

# Poem in Petronius' Satyricon

Post by “Bryan” of September 8, 2024 at 10:22 PM

I do not think we have mentioned Eumolpus' poem in Petronius' Satyricon that is clearly Epicurean.

The book is in pieces, but the poem probably comes after this section (translation by Heseltine, and is purposefully in incorrect English):

[\(Link to section\)](#) [104] “I thought I heard Priapus say in my dream: 'I tell you, Encolpius whom you seek has been led by me on board your ship.' ' Tryphaena gave a scream and said, “You would think we had slept together; I dreamed that a picture of Neptune, which I noticed in a gallery at Baiae, said to me: 'You will find Giton on board Lichas's ship.' ' **“This shows you,” said Eumolpus, “that Epicurus was a superhuman creature; he condemns jokes of this kind in a very witty fashion.”** . .

Usener mentions that part, but I do not think he includes Eumolpus' poem. It is placed in various places in the book; here listed as poem 31 [\(Link here\)](#):

"It is not the shrines of the gods, nor the powers of the air,  
that send the dreams which mock the mind with flitting shadows;  
each man makes dreams for himself. For when rest lies about the limbs  
subdued by sleep, and the mind plays with no weight upon it,  
it pursues in the darkness whatever was its task by daylight.  
The man who makes towns tremble in war, and overwhelms unhappy  
cities in flame, sees arms, and routed hosts, and the deaths of kings,  
and plains streaming with outpoured blood. They whose life is  
to plead cases have statutes and the courts before their eyes,  
and look with terror upon the judgment-seat surrounded by a throng.  
The miser hides his gains and discovers buried treasure.  
The hunter shakes the woods with his pack. The sailor snatches  
his shipwrecked bark from the waves, or grips it in death-agony.  
The woman writes to her lover, the adulteress yields herself:  
and the dog follows the tracks of the hare as he sleeps.  
The wounds of the unhappy endure into the night-season."