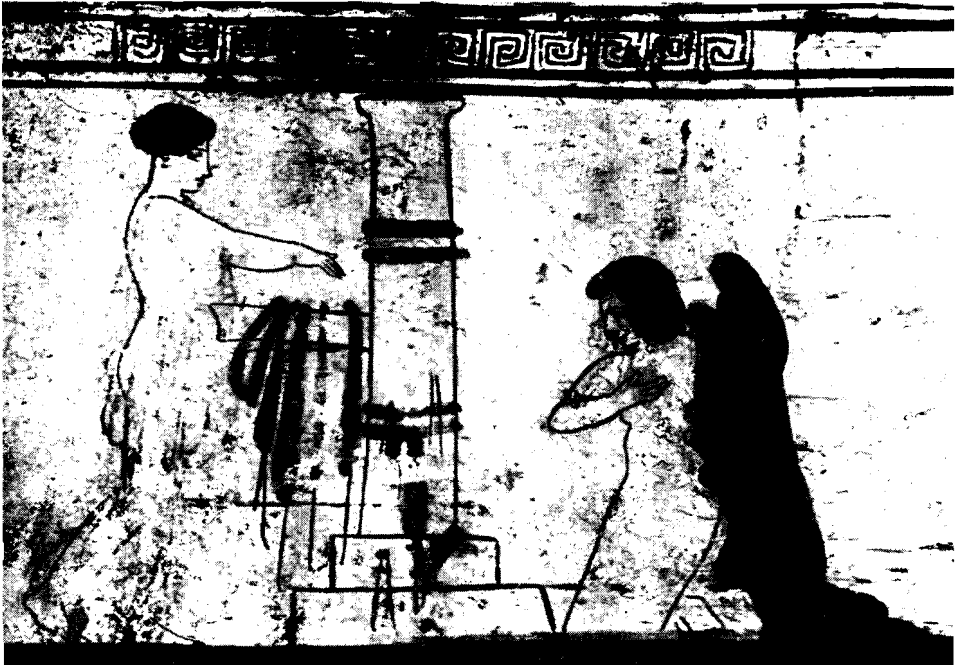


METER: elegiac couplet [see Catullus 70].

- 1 **aequor, aequoris** (*n*), sea.
- 2 **ad** (+ *acc.*), at, for the purpose of. ***inferiae, -ārum** (*f pl*), offerings for the dead, funeral rites. Such offerings at the site of the grave might have included milk, honey, wine, and flowers.
- 3 **ut . . . mortis**: rephrase this as follows: **ut tibi postrēmum mūnus mortis dōnārem**. **postrēmus, -a, -um**, final, last. **dōnārem**: an imperfect subjunctive is used here and in line 4 instead of the present, as one would expect after **adveniō**, because the purpose of the author's trip originated in the past. ***mūnus, mūneris** (*n*), duty, gift, tribute, offering.
- 4 **nēquiquam**, in vain. **alloquor, alloquī** (3), **allocūtus sum**, to address. **alloquerer**: imperfect subjunctive. **cinis, cineris** (*f*), ash.
- 5 **quandocquidem**, since, seeing that. **mihi**: dative of separation here and in line 6. **tētē**: a stronger form of **tē**.
- 6 **heu, alas**. **indignē**, undeservedly. Translate the adverb with **adēmp̄te**. **adimō, adimere** (3), **adēmī, adēmp̄tum**, to carry off, take away. **adēmp̄te**: what case?
- 7 **intereā**, for the moment, for the time being, anyhow. **haec**: i.e., the traditional offerings for the dead. **Haec** is the antecedent of **quae** and the object of **accipe** in line 9. A rearranging of the words in lines 7–9 may help your translation: **accipe haec, mānantia multum frāternō flētū, quae (in) prīscō mōre . . . inferiās**. **priscus, -a, -um**, ancient, old.
- 8 **tristī mūnere**: "as a sad offering"
- 9 **multum** (*adv.*), much, abundantly. **mānō** (1), to drip, be wet. **flētus, -ūs** (*m*), crying, tears.
- 10 **in perpetuum**, forever, now and forever. **avē**: "hail!"



Adveniō hās miserās, frāter, ad inferiās.

CATULLUS 101

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.

{Thomas Gray, 1716–1771}

Catullus' brother has died in Asia Minor near Troy. How does Catullus stress the distance he must go to the site of the grave? Why must he travel there?

5 Multās per gentēs et multa per aequora vectus
adveniō hās miserās, frāter, ad īferiās,
ut tē postrēmō dōnārem mūnere mortis
et mūtā nēquīquam alloquerer cinerem.
10 Quandoquidem fortūna mihi tētē abstulit ipsum,
heu miser indignē frāter adēmp̄te mihi,
nunc tamen int̄eā haec, pr̄scō quae mōre parentum
trādita sunt trīstī mūnere ad īferiās,
accipe frāternō multum mānantia flētū,
atque in perpetuum, frāter, avē atque valē.

1. What letters and sounds predominate in lines 1–4? Why? Read lines 1–4 aloud. How does Catullus use dactyls and spondees effectively here?
2. To whom is Catullus speaking in this poem? With that in mind, what particular kind of sadness is conveyed in line 4?
3. What feelings are expressed in lines 5–6? Look closely at the individual words in this couplet. What is the point behind using *tētē* and *ipsum* in combination? What is the force of the words *abstulit* and *adēmp̄te*? How do the three words *heu miser indignē* build on each other? Why is *mihi* repeated?
4. The words *nunc tamen int̄eā* in line 7 are difficult to translate. What turning point in the poem do they signify and with what earlier word does *tamen* correspond?
5. How many times do the words for brother and brotherly appear? Most ancient and modern epitaphs give full names and also single out qualities and accomplishments of the deceased. Do we learn anything about Catullus' brother? What, instead, is stressed?
6. Compare and contrast poem 101 with poem 96 on the death of Calvus' wife, Quintilia.
7. How well does Robert Fitzgerald translate this poem? Point out unusual and unexpected words and phrases in his version. Where has he taken the greatest liberties? How well do they succeed?

By strangers' coasts and waters, many days at sea,
I came here for the rites of your unworlding,
Bringing for you, the dead, these last gifts of the living,
And my words—vain sounds for the man of dust.
Alas, my brother,
You have been taken from me. You have been taken from me,
By cold Chance turned a shadow, and my pain.
Here are the foods of the old ceremony, appointed
Long ago for the starvelings under earth:
Take them; your brother's tears have made them wet; and take
Into eternity my hail and my farewell.