another evades every trap and doesn't leave a flank exposed to any
shaft of malice, as he's involved in the type of life where envy has
an edge and slanderous criticisms are rife: instead of calling him
'entirely sensible' and 'a prudent fellow' we speak of his 'insincerity'
and 'crafty ways'. If someone is rather open in manner, the sort of
impression I would hope you have often formed of me, Maecenas, so
that he interrupts a person when he's reading, perhaps, or engaged
in quiet thought, and makes a nuisance of himself with some chatter
or other, 'He's quite lacking in consideration for other people,'

we declare. But, ah, how foolishly we are establishing an unforgiving
precedent again*st ourselves! For no one is born free from faults: the
best fellow is the one who is burdened by the least. A kindly friend
should, in fairness, balance my good points against my bad ones, and,

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if he wants to keep my affection, he should turn the scales in favour
of the former as being more numerous—assuming, of course, that my
good points *are* in the ascendancy: if he follows this principle he'll be
weighed on the same scale. Someone who expects a friend to turn a
blind eye to his own boils will view with tolerance the other's warts;
when a person asks for forgiveness for failings, it's only fair that he
grants it duly in return.

Again, given that it's impossible to cut out the fault of anger completely
, and likewise all the other faults* that attach themselves to

fools, why does reason not employ her own weights and measures,
and bring to bear on offences the punishments that are appropriate
to each? Should a man's slave lick up some half-eaten fish and its
lukewarm sauce when told to take away a dish, and then be crucified
for this, * men of sanity* would brand the master as less sane than
Labeo. How much crazier and more offensive a transgression is this!

A friend has been guilty of some peccadillo that you would be considered
ungracious not to forgive: you react with bitter hatred and
give him as wide a berth as someone owing money to Ruso* gives him,
for, unless he manages to scrape up interest or principal from some

source or other by the time the gloomy Kalends* have overtaken him,
poor devil, he's bound to present a captive audience, as if his throat is
bared to the knife, for Ruso's boring histories. Suppose a guest, when
drunk, has wet the couch or knocked off the table a cup worn thin
by Evander's hands*, should I regard him as a less agreeable friend
on this account, or because, in a moment of hunger, he picked up
before me a chicken set down on my side of the dish*? What* am I to
do if he commits a theft, or betrays confidences, or reneges on a legal
agreement?

Those who have established as their view that all transgressions
are much on a par find themselves in difficulty when it comes to
actual instances; instinct* and convention are armed against them, as
is expediency itself, the virtual mother of justice and fairness. When
living creatures crawled forth from the earth in its infancy, dumb
beasts without moral sense, their desire for acorns and lairs* made
them fight with nails and fists, then with clubs, and so in time with
weapons that experience had later forged, until they discovered verbs*
and nouns with which to give meaning to their cries and emotions;
that was when they began to cease from war, to build towns, and

to establish laws whereby no one should be a thief or robber, or
 commit adultery. For a good time before Helen* a cunt was the
 most terrible cause of war, but an unrecorded death* was the fate of
 those who, clutching at random love like wild beasts, fell victim to
 one of superior strength, like bulls in a herd. If you wish to unroll
 the annals and calendar of the world, you are bound to admit that
 fear of injustice caused the discovery of justice. And nature has not
 the power to draw between justice and injustice the distinction she
 draws between things helpful and harmful, what should be shunned
 and what pursued; and reason will never prove the case that a man
 is guilty of one and the same offence whether he breaks off young
 cabbages* in a neighbour's garden or steals the gods' holy emblems
 under cover of night. Let us make use of a scale for imposing penalties
 that are a just reflection of crimes, in case you flog with the fearsome
 scourge one who merits only the strap. For I've no worries about
 you caning someone who deserves a more serious flogging, since
 you say that stealing and acts of highway robbery are equal crimes,
 and threaten to prune back minor offences with the same hook you
 would use for major ones, should men bestow on you the power of a*

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king.

If the wise man* is rich, and a good cobbler, and if he alone is
 handsome

and a king, why do you long to have what you already possess?

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'You do not understand father Chrysippus' meaning*,' comes the
 reply; 'the wise man has never made shoes or sandals for himself;
 and yet the wise man is a cobbler.' How can this be? 'In the sense
 that Hermogenes*, although silent, is nonetheless the best of singers
 and musicians; in the sense that the shrewd Alfenus*, despite throwing
 away every tool of his art and closing up his shop, was a barber,
 the wise man, and he alone, is the best exponent of every craft, and
 so is a king.' Naughty boys* are plucking at your beard; unless you
 keep them under control with your stick, you are surrounded and
 jostled by a crowd of them, and in your wretchedness burst your
 lungs in barking, most mighty of mighty kings. Let me be brief:
 while you, a king*, make your way to bathe for your farthing, with no
 escort to attend upon you except the ridiculous Crispinus*, my genial
 friends will pardon me, if in my folly I commit some offence, and I,
 in turn, will gladly tolerate their transgressions, and in my private
 station shall live a happier man than Your Majesty*.

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SATIRE 4

The poets Eupolis* and Cratinus and Aristophanes, and other authors of the Old Comedy, satirized with considerable freedom anyone who deserved to be marked down for his wicked and thieving ways, for being an adulterer or an assassin, or in any other way notorious. Lucilius* depends entirely on these men, following in their footsteps and changing only the metres and rhythms they used; he was witty*, with a sensitive nose*, but unpolished in the composition of his verses: for this was his area of weakness: in one hour, as a sign of his talent, he would often dictate two hundred lines on one leg*: as he flowed along like a muddy river*, one wished to remove some of the material: words poured from his lips and he was too idle to put up with the effort of writing, that is, of writing correctly: for I'm not at all impressed by the volume of his output. Here's Crispinus* now, making me a challenge at long odds: 'Take up your notebook, please, take it up now; let a place be appointed for us, a time, and judges; let's see which one of us can write more.' I thank the gods* for fashioning me with a feeble and poverty-stricken intellect that rarely expresses

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itself, and then only in very few words; but feel free, as it's what you prefer, to copy the air shut up in goatskin bellows, constantly straining away until the fire softens the iron. What a lucky man Fannius* is, delivering his books and a bust of himself to libraries without being asked, whereas no one reads my work and I'm afraid to read it* in public, for the reason* that there are some who take a dim view of this type of writing, seeing that most of them deserve censure. Select from a crowd anyone you please: either greed or wretched ambition* makes him suffer: one fellow's crazy with love for married women, another for boys; here's a third who's captivated by the lustrous sheen of silver; bronze statuary makes Albius* gape with desire; another barter his wares from the rising sun to regions warmed by its evening rays, even rushing headlong through perils like dust gathered by a whirlwind, in his fear that he may lose something from his capital or fail to get a return on his investment. All these fellows dread verses and hate poets: 'He has hay tied to his horns*; keep a good distance from him: provided he raises a laugh, he won't show mercy to himself, or to any friend; whatever he has scribbled once on his pages he'll be dying for everyone returning from the bakehouse or water-tank* to

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know, every slave and old woman.' Come now, listen to a few words
in reply to this.

In the first place I would exclude myself from the number of those
to whom I would give the name of poet. You would not describe it as
sufficient to produce a metrical line; and if, as I do, a man should write
what's more akin to conversational prose*, you wouldn't consider him
a poet. The honour of this name you should confer upon one who
possesses genius, whose intelligence the gods have inspired, whose
voice is capable of an impressive resonance. It is for this reason that
certain people have raised the question whether comedy is poetry or*
not, since neither its diction nor its content contains the fiery power
of inspiration, and, apart from the fact that it differs from prose by
its fixed metre, it is unadulterated prose. 'But the father* shows passion
when he rages because his extravagant son, mad with love for his
courtesan girlfriend, turns down a wife with a good-sized dowry, and,
creating a mighty scandal, walks the streets before sunset, drunk, surrounded
by torches.' Would Pomponius* come in for a lecture any less
harsh than this, were his father still alive? It isn't enough, then, to pen
a line of verse in plain language such that, should you break it up, any

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father would express his anger just like the one in the play. Suppose
you stripped the regular quantities and rhythm from the verses I write
now and those Lucilius wrote in earlier days, altering the sequence of
the words and transposing first and last, it would not be the same
as breaking up 'When once* loathsome Strife the iron-clad posts and
portals of War broke asunder': even when he was dismembered* you
would find there the limbs of a poet.

Enough of these questions: another time I'll consider whether this
kind of writing is true poetry or not, but for the present this is the
only point I mean to investigate, whether you are justified in viewing
it with scepticism. The implacable Sulcius and Caprius* stalk the
streets, with throats horribly hoarse and indictments in hands, the
pair of them a great terror to robbers; but should a man spend his
days honourably, with hands unstained by guilt, he may hold them
both in contempt. Even supposing *you* are like Caelius and Birrius*,
I can never be like Caprius or Sulcius; why should you be afraid of
me? My writings can never be found in any shop or dangling from*
a pillar outside to absorb the sweat from the mob's hands or those
of Hermogenes Tigellius*. I don't give readings from them to anyone

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except my friends*, and only when they press me hard, not anywhere or before any old audience. There are plenty who recite their works in the middle of the forum, or at the baths: the enclosed space gives a pleasing resonance to the voice. This delights the empty-headed, who fail to ask the question if their performance lacks tact or timing.

‘You enjoy hurting people’s feelings,’ says someone, ‘and you do it deliberately, from malice.’ Where have you found this charge to hurl at me? Is there anyone at all among my close friends to back it up? The man who runs a friend down behind his back, who doesn’t defend him from another’s accusations, who wants the public to laugh loud and long at his remarks, and to be thought of as a wit, who can make up what he hasn’t seen but can’t keep a confidence, he has a black heart*; good Roman, keep not his company. Often at dinnerparties you can see four persons* on each of the three couches, one of whom is in the habit* of casting all kinds of aspersions on every guest, excluding the man whose party it is; later even he is mocked by our friend in his cups, when the truthful god who makes men free* unlocks the secrets of the heart. You think this fellow agreeable, sophisticated, and frank, you who have no time for the black-hearted. If I laughed

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because silly Rufillus* smells of lozenges or Gargonius of a billy-goat, do you regard me as spiteful and back-biting? If some reference was made in your presence to the thefts of Petillius Capitolinus*, you’d defend him in your usual way: ‘I have been an associate and friend of Capitolinus since childhood, and he has done a great deal to assist me when asked. I am delighted that he lives without recriminations here in Rome; just the same, it amazes me how he got off at that trial.’ This is the ink* of the black cuttlefish, this is unadulterated venom: this fault, I promise, will be far from my writings and my mind, as it has been in the past, if there is any promise I can truthfully make.

If something I say is too outspoken*, perhaps too calculated to raise a laugh, you’ll be forgiving and grant me this measure of justification : my excellent father* taught me the habit, by marking out the various vices by examples, so that I should steer clear of them. When he encouraged me to live with thrift and frugality and to be content with what he had personally provided for me, he would say, ‘Don’t you see what a miserable existence Albius’ son* has, and how Baius lacks for everything? A powerful lesson that no one should wish to squander his inheritance’; when he sought to deter me from an ignominious

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passion for a prostitute^{*}, it would be, 'Don't be like Scetanus';
and to discourage me from pursuing adulterous wives^{*}, when I might
enjoy a permissible affair, 'Trebonius was caught in the act,' he'd say,
'and his reputation wasn't a pretty one. A philosopher^{*} will give you
theories for avoiding or pursuing this or that: it's enough for me if
I'm able to preserve the rule our ancestors have handed down, and,
while you need a guardian, to protect your life and good name from
harm; as soon as the years have put some strength into your body and
mind, you won't need cork to swim.' This was how he tried to mould
me in my boyhood with his words; and if he was telling me to do a
particular thing, he'd say, 'You have an authority for doing this', and
he would point to one of the selected jurymen; or if he was telling me
not to, it would be, 'Can you be at all uncertain whether this action
would bring discredit and disadvantage when so-and-so roasts in the
fire of notoriety?' As a neighbour's funeral terrifies gluttons who are
not in good health and makes them take care of themselves for fear of
dying, so the shame attaching to others often deters impressionable
minds from faults.

This training has made me free from the faults that bring destruction

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, and those^{*} that do have their grip on me are not too serious
and the sort to earn pardon. Perhaps even these will be substantially
diminished by advancing years, the frankness of a friend and
self-counsel; for whenever I find the welcome of a sofa, or stroll in
the colonnade, I do not let myself down. 'This is the more honourable
course,' I say; 'if I do this, I'll have a better life; this will bring
a smile of pleasure to my friends when I meet them; that wasn't a
nice thing for so and so to do. I hope I'll never be so inconsiderate
as to do anything like that one day.' These are the thoughts I keep
turning over in my head, with lips sealed fast; whenever I'm granted
any leisure, I waste writing paper. This is one of the less serious failings
I mentioned; should you be unwilling to allow me this, make way
for the great company of poets that would come to my aid (for we're
easily in the majority), and, like the Jews^{*}, we'll force you to make your
way into our swelling band.

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SATIRE 5

I'd left great Rome and Aricia* gave me welcome in a modest inn:
Heliodorus* the teacher of rhetoric was sharing my journey, by far
the most learned of the Greeks; from there we came to Forum*
Appii, which was crammed full of boatmen and tight-fisted innkeepers
. Being lazy* types we split this journey, which travellers more
energetic than ourselves do in a single stretch; slowcoaches find the
Appian less hard work. Here, because of the water, which was dreadful
, I declared war on my stomach* as I waited impatiently for my
fellow travellers to finish their dinner.
Now night* was preparing to draw her shadowy veil and to sprinkle
the heavens with stars. That was when the slaves began hurling
insults at the boatmen and the boatmen at the slaves. 'Put in here!'
'You're cramming hundreds on board: stop, that's enough now!' What
with collecting fares and harnessing the mule, a whole hour goes by.
Damned mosquitoes and marsh-frogs banish sleep, while our boatman,
sozzled on amounts of sour wine, sings of the charms of the
girlfriend he left behind, as one of the passengers gives him some

competition: finally the passenger, worn out, starts sleeping, and the
lazy fellow of a boatman, having sent the mule out to pasture, ties his
reins to a stone and, falling on his back, begins to snore.

Now day had dawned when it comes to us that the boat was
making no progress, until one fellow, something of a hothead, jumps
out and, with willow-branch in hands as a cudgel, starts laying
into the back and head of mule and boatman. We'd scarcely landed
two hours before noon. We bathed faces and hands in your waters,
Feronia*. Then after taking breakfast we crawled three miles and
drew near to Anxur, perched on its rocks, gleaming far and wide.
My fine friend Maecenas was due to meet us here, together with
Cocceius*, both of them sent as envoys on important business, no
strangers to reconciling friends who had quarrelled. Here I apply*
some black ointment on my eyes, which were giving me trouble.
Meanwhile Maecenas arrives, and Cocceius, together with Fonteius*
Capito, a man of flawless nature* and unrivalled in his friendship
for Antony. Without regret we left Fundi* with Aufidius* Luscus as
its praetor, laughing at the regalia* of this crazy clerk, his bordered
toga, his tunic with broad stripe and pan of charcoal. Then, worn

out, we rested in the city of the Mamurrae*, where Murena* put his
house at our disposal and Capito his cuisine. The next day's dawn
was the most joyful by far, for we were met at Sinuessa* by Plotius
and Varius* and Virgil*, the purest souls the earth has produced, 40
and men whose friendship no man values more deeply than I. Ah,
how we clasped one another, how happy we were together! Never
while I keep my senses would I compare anything with the pleasure
of friendship.

Then we were given shelter by the lodge that lies close to the 45
Campanian bridge*, and, as their duty required, the state suppliers*
provided fuel and salt. Next, at Capua*, our mules laid aside their
saddlebags in good time. Maecenas went off to amuse himself, Virgil
and I to get some sleep, as ball games* don't agree with those who
suffer from sore eyes and poor digestion. Our next source of hospitality 50
was the well-stocked villa of Cocceius, which overlooks the inns of
Caudium*.

Now, Muse*, I would have you relate to me in brief words the battle
of Sarmentus* the jester and Messius Cicirrus*, and the lineage both
men claimed when they entered the fray. The pedigree of Messius

was distinguished—the Oscans*; the mistress* of Sarmentus is still 55
living: sprung from such ancestors they met to do battle. Sarmentus
issued the first challenge: 'I declare that you resemble a wild horse*.'
We laugh, and Messius for his part responds: 'And so I do,' tossing
his head. 'Oh,' continued his adversary, 'what would you do if
your forehead didn't have its horn cut off, seeing how you threaten 60
in this hornless state?' In point of fact the left side of his hairy forehead
had been disfigured by an unsightly scar. After a good number
of jokes about his Campanian disease* and his looks, he resorted
to asking him to dance the shepherd Cyclops' dance*, adding 'You've
no need of a mask or tragic buskins*!' Cicirrus made plenty of ripostes 65
to this, enquiring several times if he had already fulfilled his vow* and
presented his chains to the household gods; he may have been a clerk*,
but this was no reason why his mistress' claims over him were any the
less. Finally, he asked him why he had ever run away, when a pound of
meal was enough to fill the belly of such a scrawny little runt. It was a 70
real delight to make that dinner-party last longer.

Next we headed straight for Beneventum*, where our painstaking
host almost reduced his home to cinders while turning some lean

thrushes on the fire: Vulcan's blaze* left its grate, and the wandering flames, as they spread through the old kitchen, made haste to lick the roof. Then you could have seen the starving guests and terrified slaves snatching up the dinner, and everyone trying to quench the blaze.

After this Apulia* began to show me her familiar mountains, scorched as they are by the Atabulus. Never would we have crawled our way over these, had we not found shelter in a villa near Trivicum* that supplied eye-stinging smoke as well, when damp branches, foliage and all, were being burnt by the stove. Here*, like a total idiot, I waited right up to midnight for a lying girl to turn up; but sleep carried me off, eager though I was to make love; as I lay on my back dreams then turned to obscene fantasies that made a mess of my nightclothes and stomach.

From here we are whirled along in carriages for twenty-four miles, to stay in a little town whose name can't be fitted into verse*, though it's no problem to identify by its features: water, nature's most accessible gift, is charged for here, but the bread is easily the best, so that the traveller in the know is in the habit of carrying it further on his shoulders, as it is full of grit at Canusium*, the place which isn't a

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jugful richer in water and was founded in early days by the brave Diomedes. Varius here takes his sorrowful leave, to the tears of his friends.

From there we came to Rubi*, worn out from covering a lengthy stage of the road that heavy rain had made less passable. The next day's weather was better but the road worse all the way to the walls of Barium*, the fish-town; then Gnatia* that was built when the water nymphs were angry gave us the chance to laugh and have some fun, as it tried* desperately to convince us that incense melts without fire at the entrance to the temple. Apella the Jew* may believe this, but not I: I've learnt* that the gods live lives that are free from care, and that, if some miracle is caused by nature, it is not sent down by the gods from their lofty dwelling in the sky to show their unhappy mood. Brundisium* marks the end of a long story and a long journey.

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criticize verses that lack energy, he will find fault with those that are harsh, he will make a horizontal stroke with his pen and smear a black sign opposite those that lack refinement, he will prune back pretentious ornamentation and force you to admit light to what is not clear enough, he will show up what has been expressed ambiguously, he will alter what requires to be changed, he will become an Aristarchus: he will not say, 'Why should I give offence to a friend when it is a matter of trifles?' These trifles will bring a friend into serious difficulties when once he has been mocked and received unfavourably.

As when a man is plagued by the accursed scab or the king's ailment or a fit of madness caused by Diana's anger, so men of sense are afraid of coming into contact with a crazy poet and take to their heels: children tease and chase him, knowing no better. He with head in the air spouts verses and wanders on his way, but if, like some fowler intent on catching blackbirds, he falls into a well or pit, then, however long he cries out, 'Hey, fellow citizens, come and help!', there wouldn't be anyone to show interest in pulling him up. Should anyone be concerned to bring help and lower a rope, my comment would be, 'How do you know he didn't throw himself in deliberately and has no wish to be saved?' and I'd tell the story of the Sicilian poet's death. Empedocles, in his eagerness to be regarded as an immortal god, leapt in cold blood into the hot glow of Etna. Let poets have the right and power to die in this manner. He who saves a man's life when he wants to die is doing the same as a murderer. It isn't the first time that he has acted like this, and, if he is pulled out, he won't immediately become a human being and abandon his desire for a famous death. It isn't very clear either what has caused his persistence in composing verses: did he commit sacrilege by pissing on top of his father's ashes or by disturbing some consecrated piece of ground? He has certainly lost his wits, and like a bear that has succeeded in breaking the bars set across its cage, he puts the lot of them to flight, learned and unlearned alike, with his remorseless recitations; indeed the man he catches he holds fast in a great hug and reads him to death, a leech that will not leave the skin alone until it has gorged itself on blood.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS

AP	<i>Ars Poetica</i> (the <i>Epistle to the Pisos: The Art of Poetry</i>)
DRN	Lucretius, <i>De rerum natura</i> (<i>On the Nature of the Universe</i>)
H.	Horace
Porph.	Porphyrio (ancient commentator on Horace)
Ps.-Acro	Pseudo-Acro (ancient commentator on Horace)
ROL	E. H. Warmington (ed.), <i>Remains of Old Latin</i> , Loeb Classical Library, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1936-40)

SATIRES, BOOK 1

SATIRE I. I

The satirist begins by expressing amazement that different people always envy the lot of others though they would not swap places given the chance, but he proceeds (after briefly noting satire's ability to convey serious truths through humour) to focus on the pointlessness of amassing wealth, since one can only use or enjoy a small amount at a time. He concludes by rejecting the other extreme of profligacy, advocating the path of moderation in all things.

14 *Fabius*: like many of the names in the *Satires*, we are dependent on the ancient commentators (such as Porphyrio and Pseudo-Acro) for the identity of Fabius, and it is at least probable that they are guessing or deducing from the context of the *Satires* themselves. Indeed, the point of virtually all H.'s named examples is clear, even if not how precisely they make that point. Porph. here proposes Fabius Maximus Narbonensis as author of several books relating to Stoicism.

25-6 *just as teachers . . . to learn their ABC*: probably an allusion to Lucretius' Epicurean poem *On the Nature of the Universe* (*De rerum natura*, DRN) and the image of his poetry as like honey smeared on a cup of bitter medicine, helping readers take in his philosophical message. Allusions to Lucretius and an affinity with Epicureanism are common in H., especially in the *Satires*.

33 *tiny ant*: the first of many uses of beast fables in the *Satires* (and *Epistles*) reflecting their (partly disingenuous) claim to homespun wisdom.

57 *the fierce Aufidus*: the modern Ofanto, a river in southern Italy. The image of the swollen, muddy river links with that of Lucilius' copious but unrefined composition of poetry at 1.4.11 and 1.10.50-1, and behind it of Callimachus' description of bad poetry as like the muddy Euphrates (Hymn to Apollo 108-9) to connect the ethical moderation advocated here to the poetic moderation of H.'s refined satire.

- 65 *the wealthy Athenian*: Ps.-Acro identifies him as Timon, but this miser indifferent to popular disapproval seems rather different from an active misanthrope, especially one like Timon, made so by ingratitude to his generosity shown in times of hardship, as depicted in Plutarch, Lucian, and eventually Shakespeare.
- 68 *Tantalus*: in mythology, he was punished for serving his son Pelops' flesh to the gods (or disclosing secrets or stealing nectar and ambrosia) by being 'tantalized' in the Underworld by fruit which always retreated when he reached for it and by water up to his neck which drained away when he tried to drink.
- 91 *Mars' Field*: the Campus Martius, just outside the walls of Rome, contained the Circus Flaminius, where chariot races were held. The Latin does not specify 'at the races' and H. may also be referring to training horses for military service.
- 95 *Ummidius*: otherwise unknown, to H.'s contemporaries as to us, as 'a certain' indicates. Some see a play on the cash (*nummi*) he weighs or on his being 'immoderate' and chopped 'in the middle' (*in medio*).
- 100 *Tyndareus' daughters*: an allusion to Clytemnestra who, in many versions, used an axe to kill her husband, Agamemnon.
- 101 *Naevius or Nomentanus*: Nomentanus is an exemplary spendthrift and mentioned in similar terms at 1.8.11, 2.1.22, 2.3.175, 2.3.224; it is unclear whether the parasite who plays a substantial role in 2.8 is meant to be the same figure. The ancient commentators speculate on his identity, but it is notable that Seneca pairs the name with that of Apicius as gourmands at *On the blessed life* 11.4. It is unclear whether Naevius is a miser in polar opposition to Nomentanus (Porph.) or whether they are both spendthrifts in contrast to the misers criticized earlier.
- 105 *Tanais and Visellius' father-in-law*: clearly extremes of some kind, but unclear what. Porph. identifies the former as a eunuch freedman of either Maecenas or Plancus, and the latter as a man with a hernia from too much sex. Tanais is also the river Don and usually represents the far north in Latin poetry (e.g. H., *Odes* 3.10.1); the antithesis may relate to this.
- 119 *like a guest who has dined well*: another allusion to Lucretius, here his argument against the fear of death at *DRN* 3.938-9, in keeping with the broadly Epicurean tone of much of the *Satires*.
- 120 *Crispinus*: Porph. claims Plotius Crispinus was a Stoic philosopher, and he is mentioned in similar terms at 1.3.139, 1.4.14, and 2.7.45. His myopia (or possibly conjunctivitis) is caused by excessive study but also symbolizes his limited perception.

SATIRE 1.2

The theme of moderation continues, focusing now on those who rush to one extreme to avoid the other, before settling specifically on the question of sex,

where the extremes of adultery with respectable *matronae* and obsession with courtesans are equally rejected. The emphasis shifts slightly onto sexual desire as a bodily appetite to be satisfied in any way one can, which renders the dangers incurred by adultery pointless.

- 1 *Honourable Companies*: the Latin word *collegia* covers various types of clubs and associations, but here ironically evokes the trade guilds of more respectable professions than those listed.
- 2 *'actresses'*: specifically, actresses in mime, the least respectable dramatic genre (closer to farce than its silent modern namesake, and including dialogue), though all actors at Rome were considered disreputable and denied citizen rights. They recur as potential mistresses at line 58.
- 3 *the singer Tigellius*: a Sardinian singer, mentioned in several of the *Satires*.
- 4 *'What a generous soul he was!'*: the context and the identity of the mourners makes it clear that this is an ironic criticism of his extravagance.
- 12 *Fufidius*: a usurer of this name is mentioned several times by Cicero, but it may by now represent a typical miser.
- 16 *toga of manhood*: the all-white *toga pura* replaced the purple-fringed *toga praetexta* when elite boys entered manhood at about 16, but they were not entitled to enter into such financial arrangements until the age of 25.
- 20-1 *the father in Terence's play*: Menedemus, eponymous character of the Roman comedy, *Heauton Timorumenos* or *The Self-Tormentor* (163 BC).
- 25 *Maltinus*: the grammarian Nonius Marcellus claims that *malta* means an effeminate man, citing a line of Lucilius (fr. 744 *ROL*), and this name was probably coined accordingly.
- 27 *Rufillus . . . Gargonius of a billy-goat*: this line is 'quoted' at 1.4.92 as one which could be taken as indicating H.'s malice, but we might be sceptical about deducing from this that these are real people. The diminutive Rufillus might suggest affectation, and it is notable that, in Catullus 69, it is a Rufus who smells of goat.
- 28-9 *women . . . a low-hanging flounce*: respectable *matronae*, whose long robes (*stolae*) had a flounce (*instita*) for added concealment.
- 32 *Cato*: M. Porcius Cato 'the Elder' or 'the Censor' (234-149 BC), a byword for stern, old-fashioned morality, hence the unexpectedness of his reaction here. H. omits the second part of the anecdote, in which Cato sees the youth leaving the brothel frequently and tells him that he praised him for going there from time to time, not for living there (Ps.-Acro).
- 36 *Cupiennius*: the name suggests the Latin *cupido*, 'erotic desire'.
cunts wearing white: the Latin *cunnius* has a comparable level of obscenity and shock value, whether taken literally or as synecdoche for aristocratic women wearing white *stolae*.

- 37 *It's worth your while to lend an ear*: reproduces a phrase from Ennius' *Annales* (fr. 494 Skutsch = 471 *ROL*), a typical satiric debasement of lofty epic language in a low context.
- 44 *irrigated*: literally 'pissed through', the urinary metaphor making even more degrading the reference to anal rape, a common (in threats, at least) assertion of dominance or method of unofficial punishment in the Graeco-Roman world.
- 45 *what the law prescribes*: the Latin *iure* could also mean 'and quite right too', but Roman law did permit the wronged family to enact severe retribution, even before Augustus' later legislation 'for restraining adultery' in 18 BC.
- Galba*: presumably an adulterer from the aristocratic Sulpician family, who either fears or has suffered the punishments described.
- 48 *freedwomen*: former slaves formed part of a *demi-monde* in which Roman men could indulge their sexual and perhaps even romantic urges, and it has been speculated that some of the 'mistresses' of Latin love elegy are of this status. Certainly, H. argues against the all-consuming passion which is characteristic of the elegists and their precursor Catullus.
- Sallust*: possibly the historian, though his most famous sexual exploit was precisely the opposite, adultery with a *matrona*, no less than Fausta, daughter of Sulla and wife of Milo.
- 55 *Marsaeus . . . Origo*: even Porph. and Ps.-Acro only paraphrase what H. himself says here. Marsaeus' name may suggest a connection with the Marsi of central Italy, and more tenuously with the flayed satyr Marsyas. Origo's ('origin, birth, lineage') may play on the fact that Marsaeus precisely is not a 'lover of lineage'.
- 63 *maid dressed in a toga*: the standard dress of a male Roman citizen was not worn by respectable women, but was the costume of the courtesan. See also line 82.
- 64 *Villius . . . Fausta*: probably the Sextus Villius mentioned as a friend of Fausta's husband Milo (see second note on line 48 above) by Cicero (*Ad familiares* 2.6.1). 'Son-in-law' is, of course, an ironic designation for 'daughter's lover'. Fausta's name means 'Lucky', misleadingly for Villius.
- 67 *the door was shut against him*: Villius plays the role of the locked-out lover (*exclusus amator*), a stock figure of love elegy, often performing a song-by-the-closed-door (*paraklausithyron*).
- Longarenus*: unknown, but evidently another of Fausta's lovers.
- 68-72 *Suppose . . . What would his reply be?*: personifications are a feature of diatribe, but close verbal echoes signal that this talking penis is a hilariously obscene parody of Nature's reprimand of those fearing death in *DRN* 3.929-65. Indeed H. goes on to align the penis's sentiments with 'what nature advises'.

- 72-6 *But how much better . . . what should be avoided*: Epicurean language in keeping with the message of sexual desire's being a bodily need, whose pleasure lies in having been satisfied rather than in the process, in Epicurean terms a *katastematic* pleasure. Much of the second half of the satire recalls Lucretius' 'diatribe' against passionate love at *DRN* 4.1030-287.
- 80 *Cerintus*: following the reading of the manuscripts and the Oxford Classical Text, he must be a jeweller. Bentley's conjecture *tuo* for *tuum* would make the comparison between the lady's leg and that of Cerintus, who would then be a beautiful boy, as his name ('bees' bread') might suggest. It is also the name of the beloved of the (later) female elegist Sulpicia.
- 86 *Kings*: the significance of this is not entirely clear, but it might play on the further meaning of *reges* as 'patrons'.
- 90 *Lynceus*: in myth, the preternaturally keen-sighted watchman of the *Argo*.
- 91 *Hypsaea*: Porph. identifies her as Plotia Hypsaea, but as usual we might suspect an invented type of blindness either literally (a better antithesis to Lynceus) or to a lover's flaws.
- 92 *'What a leg! What arms!'*: an ironic allusion to an epigram (*Palatine Anthology*, 5.132) of H.'s contemporary Philodemus, who was both an Epicurean and a writer of erotic epigrams. The epigram contains no fewer than thirteen exclamations 'Oh', evoked by H.'s restrained pair.
- 95 *Catia*: Porph. claims she wore a short skirt to show off the beauty of her legs (clearly based on this line) and that she committed adultery in the temple of Venus.
- 96-8 *hedged by a rampart . . . hangers-on*: the emphasis on obstacles and especially the language of love as war (*militia amoris*) evokes the world of love elegy.
- 101 *Coan silk*: the famed (and famously transparent) product of the island of Cos, associated with courtesans and, in the following decades, particularly linked by Propertius with his beloved Cynthia.
- 105-8 *Our friend sings . . . what runs away*: a close imitation of Callimachus, *Epigram* 31 (*Palatine Anthology*, 12.102.)
- 113 *to separate void from substance*: the return of an Epicurean approach to the question of sex is marked by an allusion (with Lucretian echoes) to its materialist view of the universe as consisting of vacuum and matter.
- 114-16 *When your throat is parched . . . peacock and turbot*: the parallel of hunger and thirst reinforces the Epicurean depiction of sex as an emotionless bodily need.
- 117 *maid or slave-boy*: the absolute power held by masters over the bodies of their slaves included the right to exact sexual favours, or to rape them (from the modern, but not the ancient point of view).

- 121 *Galli*: eunuch priests of the Eastern goddess Cybele, and hence able to endure the endless postponements of sexual gratification.
Philodemus: see note on line 92 above. The epigram alluded to does not survive, though it is interesting that another (*Palatine Anthology*, 5.126) depicts a very similar scenario to that of the caught-out lover at the end of the satire. There is also a pun on his name meaning 'lover of the common people'.
- 126 *Ilia and Egeria*: respectively the mother of Romulus and Remus by the god Mars, and the nymph who advised and married Rome's second king, Numa, hence the highest of Roman aristocracy. This is a Romanization of the sentiments of the third-century BC Cynic poet Cercidas, who recommends using the 'Aphrodite of the marketplace' and imagining yourself 'Tyndareus' son-in-law' (i.e. having sex with Helen).
- 131 *fearing for . . . her dowry*: a husband could divorce his adulterous wife and, unlike in divorce under other circumstances, keep part of her dowry.
and me for myself: the surprising climax of this breathless sentence *could* be part of the counterfactual scenario which 'I don't worry about' but surely hints that the satirist does not practise what he preaches and speaks from bitter experience. The whole scene may evoke the typical scenario enacted in the low comic drama known as the 'adultery mime'.
- 133 *bank-balance*: an adulterer might be compelled to make financial restitution to the wronged husband.
backside: see note on line 44 above, though the punitive insertion of radishes, spiky fish, and other painful objects may also be alluded to.
- 134 *Fabius*: if this is the Stoic of 1.1.14, he might argue that the wise man should be indifferent to suffering and not feel 'misery'.

SATIRE 1.3

A generalized attack on inconsistency focuses on why people ignore their own faults while criticizing those of their friends, when they ought to palliate or even put a positive 'spin' on the latter. Criticism of this general failing is linked to ridicule of its philosophical equivalent, the Stoic doctrine that all crimes are equal.

- 4 *Tigellius*: see note on *Sat.* 1.2.3.
Caesar: presumably Octavian, the only reference to him in *Satires* 1, and the father invoked is Julius.
- 7 *Bacchus*: suggests a wild hymn to Dionysus, possibly a dithyramb.
- 8 *treble . . . lowest*: even Tigellius' vocal range goes to extremes.
- 9–11 *often he would tear along . . . Juno's sacred baskets*: this draws on Cicero's condemnation of extreme speed or slowness in walking in *De officiis* 1.131. The precise ritual in which Juno's sacred objects are being carried in procession is uncertain, but the image is clear.

- 15 *a million sesterces*: equivalences with modern currency are notoriously difficult, but when Augustus a little later imposed a property qualification (or census) for senators, this was the figure, a very large sum.
- 21 *Maenius*: mentioned by Lucilius, and Porph. has an anecdote about his proclaiming that he wished he had 400,000 sesterces-worth of debt, replying when asked why, that he owed 800,000, marking him as a spend-thrift and a wit.
Novius: barely characterized here and unidentified by the commentators, but his name may suggest that he is a 'new man' (*novus homo*).
- 27 *an Epidaurian snake's*: a snake sacred to the god of healing, Aesculapius, who had a temple at Epidaurus, near Argos, or perhaps one brought from there to his temple in Rome. The healthy eyesight of such snakes provides additional contrast to the diseased eyes of self-examination.
- 29–30 *the fastidious standards*: lit. 'keen noses', continuing the sensory metaphor.
- 38–9 *a lover in his blindness . . . charmed by them*: as in the last satire, an allusion to Lucretius' diatribe against passionate love, and specifically the pet-names with which lovers delude themselves about the beloved's flaws, but H. goes on to invert the picture and use it as a *positive* model for how friends should treat each other's flaws.
- 40 *Balbinus . . . Hagna's polyp*: unknown, unless the connection with the Balbinus who joined Sextus Pompeius is correct, but the names could suggest that he 'stammers' (*balbus*) and that her 'chaste' Greek name is as much of a euphemism as any in Lucretius.
- 47 *Sisyphus*: Porph. claims this was a favourite dwarf of Mark Antony.
- 76 *Again*: marks the transition into the attack on the Stoic doctrine that all crimes are equal, using a word (*denique*) typical of Lucretius.
- 77 *the other faults that attach themselves to fools*: Stoics also believed that everyone except the Stoic 'wise man' (*sapiens*) was mad or foolish; H. appropriates the notion ironically.
- 82 *crucified*: considered a degrading punishment, particularly associated with slaves.
- 82–3 *men of sanity . . . Labeo*: H. brands the Stoic doctrine on crime with the insanity they impute to all non-Stoics; the Labeo whom Porph. suggests would be too young when the poem was written, so many identify this as C. Atinius Labeo, who, as tribune in 131 BC, tried to have the censor thrown from the Tarpeian Rock on the Capitoline Hill (from which traitors, beginning with the Vestal Virgin Tarpeia, were thrown).
- 86 *Ruso*: not known beyond the context of this passage, but evidently enforced listening to his histories at a recitation is the price of failing to pay interest on a debt.
- 87 *gloomy Kalends*: the first of the month, when interest on loans was due.

- 91 *by Evander's hands*: legendary Arcadian king who first settled the site where Rome later stood; H., or perhaps the host in free indirect discourse, massively exaggerates the antiquity of the cup.
- 92 *my side of the dish*: Roman diners shared couches, tables, and dishes.
- 94–5 *What . . . a legal agreement?*: the standard practical (as opposed to philosophical) objection to the Stoic position, that harsh punishment of trivial offences leaves no room for a proportionate response to more serious crimes.
- 97–8 *instinct . . . expediency itself*: H. opposes the Stoic position partly by referring to their own adherence to the laws of nature, partly by developing an Epicurean view of how human society develops through expediency and convention, holding much in common with Lucretius' description of this in *DRN* 5.
- 100 *acorns and lairs*: the basics of human existence; acorns are a conventionally primitive food in Roman thought, but the low detail is a satiric touch.
- 103–4 *verbs and nouns*: the development of language was an important issue in ancient philosophical (as in modern anthropological) thought on early humans.
- 107–8 *Helen . . . cause of war*: the archetypal cause of the archetypal war, that of the Greeks against Troy, is shown to be far from the first caused by sexual desire. The obscene word *cunnus* (see second note on 1.2.36 above) both emphasizes the low, physical nature of the desire (equivalent to that for acorns!) and injects a satiric note into the lofty ascent of man.
- 108 *an unrecorded death*: memorialization of the dead is a key motif in Homer and his reception; those dying before the Trojan War lack this consolation.
- 116–17 *young cabbages . . . the gods' holy emblems*: the harsh law-code of Draco in archaic Athens prescribed equal punishment for these crimes.
- 123 *the power of a king*: as holding absolute and arbitrary power to punish; the Roman aversion to the term has been exaggerated but is still considerable.
- 124–5 *If the wise man . . . a king*: Stoic doctrine; the inclusion of the cobbler, though not inconsistent with the doctrine, inevitably ridicules it.
- 127 *father Chrysippus' meaning*: Greek philosopher, c.280–207 BC, and head of the Stoa following its founder Zeno and his successor, Cleanthes, but often seen as the key formulator of Stoic doctrine. The interlocutor is clearly a Stoic.
- 129 *Hermogenes*: clearly a singer, frequently mentioned later in *Satires* 1 with the additional name Tigellius. Scholars disagree whether this is meant to be the same Tigellius mentioned at 1.2.3 and 1.3.4, but it feels awkward to have a different singer of the same name in the same satire.
- 130 *Alfenus*: despite attempts to link him with contemporary figures, clearly a retired barber for the nonce.

- 133–6 *Naughty boys . . . most mighty of mighty kings*: the beard and stick are emblems of the philosopher, here distorted into the object of and ineffectual defence against derisory attack. The humour and naughtiness of the boys surely represents the comic satirist's irreverent attack on the lofty philosopher-king.
- 137–40 *while you, a king . . . my genial friends will pardon me*: ironically, despite being a 'king', the Stoic wise man lacks a retinue even of friends because of his harshly judgmental attitude, while H., despite his 'folly' by Stoic standards, has the pleasure of (Epicurean) friends who show the leniency advocated throughout the satire.
- 139 *Crispinus*: see note on *Sat.* 1.1.120.
- 142 *in my private station shall live a happier man than Your Majesty*: asserting the joys of Epicurean quietism, with an additional, if specious, contrast between non-involvement in politics and the 'kingship' of the Stoic wise man.

SATIRE 1.4

After the three 'diatribes', H. reflects on the nature of satire. He traces its antecedents in Greek Old Comedy before criticizing the careless poetic technique of the father of satire, Lucilius. He then defends his own satires, both on aesthetic grounds and against charges of abusive slander. He traces his own moral training (and his practice as a satirist) to his father's pointing out of good and bad exemplars.

- 1 *Eupolis . . . Old Comedy*: Eupolis (fl. 429–412 BC), Cratinus (fl. 450–423), and Aristophanes (c.455–386) were the three most celebrated authors of so-called 'Old Comedy' in fifth- and fourth-century Athens, engaging with contemporary political issues and often attacking political figures (*komoidoumenoi*, or 'objects of comic attack'). Although the Romans considered satire a native form without specific Greek antecedents, the earthy tone and abusive, political subject matter made Old Comedy a privileged forebear.
- 5 *Lucilius*: see Introduction. The extent of his debt to Old Comedy is wildly exaggerated, in keeping both with H.'s archaeology of satire and his polemic against Lucilius.
- 7–8 *witty . . . but unpolished*: the contrast between the content produced by talent (*ingenium*) and the style produced by skill (*ars*) is central to H.'s attack on Lucilius and more generally to 'Callimachean' poets' attitude to 'archaic' authors.
- 8 *with a sensitive nose*: lit. 'well-blown', and hence able to detect the stench of vice and folly.
- 10 *on one leg*: proverbially 'very easily'.
- 11 *muddy river*: see note on *Sat.* 1.1.57.
- 14 *Crispinus*: see note on *Sat.* 1.1.120. The context might suggest that he also writes poetry, but the challenge might equally be between H.'s speed in composing satire and Crispinus' in writing philosophical prose.

- 17–18 *I thank the gods . . . in very few words*: the self-deprecation is clearly ironic, since his brevity fits the ideals of both aesthetic and ethical moderation espoused throughout *Satires* 1.
- 21 *Fannius*: clearly a self-promoting but unadmired poet. Regardless of his quality, as a living poet his work would not have been allowed in Pollio's library, Rome's first public library, established in the early 30s BC, which housed only the works of dead writers. Other interpretations of the Latin are possible, but the general sense is clear.
- 23 *to read it in public*: recitations were an important part of the dissemination of poetry in Rome.
- 24–5 *for the reason . . . most of them deserve censure*: the satirist's concern that the objects of his attack will be hostile, and the attendant threats to his freedom of speech, are recurrent motifs from H. onwards, notably in *Sat.* 2.1, Persius 1, and Juvenal 1.
- 26–7 *either greed or wretched ambition . . . crazy with love*: the targets of the first two satires of this book.
- 28 *Albius*: the name recurs at line 109 among the negative exempla pointed out by H.'s father. Strict chronology tells against them being the same person, but H. proleptically shows himself putting his father's teaching into practice.
- 34 *hay tied to his horns*: used to mark out aggressive bulls.
- 37 *bakehouse or water-tank*: public facilities for the poor respectively to bake their bread and fetch water, hence the low readership—slaves and old women—alleged for H.'s poetry.
- 42 *conversational prose*: evokes H.'s own title for the collection, *Sermones* or *Conversations*. The question of whether everything in verse was 'poetry' was a vexed one in antiquity (for instance, Aristotle denies the philosophical verse of Empedocles that title) but satire's rejection of the status of poetry is part of its self-representation as low, realistic, and generally the opposite of the loftier poetic genres, especially epic.
- 45 *whether comedy is poetry or not*: links back to the opening lines of this satire; note that the ostensibly negative qualities ascribed to comedy (as to satire) are also its strengths in relating to (a construction of) real life.
- 48–52 *'But the father . . . torches'*: the interlocutor's examples are actually stock characters and situations from the more domestic, social, and romantic 'New Comedy' associated with Menander and the Romans Plautus and Terence, than the political Old Comedy of Aristophanes. As H.'s response shows, the subject matter of this genre too can be paralleled in satire.
- 52 *Pomponius*: clearly a 'real-life' equivalent of the disobedient, courtesan-loving son of New Comedy.
- 60–1 *'When once . . . asunder'*: a quotation from Ennius' *Annales* (fr. 225–6 Skutsch), the canonical Roman epic before the composition of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and the specific object of parody by Lucilius. The gates of the temple of Janus were opened when Rome was at war.

- 62 *even when he was dismembered . . . the limbs of a poet*: a famous line playing on the established parallel between a body (*corpus*) of work and that of the poet himself. Even if Ennius' words did not scan as hexameters, H. claims, they would still be recognizable as poetry.
- 65–6 *Sulcius and Caprius*: it is just possible that these are other, more aggressive satirists, but far more probably they are informers, feared by robbers but not by the innocent. The Latin for 'indictments' (*libelli*) can also mean 'poetry books' (and H. so designates *this* book at line 71 below and at the very end of *Sat.* 1.10), which reinforces the parallel between informers and satirists.
- 69 *Caelius and Birrius*: in terms of the analogy, these must be robbers living in fear of Sulcius and Caprius, so that the addressee is an equivalently vicious or foolish target for satire.
- 71 *dangling from a pillar*: outside a bookshop, where books would be tied as an advertisement and for browsers to sample.
- 72 *those of Hermogenes Tigellius*: see note on *Sat.* 1.3.129. Some see this as a gibe at his meanness in browsing not buying, but the point is surely that his lack of taste is as marked as that of the mob; this specific flaw of this comprehensively flawed character is particularly stressed in *Sat.* 1.10.
- 73 *except my friends*: central to Epicureanism and to H.'s broader view of life. The emphasis on a select readership is foreshadowed in Lucilius, but is especially characteristic of Horatian satire.
- 85 *has a black heart*: lit. 'is black', with no ethnic connotations, but the ethical imagery of black and white is pervasive in the *Satires*.
- 86 *four persons . . . three couches*: three per couch was the norm, marking the *scurra* as an extra.
- 87–9 *one of whom is in the habit . . . secrets of the heart*: the *scurra* was a sort of jester, a social inferior invited to dinner to entertain with his witty and often abusive banter. H. draws a parallel between this and his own brand of gently amusing satire.
- 89 *god who makes men free*: a play on one of the Latin names for the wine-god Dionysus, *Liber*, since wine makes tongues as well as men 'free'. Again, the issue of freedom of speech is subtly introduced.
- 92 *Rufillus . . . Gargonius of a billy-goat*: an exact quotation of 1.2.27, though the previous line replaces the ironic *facetus* ('the height of fashion') with the blunt *ineptus* ('silly'). H. thus dramatizes the reception of his own earlier satires, but we should still be sceptical about whether any of this refers to real events.
- 94 *Petillius Capitolinus*: despite Porph.'s fantasies of Jupiter Capitolinus' crown being stolen, nothing is known beyond what can be deduced from this passage and even the common conjecture that the 'theft' is in the form of embezzlement cannot be certain, though the interlocutor's tone and the noble name do suggest 'white-collar crime'.
- 100–1 *ink . . . venom*: continuing the colour imagery; *aerugo* is metaphorically 'venom' or 'malice' but literally the rust on bronze.

- 103 *outspoken*: lit. 'free', a play both on the satirist's freedom of speech and the origins of the outspokenness in H.'s freedman father.
- 105 *my excellent father*: H. roots his satire in the common-sense teaching of his father, based not on (Greek) philosophical doctrines but on the very Roman tradition of exemplarity, imitating positive examples and shunning the negative. The passage is overtly autobiographical, though caution must always be used in taking such passages literally. It has something in common with Demea's instructions to his son in Terence's *Adelphoe* 413–20, though the negative portrayal of that character makes the parallel problematic. On the surface, Lucilius' literary dependence on Old Comedy is contrasted with H.'s 'real-life' dependence on his father, though characteristic Horatian irony would suggest there is more to this passage than that.
- 109–10 *Albius' son . . . Baius*: that these are spendthrifts (or victims of spendthrift fathers) can only be deduced from the context, a further parallel with H.'s own practice in the *Satires*. The context would most naturally imply that Albius' son is the spendthrift, but the father's appearance as an extravagant collector at line 28 above might put the blame on him.
- 111–12 *prostitute . . . Scetanus*: a high-class courtesan (*meretrix*) rather than streetwalker. This is part of the advice H. gives in *Sat.* 1.2. Scetanus is unknown.
- 113–14 *adulterous wives . . . Trebonius*: a further allusion to *Sat.* 1.2, this time the central argument. Trebonius is unknown.
- 115–20 *A philosopher . . . you won't need cork to swim*: the contrast between Roman exemplarity and Greek philosophizing is made explicit. Cork was used as a flotation aid for the young learning to swim.
- 130–1 *those . . . to earn pardon*: emphasis again on moderation, even in virtue, and on the differing severity of vices, as stressed in *Sat.* 1.3.
- 143 *the Jews*: in Roman times, Judaism was famous for its proselytizing zeal.

SATIRE 1.5

A description of a journey to Brundisium (or possibly Tarentum) with Maecenas and others. H. engages closely with Lucilius' satire on a journey to Sicily, but applies the principles of refinement and concision set out in the previous poem in such a way that the journey itself embodies them. H.'s brevity, unexpected emphases, and omission of many details are also related to the fact that the journey was a politically charged one, either that to Brundisium in 38 BC or to Tarentum in 37 for a meeting between Mark Antony and Octavian. H., the sufferer from conjunctivitis, only sees and the Callimachean poet only describes what it is safe to see and describe.

- 1 *Aricia*: modern Ariccia, 15 miles south-east of Rome on the Appian Way. The contrast between 'great Rome' and the 'modest inn' is suggestive of H.'s poetics.

- 2 *Heliodorus*: usually taken to be Apollodorus of Pergamum, whose name does not scan in hexameters, using a play on Apollo as Helios, the sun god; Caesar chose him in 45 BC to tutor his adopted son, Octavian. Gowers' suggestion that it refers to the author of the poem *Sights of Italy*, and that H. took not the poet but the book itself as a guide (like taking Baedeker on holiday) is attractive (E. Gowers, 'Horace' *Satires* 1.5: An Inconsequential Journey', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 39 (1993), 48–66).
- 3 *Forum Appii*: another town on the Appian Way, 42 miles south-east of Rome, on the edge of the Pomptine marshes, and north-western end of a canal across them, on which H. continues his journey.
- 5–6 *Being lazy . . . in a single stretch*: probably a self-conscious contrast with Lucilius' *Journey to Sicily*, a fragment of which (fr. 102–5 *ROL*) suggests that he did get to Forum Appii in one stretch.
- 7–8 *declared war on my stomach*: i.e. by fasting.
- 9–10 *Now night . . . stars*: amusingly incongruous epic language.
- 24 *Feronia*: an Italian goddess, who had a shrine near Tarracina (Anxur), at the south-eastern end of the canal. The address (apostrophe) to her is an epic touch.
- 28 *Cocceius*: L. Cocceius Nerva, who was sent to Antony by Octavian in 41 BC and helped to forge the pact of Brundisium the following year, as alluded to in the following line.
- 30–1 *I apply . . . trouble*: both H.'s conjunctivitis and his smearing of ointment to treat it can be read symbolically in relation to his tactful refusal to see (or report) political matters which he is not supposed to see, and which are therefore unexpectedly and tantalizingly absent from this satire.
- 32 *Fonteius Capito*: praenomen Gaius, suffect consul in 33 BC, and, according to Plutarch, sent by Antony to bring Cleopatra to Syria in 36.
- 32–3 *flawless nature*: lit. 'made to the fingernail', i.e. like a sculpture so smooth that a fingernail cannot detect flaws.
- 34 *Fundi*: another town on the Appian Way, in the land of the Volsci.
with Aufidius Luscus as its praetor: the phrase (in the ablative absolute) evokes the similar use of Roman consuls' names to designate a year, a typical satiric debasement of lofty language but also suggesting Luscus' self-importance; his names evoke the muddy Apulian river Aufidus of *Sat.* 1.1 and, being 'one-eyed', the problems with vision which pervade this satire.
- 35–6 *regalia . . . charcoal*: despite being only a municipal official, Luscus wears the *toga praetexta* of consuls and other high magistrates, and the *latus clavus* of senators. The significance of the charcoal is less clear, and the notion that he is preparing to burn incense does not seem sufficiently absurd, even if it is to his guests rather than to the gods.

- 37 *the city of the Mamurrae*: Formiae, another name which does not fit hexameters, and home to Mamurra, Caesar's chief engineer and object of some of Catullus' most vicious poems.
- 38 *Murena*: presumably Aulus Terentius Varro Murena, Maecenas' brother-in-law, later executed in 22 BC for a conspiracy against Augustus.
- 40 *Sinuessa*: near modern Mondragone, and the southernmost point at which the Appian Way touched the coast of the Tyrrhenian sea.
- Plotius*: Plotius Tucca, part of the so-called circle of Maecenas and later, with Varius, editor of the *Aeneid* following Virgil's death. All three friends also had connections with Philodemus and the Epicurean circle on the Bay of Naples, and H.'s paean to friendship here has an Epicurean ring. All three are also among H.'s ideal readers at 1.10.81, which is identical to this line but with *Maecenas* in place of *Sinuessa*.
- Varius*: L. Varius Rufus, a great poet, whose works are almost entirely lost, perhaps best known for his *De morte*, probably an Epicurean attack on the fear of death, and the tragedy *Thyestes*, performed at Augustus' Actian games in 29 BC.
- Virgil*: P. Vergilius Maro, author of *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and *Aeneid*, probably the greatest of Rome's and perhaps of all poets.
- 45 *Campanian bridge*: taking the Appian Way over the river Sarno, 3 miles from Sinuessa.
- 46 *state suppliers*: under Caesar's *lex Iulia de repetundis* of 59 BC, these *parochi* were obliged to supply the provisions listed to those on public business.
- 47 *Capua*: the main city of Campania, a byword for luxury.
- 49 *ball games . . . digestion*: H.'s ailments again prevent him from being involved with (and reporting) Maecenas' activities, though the ball games sound innocuous enough. Gowers suggests that *pila lippis*, juxtaposed with *inimicum* (lit. 'hostile'), encrypts an allusion to the battle of Philippi, where H. fought on the 'wrong' side (E. Gowers, 'Blind Eyes and Cut Throats: Amnesia and Silence in Horace *Satires* 1.7', *Classical Philology*, 97 (2002), 145–61).
- 51 *Caudium*: town in Samnium and site of a notorious Roman defeat in 321 BC. There is a double wordplay whereby Cocceius' (see note on line 28 above) villa not only overlooks, but is superior to and hence looks contemptuously down on the inns.
- 51–3 *Now, Muse*: a mock-epic invocation introducing the mock-epic 'battle' of insults between the low-life 'heroes' Sarmentus and Messius. Warriors' (infinitely more noble) lineage is also a staple of descriptions of epic duels. Lucilius also seems to have included a mock-epic 'battle' in his *Journey to Sicily*.
- 52 *Sarmentus*: according to a scholiast on Juvenal, a freedman and clerk of Maecenas; on *scurrae* ('jesters'), see note on *Sat.* 1.4.87–9; *sarmenta* means 'twigs' or 'kindling', appropriate to his 'scrawny' build and his ability to provoke fiery arguments.

- Messius Cicirrus*: his name means 'cockerel' and some speculate that this was a stock figure in the local comedy known as Atellane farce, but it more probably alludes to his strutting, combative nature.
- 54 *Oscans*: a people of south-western Italy; the generalized, ethnic nature of Messius' lineage is a bathetic deflation of the expected list of noble names.
- 55 *the mistress is still living*: in the sense of his former owner when a slave, rather than his lover; mentioning her instead of a father or grand-father emphasizes Sarmentus' servile origins.
- 56–7 *wild horse*: the precise point of the insult is unclear, but it must relate to the equivalent scene in Lucilius where one 'combatant' calls his opponent a rhinoceros.
- 62 *Campanian disease*: unknown and much speculated about.
- 63 *the shepherd Cyclops' dance*: the one-eyed giant Polyphemus, famous from the *Odyssey*, but also as a pastoral lover in Theocritus 6, evidently as a character in a dramatic dance, perhaps a pantomime.
- 64 *a mask or tragic buskins*: the latter are high boots, which are the generic marker for tragedy. There may be a specific gibe about Messius' ugliness and height, or the point may be more broadly that he is like a Cyclops even without a costume.
- 65–6 *fulfilled his vow . . . gods*: a parody of the retiring professional's dedication of his tools, applied to the servile Sarmentus.
- 66–7 *clerk . . . any the less*: Messius implies that Sarmentus is a runaway slave, still under the jurisdiction of his original owner, rather than one legitimately freed by Maecenas.
- 71 *Beneventum*: an old Samnite city, under Roman rule since the early third century.
- 73–4 *Vulcan's blaze*: a lofty, epic-sounding metonymy for a humble kitchen fire.
- 77–8 *Apulia . . . Atabulus*: H.'s native region, as emphasized by his use of the local name for the sirocco.
- 79 *Trivicum*: unknown, but almost certainly the modern Treviso.
- 82–5 *Here . . . stomach*: H.'s sexual disappointment and resulting wet dream fit with his self-deprecating persona, but might also symbolize fears that the diplomatic mission might prove an empty hope (K. J. Reckford, 'Only a Wet Dream? Hope and Skepticism in Horace, *Satire* 1.5', *American Journal of Philology*, 120 (1999), 525–54) or more broadly the satire's own refusal to provide the political 'money shot' with which it teases the reader.
- 87 *little town whose name can't be fitted into verse*: an allusion to a similarly self-conscious periphrasis in Lucilius. Many have attempted to identify the town, but Gowers ('Horace, *Satires* 1.5') suggests that it may be a deliberate red herring.

- 91–2 *Canusium* . . . *Diomedes*: modern Canosa, main city of Daunia in northern Apulia. The Greek hero settled in this region on finding his wife unfaithful when he returned from the Trojan War.
- 94 *Rubi*: another Apulian town, modern Ruvo, 29 miles beyond Canusium.
- 96 *Barium*: modern Bari, famous for its fishing industry.
- 97–8 *Gnatia* . . . *angry*: usually called Egnatia. H. probably means simply that the town had a poor water supply, rather than any more elaborate charter myth.
- 99–100 *tried* . . . *melts without fire*: evidently a local *thauma* or natural wonder.
- Apella the Jew*: the name may play on *a* (without) *pellis* (skin) to allude to circumcision. Jews are often cited in Roman literature as notoriously superstitious.
- 101–3 *I've learnt* . . . *mood*: Epicurean sentiments, with clear Lucretian echoes. The tranquillity and separateness of the gods, and hence their lack of positive or negative intervention in earthly affairs, was a central tenet of the philosophy, and Lucretius in *DRN* 6 devoted much space to explaining the natural causes of apparent wonders.
- 104 *Brundisium* . . . *journey*: a very abrupt ending, especially if the ultimate goal of the journey was not Brundisium but Tarentum. The semi-apologetic claim to length is clearly ironic, since this is the shortest satire in the collection so far, considerably shorter than Lucilius' must have been, and marked throughout by brevity and omissions. The parallelism of story and journey in this line reflects their wider parallelism, notably as both reflect the principles of satiric composition expounded in the previous poem.

SATIRE 1.6

A discussion of the importance of birth and ancestry in contemporary society, especially as it relates to an obsession with political ambition, leads into two parallel descriptions of H.'s relationships with his two 'fathers': his adoption and rebirth into the circle of Maecenas, and his upbringing and education overseen by his freedman father. The satire closes with a sketch of the simple, unambitious life which H. leads as a result.

- 1 *Lydians who inhabit Etruria's lands*: according to tradition, Etruria was colonized by settlers from Lydia in north-west Asia Minor.
- 3–4 *ancestors* . . . *legions*: an odd claim, not paralleled elsewhere, and the explanation that these are *Etruscan* legions seems a little forced.
- 6 *a freedman's son*: a much-debated autobiographical claim. Unlike freedmen themselves, their children had full citizen rights.
- 8 *gentleman*: nicely captures the double sense of *ingenuus*, literally 'free-born' but also metaphorically 'noble'.
- 9 *Tullius*: Servius Tullius, sixth king of Rome, traditionally the son of a slave-woman, and a classic example of the overcoming of humble origins.

- 12–13 *Laevinus* . . . *into banishment*: an unknown, but evidently decadent, member of the *gens Valeria* and hence a descendant of P. Valerius Poplicola, involved with Brutus, Collatinus, and others in the expulsion of Rome's last king, Tarquinius Superbus.
- 14–15 *black mark*: usually assigned by the censors to strip senators of their rank for conduct unbecoming, but here the people pre-emptively and metaphorically assign it by refusing to elect Laevinus.
- 17 *ancestral busts*: busts or masks of distinguished ancestors (*imagines*), displayed in aristocratic homes and at funerals as reminders of the family's glorious past. Such ancestry carried much weight in elections.
- 20 *Decius*: P. Decius Mus, a *novus homo* or first senator in his family, became consul in 340 BC and traditionally died while 'devoting' himself and the enemy to the gods below.
- 20–1 *Appius the censor*: Appius Claudius Pulcher, censor in 50 BC with L. Calpurnius Piso, and severe in his examination of the senatorial roll.
- 22 *my own hide*: probably an allusion to the fable of the ass in the lion's skin.
- 23–4 *Glory* . . . *high-born*: the personified Glory, like a Roman general in a triumphal procession, leads those she has conquered, who ironically are precisely those who aspire to be at the head of such a triumph.
- 24–5 *Tillius* . . . *tribune*: evidently a man of low birth who has lost his status as a senator (and hence the right to wear the 'stripe' or *latus clavus*), perhaps through expulsion by the censors, but who has regained it by being elected tribune of the plebs. L. Tillius Cimber was one of Caesar's assassins, but the identification with this figure is uncertain.
- 26–7 *binds the black leather thongs* . . . *chest*: distinctive senatorial dress: the four leather thongs attaching the shoe to the leg and, once more, the *latus clavus*.
- 30 *Barrus*: his disease is the desire to be thought a beauty, but his name ('Elephant') might suggest that his desire is unattainable as well as excessive.
- 38 *Syrus* . . . *Dionysius*: typical slave-names, often appearing in Roman comedy.
- 39 *the rock*: see note to *Sat.* 1.3.82–3.
- Cadmus*: a contemporary executioner, according to Porph., which suits the context.
- 40 *Novius*: also mentioned at 1.3.21, but here his name's implication of 'new man' is central.
- sits* . . . *he's what my father was*: the imagery is from the theatre, where the *lex Roscia* assigned different seats for senators, knights, and lower orders, but should not be taken too literally and refers more generally to social rank. The implication that Novius is a freedman (like the speaker's father) is probably an exaggeration, since they could not hold office at this time.
- 41–2 *a Paulus or a Messalla*: paradigmatically noble families, with perhaps a specific nod at the contemporary Paullus Aemilius Lepidus and Messalla Corvinus.