



A Bit of Everything Babe

faith

First, bodies. Because out of these everything is first. Before a human uses her eyes she must use her faith to live on this oppressive earth, weighed down by superstitions which fall from heaven and extend superstitiously: *the horrible super-aspect of the mortal instance*. First Gaius pitted himself against all immortals, became like a boulder rolled against the favouring eyes, but neither notoriety nor outrage nor their henchmen can suppress the murmurs of heaven.

In fact, it amuses the virtuous spirits of the bitter master no end to ornament the natural arts (though when the time comes he'll want the first enclosure). Thus the electric life of the soul persists and produces out of itself long tongues of flame that lick half the world and aggress through every huge mind and soul, even the noble referent of the victor who's cushy. This could finish by naming whatever there was; going on rational to the heretical end. But in sum: whoever paddles in superstition will subject mystery to vicissitudes, and yet as we said, no orange cutfruit will vanquish heaven.

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science

Each thing in this thing is verified. No fruit bats of impiety. You reason down to small amounts and elements. You put into motion the solemn ground. That wisdom can be momentarily scattered by superstition or criminal knowledge, but you gather yourselves. A promise from Aulis of the fertile blood of virgins? Excellent. The delicious Danaian leader, first of men, even cruded to pledge Iphigenia but since the virgin's own calculations have always outstripped him from the womb it seemed bad to take port in his offering. Before the altar he felt himself to be the master relative with his own iron to quicken the tile of blood. The waiting ministers flooded

the town with their tears. And look what happened in the end.

Change churns to send the earth off into hyperspace; it is frightened by the people. Nothing but misery is the upshot. The fatherland prince gives his name to the king in the form of incest. The trembling hands at the altar are sublated into his larger realisation that not even these solemn conventions of the sacred perfect can appease clear Hymen. But the defiled mixed acts bend time around the enemy that commits them, he considers mastery by mastication of his relatives, then spins to leave and the first thrust is given to the happy fleet. Let the epic begin.

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the old faithful nurse

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All the same to your lordship now wherever on earth. You speak terribly decisive words to the poet. She leaves. Taking the stage, you seek to divide with many of your endless jokes. They pretend to be dreaming now. Whoever can't extend their little bit of life feels put upon by fate. But lurking at the afterparty. Disturbing. What they deserve.

If they see their end with clarity the men of frivolity lose all stake in reason and take up with threatening poets. Now no faculties at all can be retained in the never-ending torture that is fear of death and the poets rejoice. Ignore everyone that you know who was born, they can't but follow the logic which leads them to their strenuous attempts to prevent it. There's always hope, fools. In the dark of Orcus one sees gaps and holes and the dancing devilgod even insinuated that if Ennius and our little chickpea, who was first a body cultured in the floods of Helicon, can put on the seasonal crown of the people of Italy, he might clue us in.

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at the funeral of his teacher

The guards want to shut this down so much. The party swells. My poetry ancestor will live for fucking ever. There's nothing permanent about our spirits or our bodies except that they continue. But they've brought me to look at these pallid robots exhorting each other in florid Homeric lines, salsified in tears as they remember their inventor. I must get back to putting the nature of things into words. I make a call. The where-o-copter picks me up in the middle of the market for trinkets. "It's good to be rational", they say when I get in, "try it".

Who achieves? You put meat on the moon to preserve it while the first fruits of our sagacity bring mind and spirit to sit together and watch the show of an over-zealous noble who's obviously lost his mind. Terrifically morbid, he's living in a sepulchre and he only dines when he can hear the silence of once beating hearts. In this way, by genuflecting and spreading his bones to death, he seeks to avoid it.

But IT is not some obscure god in our repertory. This is difficult to illustrate in Latin verses when so many new words are on the agenda. On behalf of the gestating tongue and all the novelties it creates I wish you all young, strong and luxurious until you are dead.

Note

This poem is based on a mistranslation of (roughly) lines 60-150 of *De Rerum Natura (On the Nature of Things)* by T. Lucretius Carus.

Kat Addis researches renaissance literature, especially epic poems, and makes hats. Her first book of poems is *Space Parsley*, an erotic translation of Petrarch (forthcoming from the87press in 2021). Lucretius is also under attack.

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