

THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v3

Petronius Arbiter (Translated by Firebaugh)

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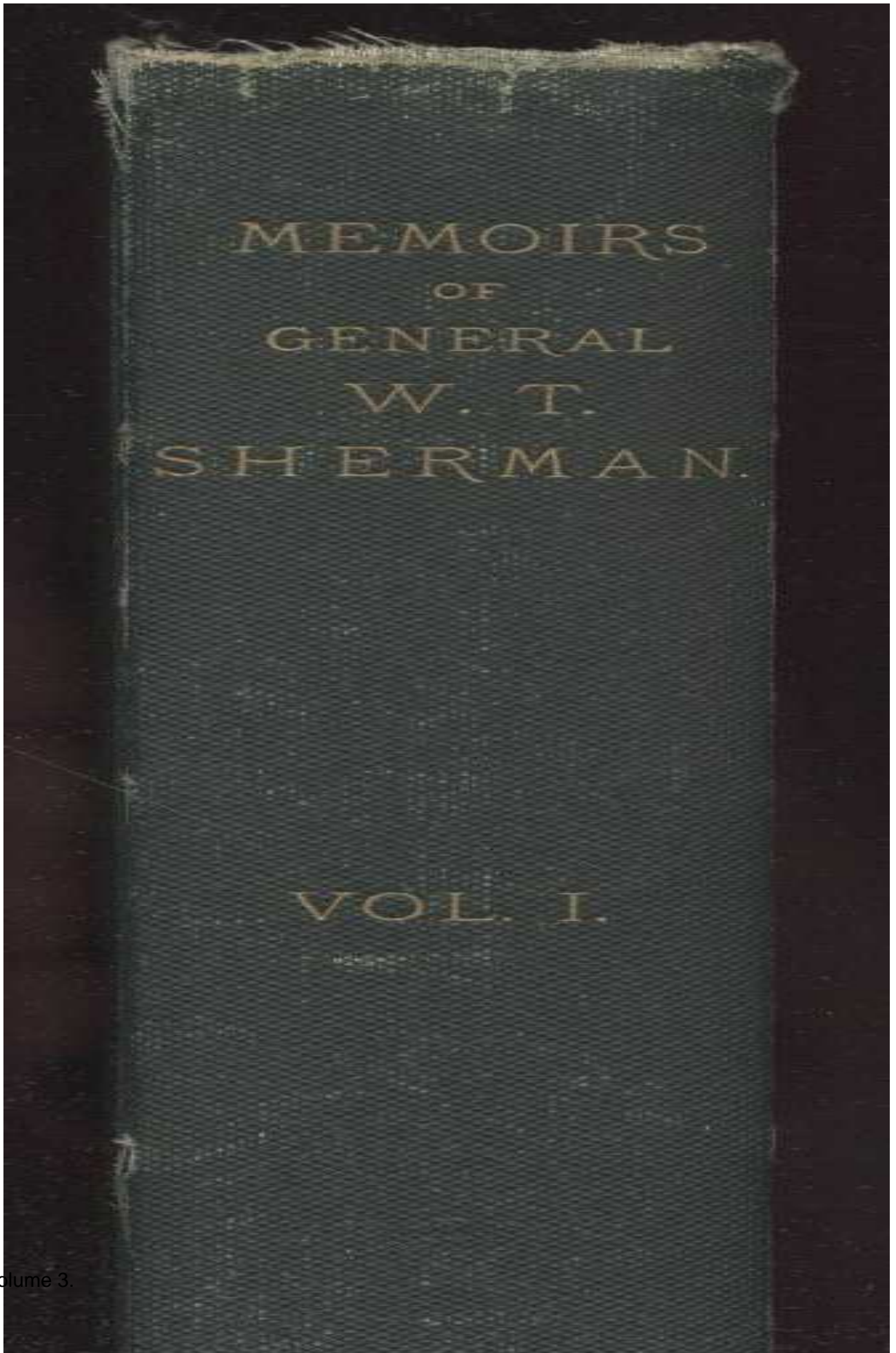
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VOLUME III.

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF ENCOLPIUS AND HIS COMPANIONS

- CHAPTER THE SEVENTY-NINTH.
- CHAPTER THE EIGHTIETH.
- CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-FIRST.
- CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-SECOND.
- CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-THIRD.
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- CHAPTER THE NINETY-EIGHTH.

Volume 3.



THE SATYRICON of Petronius, Illustrated, v3

Complete and unexpurgated translation by W. C. Firebaugh, in which are incorporated the forgeries of Nodot and Marchena, and the readings introduced into the text by De Salas.



ILLUSTRATIONS:

Giton

The Tell-tale Shoes

Eumolpus

Eumolpus Stoned

The Inn-Keeper

The Fight at the Inn

THE SATYRICON OF

PETRONIUS ARBITER

Volume 3.

BRACKET CODE:

(Forgeries of Nodot)

[Forgeries of Marchena]

{Additions of De Salas}

DW

VOLUME III.

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF ENCOLPIUS AND HIS COMPANIONS



CHAPTER THE SEVENTY–NINTH.

There was no torch to light the way for us, as we wandered around, nor did the silence of midnight give promise of our meeting any wayfarer with a light; in addition to this, we were drunk and unfamiliar with the district, which would confuse one, even in daylight, so for the best part of a mortal hour we dragged our bleeding feet over all the flints and pieces of broken tile, till we were extricated, at last, by Giton's cleverness. This prudent youngster had been afraid of going astray on the day before, so he had taken care to mark all the pillars and columns with chalk. These marks stood out distinctly, even through the pitchy night, and by their brilliant whiteness pointed out the way for us as we wandered about. Nevertheless, we had no less cause for being in a sweat even when we came to our lodging, for the old woman herself had been sitting and swilling so long with her guests that even if one had set her afire, she would not have known it. We would have spent the night on the door–sill had not Trimalchio's courier come up in state, with ten wagons; he hammered on the door for a short time, and then smashed it in, giving us an entrance through the same breach. (Hastening to the sleeping–chamber, I went to bed with my “brother” and, burning with passion as I was, after such a magnificent dinner, I surrendered myself wholly to sexual gratification.)

Oh Goddesses and Gods, that purple night
 How soft the couch! And we, embracing tight;
 With every wandering kiss our souls would meet!
 Farewell all mortal woes, to die were sweet

But my self–congratulation was premature, for I was overcome with wine, and when my unsteady hands relaxed their hold, Ascyrtos, that never–failing well–spring of iniquity, stole the boy away from me in the night and carried him to his own bed, where he wallowed around without restraint with a “brother” not his own, while the latter, not noticing the fraud, or pretending not to notice it, went to sleep in a stranger's arms, in defiance of all human rights. Awaking at last, I felt the bed over and found that it had been despoiled of its treasure: then, by all that lovers hold dear, I swear I was on the verge of transfixing them both with my sword and uniting their sleep with death. At last, however, I adopted a more rational plan; I spanked Giton into wakefulness, and, glaring at Ascyrtos, “Since you have broken faith by this outrage,” I gritted out, with a savage frown, “and severed our friendship, you had better get your things together at once, and pick up some other bottom for your abominations!” He raised no objection to this, but after we had divided everything with scrupulous exactitude, “Come on now,” he demanded, “and we'll divide the boy!”

CHAPTER THE EIGHTIETH.

I thought this was a parting joke till he whipped out his sword, with a murderous hand. “You'll not have this prize you're brooding over, all to yourself! Since I've been rejected, I'll have to cut off my share with this sword.” I followed suit, on my side, and, wrapping a mantle around my left arm, I put myself on guard for the duel. The unhappy boy, rendered desperate by our unreasoning fury, hugged each of us tightly by the knee, and in tears he humbly begged that this wretched lodging-house should not witness a Theban duel, and that we would not pollute—with mutual bloodshed the sacred rites of a friendship that was, as yet, unstained. “If a crime must be committed,” he wailed, “here is my naked throat, turn your swords this way and press home the points. I ought, to be the one to die, I broke the sacred pledge of friendship.” We lowered our points at these entreaties. “I'll settle this dispute,” Ascyrtos spoke up, “let the boy follow whomsoever he himself wishes to follow. In that way, he, at least, will have perfect freedom in choosing a 'brother'.” Imagining that a relationship of such long standing had passed into a tie of blood, I was not at all uneasy, so I snatched at this proposition with precipitate eagerness, and submitted the dispute to the judge. He did not deliberate long enough to seem even to hesitate, for he got up and chose Ascyrtos for a “brother,” as soon as the last syllable had passed my lips! At this decision I was thunder-struck, and threw myself upon the bed, unarmed and just as I stood. Had I not begrudged my enemy such a triumph, I would have laid violent hands upon myself. Flushed with success, Ascyrtos marched out with his prize, and abandoned, in a strange town, a comrade in the depths of despair; one whom, but a little while before, he had loved most unselfishly, one whose destiny was so like his own.

As long as is expedient, the name of friendship lives,
 Just as in dicing, Fortune smiles or lowers;
 When good luck beckons, then your friend his gleeful service gives
 But basely flies when ruin o'er you towers.
 The strollers act their farces upon the stage, each one his part,

The father, son, the rich man, all are here,
 But soon the page is turned upon the comic actor's art,
 The masque is dropped, the make-ups disappear!

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY–FIRST.

Nevertheless, I did not indulge myself very long in tears, being afraid that Menelaus, the tutor, might drop in upon me all alone in the lodging–house, and catch me in the midst of my troubles, so I collected my baggage and, with a heavy heart, sneaked off to an obscure quarter near the seashore. There, I kept to my room for three days. My mind was continually haunted by my loneliness and desertion, and I beat my breast, already sore from blows. “Why could not the earth have opened and swallowed me,” I wailed aloud, between the many deep–drawn groans, “or the sea, which rages even against the guiltless? Did I flee from justice, murder my ghost, and cheat the arena, in order that, after so many proofs of courage, I might be left lying here deserted, a beggar and an exile, in a lodging–house in a Greek town? And who condemned me to this desolation? A boy stained by every form of vice, who, by his own confession, ought to be exiled: free, through vice, expert in vice, whose favors came through a throw of the dice, who hired himself out as a girl to those who knew him to be a boy! And as to the other, what about him? In place of the manly toga, he donned the woman's stola when he reached the age of puberty: he resolved, even from his mother's womb, never to become a man; in the slave's prison he took the woman's part in the sexual act, he changed the instrument of his lechery when he double–crossed me, abandoned the ties of a long–standing friendship, and, shame upon him, sold everything for a single night's dalliance, like any other street–walker! Now the lovers lie whole nights, locked in each other's arms, and I suppose they make a mockery of my desolation when they are resting up from the exhaustion caused by their mutual excesses. But not with impunity! If I don't avenge the wrong they have done me. in their guilty blood, I'm no free man!”

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY–SECOND.

I girded on my sword, when I had said these words, and, fortifying my strength with a heavy meal, so that weakness would not cause me to lose the battle, I presently sallied forth into the public streets and rushed through all the arcades, like a maniac. But while, with my face savagely convulsed in a frown, I was meditating nothing but bloodshed and slaughter, and was continually clapping my hand to the hilt of my sword, which I had consecrated to this, I was observed by a soldier, that is, he either was a real soldier, or else he was some night–prowling thug, who challenged me. “Halt! Who goes there? What legion are you from? Who’s your centurion?” “Since when have men in your outfit gone on pass in white shoes?” he retorted, when I had lied stoutly about both centurion and legion. Both my face and my confusion proved that I had been caught in a lie, so he ordered me to surrender my arms and to take care that I did not get into trouble. I was held up, as a matter of course, and, my revenge balked, I returned to my lodging–house and, recovering by degrees from my fright, I began to be grateful to the boldness of the footpad. It is not wise to place much reliance upon any scheme, because Fortune has a method of her own.



CHAPTER THE EIGHTY–THIRD.

(Nevertheless, I found it very difficult to stifle my longing for revenge, and after tossing half the night in anxiety, I arose at dawn and, in the hope of mitigating my mental sufferings and of forgetting my wrongs, I took a walk through all the public arcades and) entered a picture–gallery, which contained a wonderful collection of pictures in various styles. I beheld works from the hand of Zeuxis, still undimmed by the passage of the years, and contemplated, not without a certain awe, the crude drawings of Protogenes, which equalled the reality of nature herself; but when I stood before the work of Apelles, the kind which the Greeks call “Monochromatic,” verily, I almost worshipped, for the outlines of the figures were drawn with such subtlety of touch, and were so life–like in their precision, that you would have thought their very souls were depicted. Here, an eagle was soaring into the sky bearing the shepherd of Mount Ida to heaven; there, the comely Hylas was struggling to escape from the embrace of the lascivious Naiad. Here, too, was Apollo, cursing his murderous hand and adorning his unstrung lyre with the flower just created. Standing among these lovers, which were only painted, “It seems that even the gods are wracked by love,” I cried aloud, as if I were in a wilderness. “Jupiter could find none to his taste, even in his own heaven, so he had to sin on earth, but no one was betrayed by him! The nymph who ravished Hylas would have controlled her passion had she thought Hercules was coming to forbid it. Apollo recalled the spirit of a boy in the form of a flower, and all the lovers of Fable enjoyed Love’s embraces without a rival, but I took as a comrade a friend more cruel than Lycurgus!” But at that very instant, as I was telling my troubles to the winds, a white–haired old man entered the picture–gallery; his face was care–worn, and he seemed, I know not why, to give promise of something great, although he bestowed so little care upon his dress that it was easily apparent that he belonged to that class of literati which the wealthy hold in contempt. “I am a poet,” he remarked, when he had approached me and stood at my side, “and one of no mean ability, I hope, that is, if anything is to be inferred from the crowns which gratitude can place even upon the heads of the unworthy! Then why, you demand, are you dressed so shabbily? For that very reason; love or art never yet made anyone rich.”

The trader trusts his fortune to the sea and takes his gains,

The warrior, for his deeds, is girt with gold;

The wily sycophant lies drunk on purple counterpanes,

Young wives must pay debauchees or they’re cold.

But solitary, shivering, in tatters Genius stands

Invoking a neglected art, for succor at its hands.



Eumolpus

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY–FOURTH.

“It is certainly true that a man is hated when he declares himself an enemy to all vice, and begins to follow the right road in life, because, in the first place, his habits are different from those of other people; for who ever approved of anything to which he took exceptions? Then, they whose only ambition is to pile up riches, don't want to believe that men can possess anything better than that which they have themselves; therefore, they use every means in their power to so buffet the lovers of literature that they will seem in their proper place—below the moneybags.” “I know not why it should be so,” (I said with a sigh), “but Poverty is the sister of Genius.” (“You have good reason,” the old man replied, “to deplore the status of men of letters.” “No,” I answered, “that was not the reason for my sigh, there is another and far weightier cause for my grief.” Then, in accordance with the human propensity of pouring one's personal troubles into another's ears, I explained my misfortune to him, and dwelt particularly upon Ascyltos' perfidy.) “Oh how I wish that this enemy who is the cause of my enforced continence could be mollified,” (I cried, with many a groan,) “but he is an old hand at robbery, and more cunning than the pimps themselves!” (My frankness pleased the old man, who attempted to comfort me and, to beguile my sorrow, he related the particulars of an amorous intrigue in which he himself had played a part.)

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-FIFTH.

“When I was attached to the Quaestor's staff, in Asia, I was quartered with a family at Pergamus. I found things very much to my liking there, not only on account of the refined comfort of my apartments, but also because of the extreme beauty of my host's son. For the latter reason, I had recourse to strategy, in order that the father should never suspect me of being a seducer. So hotly would I flare up, whenever the abuse of handsome boys was even mentioned at the table, and with such uncompromising sternness would I protest against having my ears insulted by such filthy talk, that I came to be looked upon, especially by the mother, as one of the philosophers. I was conducting the lad to the gymnasium before very long, and superintending his conduct, taking especial care, all the while, that no one who could debauch him should ever enter the house. Then there came a holiday, the school was closed, and our festivities had rendered us too lazy to retire properly, so we lay down in the dining-room. It was just about midnight, and I knew he was awake, so I murmured this vow, in a very low voice, 'Oh Lady Venus, could I but kiss this lad, and he not know it, I would give him a pair of turtle-doves tomorrow!' On hearing the price offered for this favor, the boy commenced to snore! Then, bending over the pretending sleeper, I snatched a fleeting kiss or two. Satisfied with this beginning, I arose early in the morning, brought a fine pair of turtle-doves to the eager lad, and absolved myself from my vow.”

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY–SIXTH.

“Next night, when the same opportunity presented itself, I changed my petition, 'If I can feel him all over with a wanton hand,' I vowed, 'and he not know it, I will give him two of the gamest fighting–cocks, for his silence.' The lad nestled closer to me of his own accord, on hearing this offer, and I truly believe that he was afraid that I was asleep. I made short work of his apprehensions on that score, however, by stroking and fondling his whole body. I worked myself into a passionate fervor that was just short of supreme gratification. Then, when day dawned, I made him happy with what I had promised him. When the third night gave me my chance, I bent close to the ear of the rascal, who pretended to be asleep. 'Immortal gods,' I whispered, 'if I can take full and complete satisfaction of my love, from this sleeping beauty, I will tomorrow present him with the best Macedonian pacer in the market, in return for this bliss, provided that he does not know it.' Never had the lad slept so soundly! First I filled my hands with his snowy breasts, then I pressed a clinging kiss upon his mouth, but I finally focused all my energies upon one supreme delight! Early in the morning, he sat up in bed, awaiting my usual gift. It is much easier to buy doves and game–cocks than it is to buy a pacer, as you know, and aside from that, I was also afraid that so valuable a present might render my motive subject to suspicion, so, after strolling around for some hours, I returned to the house, and gave the lad nothing at all except a kiss. He looked all around, threw his arms about my neck. 'Tell me, master,' he cried, 'where's the pacer?' ('The difficulty of getting one fine enough has compelled me to defer the fulfillment of my promise,' I replied, 'but I will make it good in a few days.' The lad easily understood the true meaning of my answer, and his countenance betrayed his secret resentment.)”

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY–SEVENTH.

“(In the meantime,) by breaking this vow, I had cut myself off from the avenue of access which I had contrived, but I returned to the attack, all the same, when the opportunity came. In a few days, a similar occasion brought about the very same conditions as before, and the instant I heard his father snoring, I began pleading with the lad to receive me again into his good graces, that is to say, that he ought to suffer me to satisfy myself with him, and he in turn could do whatever his own distended member desired. He was very angry, however, and would say nothing at all except, 'Either you go to sleep, or I'll call father!' But no obstacle is so difficult that depravity cannot twist around it and even while he threatened 'I'll call father,' I slipped into his bed and took my pleasure in spite of his half-hearted resistance. Nor was he displeased with my improper conduct for, although he complained for a while, that he had been cheated and made a laughing-stock, and that his companions, to whom he had bragged of his wealthy friend, had made sport of him. 'But you'll see that I'll not be like you,' he whispered; 'do it again, if you want to!' All misunderstandings were forgotten and I was readmitted into the lad's good graces. Then I slipped off to sleep, after profiting by his complaisance. But the youth, in the very flower of maturity, and just at the best age for passive pleasure, was by no means satisfied with only one repetition, so he roused me out of a heavy sleep. 'Isn't there something you'd like to do?' he whispered! The pastime had not begun to cloy, as yet, and, somehow or other, what with panting and sweating and wriggling, he got what he wanted and, worn out with pleasure, I dropped off to sleep again. Less than an hour had passed when he began to punch me with his hand. 'Why are we not busy,' he whispered! I flew into a violent rage at being disturbed so many times, and threatened him in his own words, 'Either you go to sleep, or I'll call father!'”

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH.

Heartened up by this story, I began to draw upon his more comprehensive knowledge as to the ages of the pictures and as to certain of the stories connected with them, upon which I was not clear; and I likewise inquired into the causes of the decadence of the present age, in which the most refined arts had perished, and among them painting, which had not left even the faintest trace of itself behind. “Greed of money,” he replied, “has brought about these unaccountable changes. In the good old times, when virtue was her own reward, the fine arts flourished, and there was the keenest rivalry among men for fear that anything which could be of benefit to future generations should remain long undiscovered. Then it was that Democritus expressed the juices of all plants and spent his whole life in experiments, in order that no curative property should lurk unknown in stone or shrub. That he might understand the movements of heaven and the stars, Eudoxus grew old upon the summit of a lofty mountain: three times did Chrysippus purge his brain with hellebore, that his faculties might be equal to invention. Turn to the sculptors if you will; Lysippus perished from hunger while in profound meditation upon the lines of a single statue, and Myron, who almost embodied the souls of men and beasts in bronze, could not find an heir. And we, sodden with wine and women, cannot even appreciate the arts already practiced, we only criticise the past! We learn only vice, and teach it, too. What has become of logic? of astronomy? Where is the exquisite road to wisdom? Who even goes into a temple to make a vow, that he may achieve eloquence or bathe in the fountain of wisdom? And they do not pray for good health and a sound mind; before they even set foot upon the threshold of the temple, one promises a gift if only he may bury a rich relative; another, if he can but dig up a treasure, and still another, if he is permitted to amass thirty millions of sesterces in safety! The Senate itself, the exponent of all that should be right and just, is in the habit of promising a thousand pounds of gold to the capitol, and that no one may question the propriety of praying for money, it even decorates Jupiter himself with spoils'. Do not hesitate, therefore, at expressing your surprise at the deterioration of painting, since, by all the gods and men alike, a lump of gold is held to be more beautiful than anything ever created by those crazy little Greek fellows, Apelles and Phydias!”

CHAPTER THE EIGHTY-NINTH.

“But I see that your whole attention is held by that picture which portrays the destruction of Troy, so I will attempt to unfold the story in verse:

And now the tenth harvest beheld the beleaguered of Troia
 Worn out with anxiety, fearing: the honor of Calchas
 The prophet, hung wavering deep in the blackest despair.
 Apollo commanded! The forested peaks of Mount Ida
 Were felled and dragged down; the hewn timbers were fitted to fashion
 A war-horse. Unfilled is a cavity left, and this cavern,
 Roofed over, capacious enough for a camp. Here lie hidden
 The raging impetuous valor of ten years of warfare.
 Malignant Greek troops pack the recess, lurk in their own offering.
 Alas my poor country! We thought that their thousand grim war-ships
 Were beaten and scattered, our arable lands freed from warfare!
 Th' inscription cut into the horse, and the crafty behavior
 Of Sinon, his mind ever powerful for evil, affirmed it.
 Delivered from war, now the crowd, carefree, hastens to worship
 And pours from the portals. Their cheeks wet with weeping, the joy
 Of their tremulous souls brings to eyes tears which terror
 Had banished. Laocoon, priest unto Neptune, with hair loosed,
 An outcry evoked from the mob: he drew back his javelin
 And launched it! The belly of wood was his target. The weapon
 Recoiled, for the fates stayed his hand, and this artifice won us.
 His feeble hand nerved he anew, and the lofty sides sounded,
 His two-edged ax tried them severely. The young troops in ambush
 Gasp. And as long as the reverberations re-echoed
 The wooden mass breathed out a fear that was not of its own.
 Imprisoned, the warriors advance to take Troia a captive
 And finish the struggle by stratagem new and unheard of.
 Behold! Other portents: Where Tenedos steep breaks the ocean
 Where great surging billows dash high; to be broken, and leap back
 To form a deep hollow of calm, and resemble the plashing
 Of oars, carried far through the silence of night, as when ships pass
 And drive through the calm as it smashes against their fir bows.
 Then backward we look: towards the rocks the tide carries two serpents
 That coil and uncoil as they come, and their breasts, which are swollen
 Aside dash the foam, as the bows of tall ships; and the ocean
 Is lashed by their tails, their manes, free on the water, as savage
 As even their eyes: now a blinding beam kindles the billows,
 The sea with their hissing is sibilant! All stare in terror!
 Laocoon's twin sons in Phrygian raiment are standing
 With priests wreathed for sacrifice. Them did the glistening serpents
 Enfold in their coils! With their little hands shielding their faces,
 The boys, neither thinking of self, but each one of his brother!
 Fraternal love's sacrifice! Death himself slew those poor children
 By means of their unselfish fear for each other! The father,
 A helper too feeble, now throws himself prone on their bodies:

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The serpents, now glutted with death, coil around him and drag him
To earth! And the priest, at his altar a victim, lies beating
The ground. Thus the city of Troy, doomed to sack and destruction,
First lost her own gods by profaning their shrines and their worship.
The full moon now lifted her luminous beam and the small stars
Led forth, with her torch all ablaze; when the Greeks drew the bolts
And poured forth their warriors, on Priam's sons, buried in darkness
And sodden with wine. First the leaders made trial of their weapons
Just as the horse, when unhitched from Thessalian neck-yoke,
First tosses his head and his mane, ere to pasture he rushes.
They draw their swords, brandish their shields and rush into the battle.
One slays the wine-drunken Trojans, prolonging their dreams
To death, which ends all. Still another takes brands from the altars,
And calls upon Troy's sacred temples to fight against Trojans.”



CHAPTER THE NINTIETH.

Some of the public, who were loafing in the portico, threw stones at the reciting Eumolpus and he, taking note of this tribute to his genius, covered his head and bolted out of the temple. Fearing they might take me for a poet, too, I followed after him in his flight and came to the seashore, where we stopped as soon as we were out of range. "Tell me," I demanded, "what are you going to do about that disease of yours? You've loafed with me less than two hours, and you've talked more often like a poet than you have like a human being! For this reason, I'm not at all surprised that the rabble chases you with rocks. I'm going to load my pockets with stones, too, and whenever you begin to go out of your head, I'm going to let blood out of it!" His expression changed. "My dear young man," said he, "today is not the first time I have had such compliments showered upon me; the audience always applauds me in this fashion, when I go into the theatre to recite anything, but I'll abstain from this sort of diet for the whole day, for fear of having trouble with you." "Good," I replied, "we'll dine together if you'll swear off crankiness for the day." (So saying,) I gave the housekeeper the orders for our little supper (and we went straight off to the baths.)

CHAPTER THE NINETY-FIRST.

(There) I catch sight of Giton laden with towels and scrapers, leaning, downhearted and embarrassed, against the wall. You could see that he did not serve of his own free will. Then, that I might assure myself that I saw aright, "Take pity on me, brother," he cried, turning towards me a face lighted up with joy, "there are no arms here, I can speak freely take me away from that bloody robber, and punish your penitent judge as severely as you like. To have perished, should you wish it, will be a consolation great enough in my misery!" Fearing some one might overhear our plans, I bade him hush his complaints and, leaving Eumolpus behind—for he was reciting a poem in the bath—I pull Giton down a dark and dirty passage, after me, and fly with all speed to my lodgings. Arriving there, I slam the door shut, embrace him convulsively, and press my face against his which is all wet with tears. For a long time, neither of us could find his voice, and as for the lad, his shapely bosom was heaving continuously with choking sobs. "Oh the disgraceful inconsistency of it all," I cried, "for I love you still, although you abandoned me, and no scar from that gaping wound is left upon this breast! What can you say that will justify you in yielding your love to a stranger? Did I merit such an affront?" He held his head higher when he found that he was loved.

For one to love, and at the same time, blame,
That were a labor Hercules to tame!
Conflicting passions yield in Cupid's name.

("And furthermore," I went on), "I was not the one that laid the cause of our love before another judge, but I will complain no more, I will remember nothing, if you will prove your penitence by keeping faith." He wiped his face upon his mantle, while I poured out these words, with groans and tears. "Encolpius," said he, "I beseech you, I appeal to your honest recollection, did I leave you, or did you throw me over? For my part, I admit, and openly at that, that I sought, refuge with the stronger, when I beheld two armed men." I kissed that, bosom, so full of prudence, threw my arms around his neck and pressed him tightly against my breast, that he might see unmistakably that he had gotten back into my good graces, and that our friendship lived again in perfect confidence.

CHAPTER THE NINETY–SECOND.

Night had fallen by this time, and the woman to whom I had given my order had prepared supper, when Eumolpus knocked at the door. “How many of you are there?” I called out, and as I spoke, I peeped cautiously through a chink in the door to see if Ascyrtos had come with him; then, as I perceived that he was the only guest, I quickly admitted him. He threw himself upon the pallet and caught sight of Giton, waiting table, whereupon, he nodded his head, “I like your Ganymede,” he remarked, “this day promises a good ending!” I did not take kindly to such an inquisitive beginning, fearing that I had let another Ascyrtos into my lodging. Eumolpus stuck to his purpose. “I like you better than the whole bathful,” he remarked, when the lad had served him with wine, then he thirstily drained the cup dry and swore that never before had he tasted a wine with such a satisfying tang to it. “While I was bathing,” he went on, “I was almost beaten up for trying to recite a poem to the people sitting around the basin, and when I had been thrown out of the baths, just like I was out of the theatre, I hunted through every nook and cranny of the building, calling 'Encolpius, Encolpius,' at the top of my voice. A naked youth at the other end, who had lost his clothes, was bawling just as loudly and no less angrily for Giton! As for myself, the slaves took me for a maniac, and mimicked me in the most insolent manner, but a large crowd gathered around him, clapping its hands in awe–struck admiration, for so heavy and massive were his private parts, that you would have thought that the man himself was but an appendage of his own member! Oh such a man! He could do his bit all right! I haven't a doubt but that he could begin on the day before and never finish till the day after the next! And he soon found a friend, of course: some Roman knight or other, I don't know his name, but he bears a bad reputation, so they say, threw his own mantle around the wanderer and took him off home with himself, hoping, I suppose, to have the sole enjoyment of so huge a prize. But I couldn't get my own clothing back from the officious bath attendant till I found some one who could identify me, which only goes to show that it is more profitable to rub up the member than it is to polish the mind!” While Eumolpus was relating all this, I changed countenance continually, elated, naturally, at the mishaps of my enemy, and vexed at his good fortune; but I controlled my tongue nevertheless, as if I knew nothing about the episode, and read aloud the bill of fare. (Hardly had I finished, when our humble meal was served. The food was plain but succulent and nutritious, and the famished scholar Eumolpus, fell to ravenously.)

Kind Providence unto our needs has tempered its decrees
 And met our wants, our carping complaints to still
 Green herbs, and berries hanging on their rough and brambly sprays
 Suffice our hunger's gnawing pangs to kill.
 What fool would thirst upon a river's brink? Or stand and freeze
 In icy blasts, when near a cozy fire?
 The law sits armed outside the door, adulterers to seize,
 The chaste bride, guiltless, gratifies desire.
 All Nature lavishes her wealth to meet our just demands;
 But, spurred by lust of pride, we stop at naught to gain our ends!

(Our philosopher began to moralize, when he had gorged himself, leveling many critical shafts at those who hold every–day things in contempt, esteeming nothing except what is rare.)

CHAPTER THE NINETY-THIRD.

(“To their perverted taste,” he went on,) everything one may have lawfully is held cheap and the appetite, tickled only by forbidden indulgences, delights in what is most difficult to obtain.

The pheasant from Colchis, the wild-fowl from African shores,
Because they are dainties, the parvenu's palate adores
The white-feathered goose, and the duck in his bright-colored plumes
Must nourish the rabble; they're common, so them Fashion dooms!
The wrasse brought from dangerous Syrtis is much more esteemed
When fishing-boats founder! And even the mullet is deemed,
No matter how heavy, a weight on the market! The whore
Displaces the wife; and in perfumes, the cinnamon more
Is esteemed than the rose! So whatever we have, we despise,
And whatever we have not, we think a superlative prize!”

“Is this the way in which you keep your promise not to recite a single verse today?” I demanded; “bear in mind your promise and spare us, at least, for we have thrown no rocks at you yet. If a single one of those fellows drinking under this very roof were to smell out a poet in their midst, he would arouse the whole neighborhood and involve all of us in the same misunderstanding!” Giton, who was one of the gentlest of lads, took me to task for having spoken in that manner, denying that I did rightly in criticising my elders and at the same time forgetting my duties as host by offering an affront to one whom I had invited out of kindness. And much more, full of moderation and propriety, which was in exquisite keeping with his good looks.

CHAPTER THE NINETY–FOURTH.

“Happy the mother,” cried Eumolpus, “who bore such a son as you! May your fortune be in keeping with your merit! Beauty and wisdom are rarely found mixed! And that you may not think that all your words are wasted, know that you have found a lover! I will fill my verses with your praise! I will act as your guardian and your tutor, following you even when you bid me stay behind! Nor can Encolpius take offense, he loves another.” The soldier who took my sword from me did Eumolpus a good turn, too; otherwise, the rage which I had felt against Ascyrtos would have been quenched in the blood of Eumolpus. Seeing what was in the wind, Giton slipped out of the room, pretending he was going after water, and by this diplomatic retreat he put an end to my fury. Then, as my anger cooled, little by little, “Eumolpus,” I said, “rather than have you entertain designs of such a nature, I would even prefer to have you spouting poetry! I am hot–tempered and you are lecherous; see how uncongenial two such dispositions must be! Take me for a maniac, humor my malady: in other words, get out quick!” Taken completely aback by this onslaught, Eumolpus crossed the threshold of the room without stopping to ask the reason for my wrath, and immediately slammed the door shut, penning me in, as I was not looking for any move of that kind then, having quickly removed the key, he hurried away in search of Giton. Finding that I was locked in, I decided to hang myself, and had already fastened my belt to the bedstead which stood alongside of the wall, and was engaged in fastening the noose around my neck, when the doors were unlocked and Eumolpus came in with Giton, recalling me to light when I was just about to turn the fatal goal–post! Giton was greatly wrought up and his grief turned to fury: seizing me with both hands, he threw me upon the bed. “If you think, Encolpius,” he shrieked, “that you can contrive to die before I do, you’re wrong! I thought of suicide first. I hunted for a sword in Ascyrtos’ house: I would have thrown myself from a precipice if I had not found you! You know that Death is never far from those who seek him, so take your turn and witness the spectacle you wished to see!” So saying, he snatched a razor from Eumolpus’ servant, slashed his throat, once, twice, and fell down at our feet! I uttered a loud cry, rushed to him as he fell, and sought the road to death by the same steel; Giton, however, showed not the faintest trace of any wound, nor was I conscious of feeling any pain. The razor, it turned out, was untempered and dull and was used to imbue boy apprentices with the confidence of the experienced barber. Hence it was in a sheath and, for the reason given above, the servant was not alarmed when the blade was snatched nor did Eumolpus break in upon this farcical death scene.



The Inn-keeper

CHAPTER THE NINETY-FIFTH.

The landlord made his appearance with a part of our little supper, while this lover's comedy was being enacted and, taking in the very disorderly spectacle which we presented, lying there and wallowing as we were, "Are you drunk," he demanded, "or are you runaway slaves, or both? Who turned up that bed there? What's the meaning of all these sneaking preparations? You didn't want to pay the room-rent, you didn't, by Hercules, you didn't; you wanted to wait till night and run away into the public streets, but that won't go here! This is no widow's joint, I'll show you that; not yet it ain't! This place belongs to Marcus Manicius!" "So you threaten, do you'?" yelled Eumolpus, giving the fellow a resounding slap in the face. At this, the latter threw a small earthenware pitcher, which had been emptied by the draughts of successive guests, at Eumolpus' head, and cut open the forehead of his cursing adversary: then he skipped out of the room. Infuriated at such an insult. Eumolpus snatched up a wooden candlestick, ran in pursuit of his retreating foeman, and avenged his broken head with a shower of blows. The entire household crowded around, as did a number of drunken lodgers, but I seized this opportunity of retaliating and locked Eumolpus out, retorting his own trick upon the quarrelsome fellow, and found myself without a rival, as it were, able to enjoy my room and my night's pleasure as well. In the meantime, Eumolpus, locked out as he was, was being very roughly handled by the cooks and scullions of the establishment; one aimed a spitful of hissing-hot guts at his eyes; another grabbed a two-tined fork in the pantry and put himself on guard. But worst of all, a blear-eyed old hag, girded round with a filthy apron, and wearing wooden clogs which were not mates, dragged in an immense dog on a chain, and "sicked" him upon Eumolpus, but he beat off all attacks with his candlestick.



The Fight at the Inn

CHAPTER THE NINETY–SIXTH.

We took in the entire performance through a hole in the folding–doors: this had been made but a short time before, when the handle had been broken and jerked out, and I wished him joy of his beating. Giton, however, forgetting everything except his own compassion, thought we ought to open the door and succor Eumolpus, in his peril; but being still angry, I could not restrain my hand; clenching my fist, I rapped his pitying head with my sharp knuckles. In tears, he sat upon the bed, while I applied each eye in turn, to the opening, filling myself up as with a dainty dish, with Eumolpus' misfortunes, and gloating over their prolongation, when Bargates, agent for the building, called from his dinner, was carried into the midst of the brawl by two chair–men, for he had the gout. He carried on for some time against drunkards and fugitive slaves, in a savage tone and with a barbarous accent, and then, looking around and catching sight of Eumolpus, “What,” he exclaimed, “are you here, nay prince of poets? and these damned slaves don't scatter at once and stop their brawling!” (Then, whispering in Eumolpus' ear,) “My bedfellow's got an idea that she's finer–haired than I am; lampoon her in a poem, if you think anything of me, and make 'er ashamed.”

CHAPTER THE NINETY–SEVENTH.

Eumolpus was speaking privately with Bargates, when a crier attended by a public slave entered the inn, accompanied by a medium–sized crowd of outsiders. Waving a torch that gave out more smoke than light, he announced: “Strayed from the baths, a short time ago, a boy about sixteen years of age, curly headed, a minion, handsome, answers to the name of Giton. One thousand sesterces reward will be paid to anyone bringing him back or giving information as to his whereabouts.” Ascyrtos, dressed in a tunic of many colors, stood not far from the crier, holding out a silver tray upon which was piled the reward, as evidence of good faith. I ordered Giton to get under the bed immediately, telling him to stick his hands and feet through the rope netting which supported the mattress, and, just as Ulysses of old had clung to the ram, so he, stretched out beneath the mattress, would evade the hands of the hunters. And Giton did not hesitate at obeying this order, but fastened his hands in the netting for a moment, outdoing Ulysses in his own cunning! For fear of leaving room for suspicion, I piled covers upon my pallet, leaving the impression of a single person of my own stature. Meanwhile Ascyrtos, in company with the magistrate's servant, had ransacked all the rooms and had come at last to mine, where he entertained greater hopes of success, because he found the doors carefully barred. The public slave loosened the bolts by inserting the edge of his ax in the chink. I threw myself at Ascyrtos' feet, begging him, by the memory of our friendship and our companionship in suffering, to show me my “brother,” safe and sound, and furthermore, that my simulated prayers might carry conviction, I added, “I know very well, Ascyrtos, that you have come here seeking my life. If not, why the axes?”

“Well, fatten your grudge, then! Here's my neck! Pour out that blood you seek to shed under pretext of a search!” Ascyrtos repelled this suspicion, affirming that he sought nothing except his own fugitive and desired the death of neither man nor suppliant, and least of all did he wish to harm one whom, now that their quarrel was over, he regarded as his dearest friend.

CHAPTER THE NINETY-EIGHTH.

The public servant, however, was not derelict in the performance of his duty for, snatching a cane from the innkeeper, he poked underneath the bed, ransacking every corner, even to the cracks in the wall. Twisting his body out of reach, and cautiously drawing a full breath, Giton pressed his mouth against the very bugs themselves. (The pair had scarcely left the room) when Eumolpus burst in in great excitement, for the doors had been broken and could keep no one out. "The thousand sesterces are mine," he shouted, "I'll follow that crier out and tell him Giton is in your power, and it will serve you right, too!" Seeing that his mind was made up, I embraced his knees and besought him not to kill a dying man. "You might have some reason for being excited," I said, "if you could produce the missing boy, but you cannot, as the thing stands now, for he escaped into the crowd and I have not even a suspicion as to where he has gone! Get the lad back, Eumolpus, for heaven's sake, even if you do restore him to Ascyrtos!" I had just succeeded in persuading him to believe all this when Giton, nearly suffocated from holding his breath, suddenly sneezed three times, and shook the bed. Eumolpus turned at the commotion. "Hello, Giton," he exclaimed, "glad to see you!" Then he turned back the mattress and discovered an Ulysses who even a ravenous Cyclops might have spared; thereupon, he faced me, "You robber," said he, "what does all this mean? You hadn't the nerve to tell me the truth even when you were caught! If the god, that umpires human affairs hadn't forced a sign from this boy as he hung there, I would be wandering from one pot-house to another, like a fool!" (But) Giton was far more tactful than I: first of all, he dressed the cut upon Eumolpus' forehead, with spider's web soaked in oil; he then exchanged the poet's torn clothing for his own cloak; this done, he embraced the old gentleman, who was already somewhat mollified, and poulticed him with kisses. "Dearest of fathers," he cried, "we are entirely in your hands! In yours alone! If you love your Giton, do your best to save him. Would that some cruel flame might devour me, alone, or that the wintry sea might swallow me, for I am the cause for all these crimes. Two enemies would be reconciled if I should perish!" (Moved by our troubles, but particularly stirred by Giton's caresses, "You are fools," exclaimed Eumolpus, "you certainly are: here you are gifted with talents enough to make your fortunes and you still lead a life of misery, and every day you bring new torments upon yourselves, as the fruits of your own acts!")"
