

Martial, Ode on Mount Vesuvius

Post by “Joshua” of August 8, 2021 at 4:53 PM

XLIV. ON MOUNT VESUVIUS.

Quote

This is Vesuvius, lately green with umbrageous vines; here the noble grape had pressed the dripping coolers. These are the heights which Bacchus loved more than the hills of Nysa; on this mountain the satyrs recently danced. This was the abode of Venus, more grateful to her than Lacedaemon; this was the place renowned by the divinity of Hercules. All now lies buried in flames and sad ashes. Even the gods would have wished not to have had the power to cause such a catastrophe.

He was perilously close to stumbling upon a real point in that last sentence.

Post by “shahabgh66” of August 8, 2021 at 5:31 PM

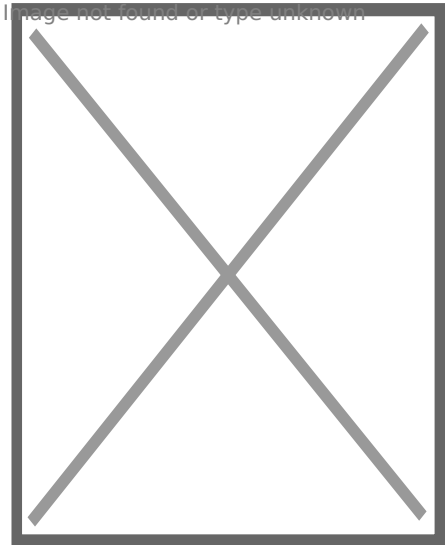
Who is the author?

Post by “Don” of August 8, 2021 at 6:27 PM

[Quote from shahabgh66](#)

Who is the author?

Martial (Marcus Valerius Martialis)



[Martial - Wikipedia](#)

en.wikipedia.org

[Epigrams of Martial, Englished with some other pieces, ancient and modern.](#)

Post by “Don” of August 8, 2021 at 6:30 PM

[Quote from JJElbert](#)

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You're very diplomatic there 😊

Post by “Don” of August 8, 2021 at 9:17 PM

[Quote from JJElbert](#)

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It's humbling to think that the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum would have been current events for Martial when he wrote this. He's not looking back over centuries like us. The eruption happened in his lifetime.

Post by “Joshua” of August 8, 2021 at 10:14 PM

It does have a certain poignancy.

I actually found this because of a poem I was workshopping; I was going to use the Sarno River that flows into the Bay of Naples as a metaphor for Epicurean philosophy. Starting out muddled under the ash of Vesuvius and then slowly, and by degrees, tending toward clarity and wholesomeness.

That was until I discovered that the Sarno is the most polluted waterway in Europe... 😞