

METER: elegiac couplet (see Catullus 70). Line 6 is metrically unusual. How and why?

- 1 **dē quōquam**: “from anyone.” **velle**: **velle** and **putāre** (2) are complementary infinitives after **dēsine**. Explain the use of the infinitives **merēri**, **fieri**, and **posse** (1–2). **mereor**, **merēri** (2), **meritus sum**, to earn, deserve. **bene merēri**, to be rightfully entitled to.
- 2 ***pius**, -a, -um, dutiful, grateful.
- 3 ***ingrātus**, -a, -um, unappreciated, thankless. **nihil . . . prōdest** (4): “it is not profitable to have done anything with kindness.” **benignē**, kindly, with kindness.
- 4 **prōsum**, **prōdesse** (*irreg.*), **prōfui**, to profit, be of use. **immō**, on the contrary. **taedet**, it is wearisome, tiring. What is the antecedent of “it”? **obsum**, **obesse** (*irreg.*), **obfui** (+ *dat.*), to get in the way, be harmful.
- 5 **ut mihi**: “as it is to me.” **quem nēmō . . . quam** (6) . . . **quī**: “whom no one . . . than he who. . .” **acerbus**, -a, -um, sharp, painful. What does the ending on the words **gravius** and **acerbius** indicate?
- 6 **urgeō**, **urgēre** (2), **ursi**, to press, distress, vex.
- 6 **ūnicus**, -a, -um, only. **habeō**, **habēre** (2), **habui**, **habitum**, to have, hold, consider.

METER: elegiac couplet (see Catullus 70).

- 1 **dēdūcō**, **dēdūcere** (3), **dēdūxī**, **dēductum**, to lead down, drag down. **culpa**, -ae (*f*), fault, infidelity.
- 2 **officiō . . . suō**: “by its own commitment,” “by its own devotion.” **ipsa**: i.e., **mēns**.
- 3 **ut**: does this introduce a purpose or result clause here? How do you know?
queat: present subjunctive, “it is possible (for me),” “I am able.” **tibi**: dative with **bene velle**. **sī optima fiās**: what type of conditional clause? Compare **omnia sī faciās** (4).

CATULLUS 73

Ingratitude Everywhere

What are some possibilities for the grievance at the heart of this poem?

- 1 Dēsine dē quōquam quicquam bene velle merērī
- 2 aut aliquem fierī posse putāre pium.
- 3 Omnia sunt ingrāta, nihil fēcisse benignē
- 4 prōdest, immō etiam taedet obestque magis;
- 5 ut mihi, quem nēmō gravius nec acerbius urget,
- 6 quam modo quī mē ūnum atque ūnicum amīcum habuit.

1. The words *merērī* (1), *pium* (2), (*in*)*grāta* (3), *benignē* (3), and *prōdest* (4) refer to traditional values in Roman society. These values put great store in a network of mutual loyalties and gratitudes between individuals, the state, and the gods. What radical proposal(s) is Catullus making in this poem?
2. The word *taedet* in line 4 is difficult to translate. What does Catullus mean by the word in this context? Defend your choice of translation.
3. What *imagery* (use of descriptive language to represent people or objects, often appealing to our senses) does Catullus use in this poem? How many nouns can you find? Of what significance are your findings? From what does this poem draw its power?
4. Where else in the poems you have read has Catullus generalized from a particular experience and drawn large conclusions? Have you encountered this tendency before, perhaps in other writers or from among people you know? Where? How do you explain this very human trait?

CATULLUS 75

The Love-Hate Deepens.

Catullus admits in this short poem that personal reflection and analysis have worsened his condition.

- 1 Hūc est mēns dēducta tuā, mea Lesbia, culpā
- 2 atque ita sē officiō perdidit ipsa suō,
- 3 ut iam nec bene velle queat tibi, sī optima fias,
- 4 nec dēsistere amāre, omnia sī faciās.

1. Catullus has put strong emphasis on the opening word, *hūc*. To what state of mind does *hūc* refer? How does the compound verb *dēdūcere* strengthen the assertion?
2. In lines 1–2, what is Catullus claiming he did and that Lesbia did not do? Consider the words *culpā* and *officiō* in your answer. What is the consequence of his action according to line 2?
3. In your own words state what the last two lines say. Is the word *omnia* meant to be positive or negative? Compare this couplet to the last couplet of poem 72. What more desperate note has been sounded here?
4. Read the poem in meter. How many elisions do you find? Why are the ones in line 4 so effective?