**By Theognis**

Fools and children you are, mankind! You mourn

The dead and not the dying flower of youth.

**By Theognis**

Nothing destroys a good man quicker than poverty;

Not malarial fever, God, nor old age.

Better to hurl oneself in the damned sea

Over a high cliff—than be a victim

Of poverty. The poor man can do or say nothing

Worthwhile. Even his mouth is broke.

**By Plato**

I throw this apple before you.

Take it—if you love me purely,

And give up your virginity.

But if you will not love me

Keep the apple—and think

How long the beauty lasts.

**Plato on the Equality of Death**

I’m a sailor’s tomb. Beside me lies a farmer.

Hell is the same, under the land and sea.

**A Shopping Tip by Lucillius, first century a.d.**

Lady, you went to the market

And picked up hair, rouge, honey, wax and eyelashes.

For that amount you might have bought a face.

**Lucillius on Boxers**

Here you see the ruins of a former Olympic star.

Once he had a real nose, mind you, a chin, forehead, ears, and eyes (lids and all),

And then he went pro.

He scrambles everything,

Even his share of his father’s estate.

For his kid brother showed up

(a spitting image of the former champ)

and the pug

(who looked like an outsider now)

was quietly but sternly ushered away.

A Natural Sundial

By Traianus (The Emperor Trajan)

If you point your big nose sunward

And open your gaping mouth,

All who pass by

Will know the time of day.

**Dionysus Sophistes to a Vendor of Flowers**

You selling roses have a flowery charm.

But rose-girl, what are you selling me?

Your roses? Yourself? Or both?

**Lucian on Magical Whiskers**

If by growing a goatee you hope to come upon wisdom,

Then, my friend, any smelly goat in a handsome beard

Is at once Plato.

**Calculation**

**By Julianus (Julian the Apostate)**

Jules is but two feet tall—his wife four.

When flat in bed

Their feet touching the wall,

Imagine where Jules keeps his lips.

**Intimate Dialogue by Agathias Scholastikos**

A. What are you upset about?

B. I’m in love.

A. With who?

B. A virgin.

A. Is she good looking?

B. Drop dead gorgeous.

A. Where did you meet her?

B. At a dinner party. We were sitting on the same couch.

A. You think you’ll get in?

B. Yes, yes, my friend, but I don’t wish to broadcast it. Actually I want it to be nice and discreet.

A. You mean you want to avoid marriage?

B. My friend, I found out she isn’t worth a dime.

A. You know this already. You are not in love, dear friend. You are lying. How can your heart be madly in love when it calculates so well?

**Glykon on Life without Meaning**

All is laughter and dust. And all is nothing,

Since our of unreason comes all that is.

**Korinna on Herself**

Will you sleep forever? There was a time,

Korinna, when you were not such a lazy ass.