

AS IS THE GENERATION OF LEAVES,
SO ARE THE GENERATIONS OF COWS, MICE,
AND GIGOLOS

Excerpe Diem! or *Excerpts of Carpe Diem*

In 1752, the German poet Christoph Martin Wieland wrote *Anti-Ovid, or the Art of Loving*. In this response to Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, Wieland attempted to show that true love, by contrast with lust, always includes virtue.¹ The prefaces of later editions express Wieland's dissatisfaction with his juvenilia and note the extensive changes made later.² Indeed, in the preface of his collected works, Wieland says that the *Anti-Ovid* became a frock whose original colour is not discernible anymore, because it only consists of patches.³ One passage or patch that Wieland included in all editions shows the Greek lyric poet Anacreon appearing in the first canto and singing a *carpe diem* song: 'Genießt und liebt, weil euch die Jugend winkt, | Sie wird verblühh, genießt und liebt, und trinkt' ('Enjoy yourselves and love because you are young and youth will wither; enjoy yourselves and love and drink'). The insertion of an Anacreontic song within an anti-Ovidian poem is interesting. To be sure, the hedonistic attitude of the two ancient poets can easily be linked ('verführerische Sittenlehre'; 'seductive teachings'), and Ovid himself recommends reading Anacreon at *Ars Amatoria* 3.30. But on a formal level it is striking to see a piece of lyric appearing inside a work of didactic poetry.⁴ Is it the case that Wieland, the great expert in ancient literature, knew that such inserted lyric excerpts of *carpe diem* are also a notable feature of ancient texts – the more so as he published a translation of Horace's

¹ Wieland (1752). ² Wieland (1776: 137–8; 1798: 7–8). ³ Wieland (1798) 7–8.

⁴ Formally, the piece would have sat more comfortably among the eight Anacreontic lyric poems in the appendix of Wieland's work.

Sermones which includes a similar excerpt?⁵ This and other excerpts of *carpe diem* will be the topic of this chapter.

The previous chapters of this book have all dealt with short texts on the *carpe diem* theme. All of these, whether they are epigrams or lyric poems, can justly be called ‘*carpe diem* poems’. The topic of this chapter is longer texts which are not primarily about *carpe diem*, but which contain shorter sections dedicated to this motif. These ‘sections’ are characterised by three traits (though not all traits necessarily apply to every passage): they are clearly demarcated units within a longer surrounding text, they are self-contained, and they constitute (apparent) quotations or will in turn be quoted. Thus, in Wieland’s *Anti-Ovid* the *carpe diem* section is demarcated through a different diction, and a separate speaker. As a poem on its own, it is clearly self-contained, and it at least pretends to be a work of Anacreon, not Wieland. Such demarcated and self-contained passages can also be found in ancient literature. Indeed, Horace’s *Ars Poetica* provides us with a neat image for such passages. For not just Wieland refers to texts as patches – Horace criticises poets who make use of ‘purple patches’ (*purpureus pannus*; *Ars* 14–23), rhetorical set pieces that stick out as alien elements.⁶ Though their material is precious, they are all too well known and do not fit into the surrounding text. In looking at such ‘purple patches’ of *carpe diem*, I am interested in these seemingly conflicting dynamics: the natural splendour of the material (purple) and its reduction to a small piece in poor surroundings (patch). What is particularly notable is how the natural splendour of the purple material of *carpe diem* passages keeps attracting readers, so that the same patches are repeatedly removed and continuously sewn onto new clothes in anthologies, *florilegia*, and commonplace-books. The purple patch then becomes an independent textual object, completely removed from its original context, a cliché or a pure excerpt.

The term ‘excerpts’ perhaps requires some explanation. This is the word I will use to refer to sections of *carpe diem* in this chapter, a term with several interpretative benefits. In my use of the term,

⁵ Wieland (1813) 436–7 (see page 199 in this chapter).

⁶ Wieland translated, of course, also the *Ars Poetica*, where he rendered the purple patch thus: ‘einen Purpurstreifen angeffickt’ (Wieland (1816) 211).

I note its primary meaning from the Latin verb *excerpere*, ‘to pick out’ or ‘select’. Seneca, for example, uses *excerpta* to refer to literary extracts (Sen. *Epist.* 33.3).⁷ While I will consider some excerpts in Seneca and Athenaeus according to the ancient meaning of the term, I ultimately wish to add a broader meaning. Let us again consider the Wieland passage. The *carpe diem* song is presented as an excerpt from Anacreon, but this is, of course, a pastiche by Wieland himself, who is evidently inspired by the *Anacreontea*, which are in turn themselves pastiches of Anacreon’s poetry. A further source for Wieland is a *carpe diem* ode of Horace (C. 1.4.16–20), which provides him with an ending for his poem, and the name Phyllis in Wieland’s poem also appears in several Augustan poets. Additionally, Wieland here parodies the fashion of Anacreontic poetry, which was in full bloom in Germany when he published the *Anti-Ovid*.⁸ Thus, the distinctions between real quotations and pseudo-quotations are hopelessly blurred. It, therefore, seems much more fruitful to broaden the meaning of the term ‘excerpt’, in order to analyse the specific intertextual dynamics that combine quoting, abridging, and imitating.⁹ Referring to this intertextual overlap as ‘excerpt’, I wish to explore the rhetorical scope of purple passages of *carpe diem*, which – whether actual quotations or pastiches – draw on the *auctoritas* of a purple model. This broader view on ‘excerpts’ relates to work on textual dynamics beyond Classics. Thus, the slavist Gary Saul Morson wrote a book on quotations, in which he analysed among other things something he called ‘quotationality’: ‘Sometimes we do not cite specific words but rather conjure the *aura* of a quotation’ (original emphasis).¹⁰ There exists one more reason why ‘excerpt’ is an appropriate term for the phenomenon discussed here. The semantics of the word *excerptum* already point to how the concept of *carpe diem* is treated

⁷ *L&S* s.v.

⁸ The ‘German Anacreon’ Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim published his Anacreontic *Versuch in Scherzhaften Liedern* in 1740, and Anacreontic poetry became an ‘infectious plague’, in the words of a contemporary, as noted by Höschele (2014) 201 n.14.

⁹ An important theoretical article of the Romanist Wolfgang Raible (1995) distinguishes three modes of intertextuality: amplification of texts (e.g., commentaries), abridgment (e.g., epitomes), parallel texts (e.g., pastiches). The combination of the latter two categories is the theme of this chapter. For cutting and excerpting lyric, see, in particular, Hose (2008).

¹⁰ Morson (2011) 37. I owe this reference to Henry Spelman.

in longer texts; bits of poems or patches are *cut out* and ‘flowery purple passages’ (*flosculi*; see Sen. *Epist.* 33.1, 33.7) are *plucked out*.¹¹ Indeed, when one author encourages ‘plucking sweet things’ (*carpamus dulcicia*; Pers. 5.151), we cannot tell whether this is just an exhortation to enjoyment, or a metaliterary comment on plucking sweet poetry. My interpretation of excerpts develops some thoughts on allusions as physical, pluckable textual objects, put forward by Philip Hardie, and engages with Gian Biagio Conte’s thoughts on the rhetorical scope of intertextuality.¹² In short, I am arguing that it is no coincidence that the motif of *carpe diem* is particularly prone to being excerpted.¹³

Naturally, not every excerpt of *carpe diem* can be discussed in this chapter. Rather, mirroring my material, I will gather some of the choicest examples. The selection here focusses in particular on textual developments towards and during the Roman Empire, and pays close attention to their later reception in quotations, *florilegia*, and anthologies. While two texts that are discussed here, Vergil’s *Georgics* and Horace’s *Sermones* 2, still look towards the Empire, other texts are firmly placed within this period. By focusing on the Empire, I am, however, not claiming that such excerpting is a purely late phenomenon. Indeed, one of the earliest *carpe diem* poems we possess, Mimnermus, *fr.* 2, can fruitfully be linked to excerpting, as Mimnermus excerpts and decontextualises material from a Homeric purple passage on leaves (*Il.* 6.146–9).¹⁴ The Theognidean corpus, featuring many short ‘snippets’ on *carpe diem*, may also invite this concept. And perhaps one of the best-known and most elaborate *carpe diem* set-texts is the speech of drunken Heracles in Euripides’ *Alcestis* (780–802), a text that would in turn become much excerpted.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the focus on the Roman Empire is not arbitrarily chosen. For, as David

¹¹ On the flower imagery in miscellanies, see, in particular, Fitzgerald (2016) 153–4.

¹² Hardie (2012) 229–38, Conte (1986).

¹³ This has been suggested to me by Emily Gowers.

¹⁴ On Mimnermus, *fr.* 2, see, for example, Griffith (1975), Sider (1996), and pages 11–13 in the Introduction.

¹⁵ In his Valedictory Lecture as Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge, titled ‘I Think I Should Probably Go Now’ (accessible at www.classics.cam.ac.uk/file/valedictorywebsitepdf), Richard Hunter has reminded us that Heracles’ *carpe diem* argument was excerpted by Plu. *Moralia* 107b–c (the perhaps spurious *Consolatio ad Apollonium*), Stobaeus 4.51.13, as well as by the fifth-century-AD grammarian Orion at *Anthologion*

Konstan says in relation to excerpts in Stobaeus, while excerpts have always been a part of Greco-Roman literature, they become increasingly important in the Empire.¹⁶ This period, and in particular its anthologies and satires, which are stuffed full with other genres, seem the richest meadows for gathering my flowers.

The chapter falls into four different parts, each one dedicated to a case study of excerpting. In the first part, I will look at Vergil's *Georgics* 3 and discuss how purple passages from archaic poetry are used to convey an independent voice of wisdom. The other focus of this section is how the natural splendour of a purple passage leads to later excerption. The topic of my second section is the tale of the town and the country mouse in Horace, *Sermones* 2.6. Here, I am concerned with how a section on *carpe diem* can appear as an intrusive voice of high-style poetry in the pedestrian context of the *Sermones*. The third section deals with Trimalchio's poems in Petronius' *Satyrica*. I will analyse these excerpts as a product of rhetorical education which treats literature as a series of patterns. The other theme I am interested in here is how Trimalchio's recitation of poetic scraps demonstrates an especially 'sympotic' preference for extracting lyric (as in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*). Finally, in the last part of this chapter, I will look at Juvenal, *Satires* 9. I will show how excerpting and re-excerpting has created a cliché that can be inserted just about anywhere, so that the musings of a Roman male prostitute ended up in a letter to Charles IV, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and self-proclaimed descendant of saints.

5.1 Plucking Grass: Cows, Flocks, Vergil, *Georgics* 3, and Seneca

A passage that was considered a purple passage in antiquity and adapted by numerous authors is Hesiod's description of a summer day in the *Works and Days*, where the poet advises his addressee to enjoy the season by sitting in the shade and having a good meal with wine (*Op.* 582–96):¹⁷

8.4.2. Lines 782–93 on *carpe diem* are also preserved by *P.Oxy.* 5486, which may be from the same column as *P.Oxy.* 4547, which preserves lines 772–9 (cf. Chepel (2016)).

¹⁶ Konstan (2011). Cf. Jacob (2000) 104–6, König and Whitmarsh (2007b).

¹⁷ Text: West (1978).

Excerpts of *Carpe Diem*

ἦμος δὲ σκόλυμός τ' ἀνθεῖ καὶ ἠχέτα τέττιξ
δενδρέω ἐφεζόμενος λιγυρὴν καταχεύετ' αἰοιδὴν
πυκνὸν ὑπὸ πτερυγῶν θέρεος καματώδους ὥρη,
τῆμος πίοταταί τ' αἴγες καὶ οἶνος ἄριστος, (585)
μαχλόταται δὲ γυναῖκες, ἀφαιρότατοι δὲ τοὶ ἄνδρες
εἰσίν, ἐπεὶ κεφαλὴν καὶ γούνατα Σείριος ἄζει,
αὐαλέος δὲ τε χρώς ὑπὸ καύματος· ἀλλὰ τότ' ἦδη
εἶη πετραίη τε σκιὴ καὶ Βίβλινος οἶνος
μᾶζά τ' ἀμολγαίη γάλα τ' αἰγῶν σβεννυμενάων (590)
καὶ βοῶς ὑλοφάγοιο κρέας μὴ πω τετοκυῖης
πρωτογόνων τ' ἐρίφων· ἐπὶ δ' αἴθοπα πινέμεν οἶνον
ἐν σκιῇ ἐζόμενον, κεκορημένον ἦτορ ἐδωδῆς,
ἀντίον ἀκραέος Ζεφύρου τρέψαντα πρόσωπα·
κρήνης δ' αἰενάου καὶ ἀπορρύτου, ἣ τ' ἀθόλωτος, (595)
τρὶς ὕδατος προχέειν, τὸ δὲ τέτρατον ἰέμεν οἴνου.

When the golden thistle blooms and the chirping cicada sits in a tree and ceaselessly pours out its shrill song from under its wings in the season of toilsome summer, then the goats are fattest and wine is best, the women most lustful and the men at their weakest, because Sirius burns their heads and knees, and the skin is dry from the heat. But then make sure that there's some shade from a rock and Bibline wine, a milk cake, the milk of goats which are drying up, the meat of a forest-grazing cow that has not yet given birth, and the meat of newly born kids. Also, drink gleaming wine, while you are sitting in the shade, when you've fulfilled your desire for food, with your face turned towards the fresh west wind. Pour in three measures of water from a spring that's ever-flowing, running and unclouded, and put in a fourth measure of wine.

These lines are repeatedly quoted when authors wish to speak in Hesiod's authoritative voice, and already in archaic lyric Alcaeus used this voice in an exhortation to heavy drinking, as Richard Hunter has shown (*fr.* 347):¹⁸

Τέγγε πλεύμονας οἴνω, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιτέλλεται,
ἅ δ' ὦρα χαλέπα, πάντα δὲ δίψαισ' ὑπὰ καύματος,
ἄχει δ' ἐκ πετάλων ἄδεα τέττιξ . . .
ἄνθει δὲ σκόλυμος, νῦν δὲ γυναῖκες μιαρῶταται
λέπτοι δ' ἄνδρες, ἐπεὶ () κεφάλαν καὶ γόνα Σείριος
ἄσδει

¹⁸ Hunter (2014) 123–66 with further bibliography. For Alcaeus' fragment, its history, and further sources, see Budelmann (2018) 110–13, Ponzio (2001).

Drench your lungs in wine, because the star is revolving and the season is harsh; everything is thirsty under the heat, and the cicada sings sweetly from the leaves . . . the golden thistle blooms; now women are at their most repulsive and men are feeble, because Sirius burns their heads and knees

We do not know the context of Alcaeus' fragment, but a *carpe diem* context may be at least suspected. Not only would this be in line with other poems of Alcaeus (see *fr.* 38, 335, 346), but it would also fit the reception of this fragment: Horace adapts the idea of drinking in a warm season in *Odes* 3.29.18–20 as well as in 4.12, where the *carpe diem* motif is strongly present in each case,¹⁹ and the same can be said about the pseudo-Vergilian *Copa* (in particular lines 25–38).²⁰ Moreover, when Athenaeus quotes part of this fragment, he does so within a sequence of drinking exhortations of Alcaeus of which some have a definite *carpe diem* context and others have a possible one.²¹ Though this cumulative evidence makes a *carpe diem* context in Alcaeus not unlikely, it is more fruitful to look at Alcaeus' poem through the lens of its reception: we can see that the passage came to be treated as a model for 'carpe diem in summer'. This is something not yet present in Hesiod, but linked to the reception of Alcaeus' poem, which became an oft-quoted excerpt in its own right.²² Indeed, whether this is an instance of misquotation or of reperformance, Alcaeus *fr.* 352 shows close verbal resemblance

¹⁹ For the Alcaean reference at Hor. *C.* 3.29.18–20, see Davis (1991) 175 and 175 n.26.

²⁰ For *carpe diem* in the *Copa*, see J. Henderson (2002) 261–4, and see page 20 in the Introduction. If the puzzling expression *tangomenas faciamus*, which Trimalchio uses at Petron. 34.7 and 73.6, indeed refers to Alcaeus' τέγγε πλεῦμονας οἴνω, as has been suggested (see, e.g., Alessio (1960–1) 353–4, Setaioli (2011) 101 n.61 and 102 n.62, Schmeling (2011) *ad loc.*), then there is yet another work that associates Alcaeus' poem with *carpe diem*. Moreover, *P.Oxy.* 3724.iv.20, perhaps an epigram of Philodemus, has the *incipit* ζωροπότην ωρη(?) or ωρη() (perhaps: 'It is the season for the man who drinks his wine straight to [. . .]', following Sider (1997) 203–5, 214, and see pages 153–7 in Chapter 4 on ζωροποτεῖν and *carpe diem*). Though this has to remain speculation, I am tempted to see in this *incipit* a reference to Alcaeus drinking in the summer heat, the more so as Philodemus quotes Alcaeus' image of wetting the lungs with wine elsewhere (*AP* 11.34.7 = Philodemus 6.7 Sider).

²¹ Ath. 10.430a–d, where *fr.* 335 and 346 make the motif explicit, and *fr.* 338 and 367 have been received as *carpe diem* poetry respectively through Hor. *C.* 1.9, 1.4/4.7.

²² For verbal quotations of Alc. *fr.* 347, see Voigt (1971) *ad loc.* Also note the allusions to Alcaeus' poem at *Anacreont.* 18.1–4, and 60.32–6 with Most (2014) 146–9, though neither poem employs the *carpe diem* motif.

Excerpts of *Carpe Diem*

to *fr.* 347 and is a case in point for its status as a purple passage.²³

In Vergil's *Georgics*, both Hesiod and Alcaeus are used as models for a description of summer heat. The one gives the passage didactic authority; the other adds a sense of humour and sympotic dimension to *carpe diem*, as Vergil explains how one should take care of flocks in the summer (Verg. *G.* 3.323–38):

at uero Zephyris cum laeta uocantibus aestas
in saltus utrumque gregem atque in pascua mittet,
Luciferi primo cum sidere frigida rura
carpamus, dum mane nouum, dum gramina canent, (325)
et ros in tenera pecori gratissimus herba.
inde ubi quarta sitim caeli collegerit hora
et cantu querulae rumpent arbusta cicadae,
ad puteos aut alta greges ad stagna iubebo
currentem ilignis potare canalibus undam; (330)
aestibus at mediis umbrosam exquirere uallem,
sicubi magna Iouis antiquo robore quercus
ingentis tendat ramos, aut sicubi nigrum
ilicibus crebris sacra nemus accubet umbra;
tum tenuis dare rursus aquas et pascere rursus (335)
solis ad occasum, cum frigidus aëra Vesper
temperat, et saltus reficit iam roscida luna,
litoraque alcyonen resonant, acalanthida dumi.

But when the Zephyrs are calling and joyous summer sends the flocks of sheep and goats to the woodland pastures and the meadows, then let us take to the cool fields at the rise of the morning star, while the morning is young, while hoar frost whitens the grass, and the dew in the tender grass is most welcome to cattle. Then, when the fourth celestial hour has brought thirst and the song of shrill cicadas bursts through the thickets, I will ask the flocks to drink the water that runs through wooden channels at the side of wells or deep pools. But in the midday sun look for a shaded valley where the great oak of Jupiter with its old trunk stretches out its huge branches or where a grove, dark with many holms, lies with hallowed shade. Then, give them again trickling water and feed them again until sunset, when the cool evening star chills the air and the moon refreshes the woodland pastures by dropping dew now, and the shores resound with the song of the halcyon and the thickets echo the song of the finch.

²³ *Fr.* 352: Πώνωμεν, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιτέλλεται. See Rösler (1983) 19–20, Budelmann (2018) 111.

Hesiod and Alcaeus have lent purple splendour to a topic that does perhaps not possess it by nature: the feeding and drinking schedule of flocks. The structure of the summer day in these lines and the prescriptions are taken from an agricultural treatise: Richard Thomas has shown in detail how Vergil here adopts a section of Varro's *Res rustica*.²⁴ Vergil changes, however, the tone of 'some of the most functional and mundane prose of ancient literature',²⁵ as Thomas points out. I argue that Vergil achieves that as he combines Varro's text with other models: dry technical instructions on farming are turned into a Hesiodic purple passage and are made to echo the sound of Alcaeus' lyric. Thus, some features of the passage, such as the zephyr winds and the chirping cicada, are clear references to Hesiod.²⁶ Shade and drinking can also be found in Hesiod's description of the summer day, though they do appear in Varro as well. A reference to Hesiod naturally befits Vergil's *Ascraeum carmen* (Verg. *G.* 2.176), but there might be more in play here. As Richard Hunter has shown, the rich history of allusions to this specific passage from Hesiod makes it a typical Hesiodic 'excerpt', exactly the type of passage an author cites whenever he wishes to speak with Hesiodic authority.²⁷

By nodding to both Hesiod and Alcaeus, Vergil shows some awareness of the quotation history of the text. Alcaeus' influence on the passage seems not to have been noted so far. Two lines of the passage strongly recall the lyric poet (327–8): *inde ubi quarta sitim caeli collegerit hora | et cantu querulae rumpent arbusta cicadae* ('then when the fourth celestial hour has brought thirst and the song of shrill cicadas bursts through the thickets'). These lines evoke ἄδ' ὥρα χαλέπα, πάντα δὲ δίψαισ' ὑπὸ καύματος, | ἄχει δ' ἐκ πετάλων ἄδεα τέτιξ ('the season is harsh; everything is thirsty under the heat, and the cicada sings sweetly from the leaves'). The train of thought that moves from thirst in one line to a singing cicada in the next one is the same in both poets, whereas Hesiod

²⁴ Thomas (1987) 233–5 referring to Varro *R.* 2.2.10–11. ²⁵ Thomas (1987) 230.

²⁶ The Hesiodic influence has been noted by Heyne (1826) and Erren (2003) *ad loc.*, Hunter (2014) 145 n.58, and see this chapter, page 192 n.29 for the discussion of another Hesiodic feature in the *Georgics* passage.

²⁷ Hunter (2014) 123–66. For Hesiod's poem as a sequence of self-contained passages that invite excerpting, see Canevaro (2015).

first mentions the cicada and burning heat later. While this could still be explained as a coincidence, another feature within these lines is crucial: the motif of thirst. This is not mentioned by Hesiod, whereas Alcaeus makes thirst the theme of his poem (at least from how the fragmentary state of the poem allows us to judge). Picking up the thirst motif, Vergil makes *hora* the agent of thirst, which may be an interlingual pun on Alcaeus' ὥρα.²⁸ We are hearing Alcaeus' lyric voice, a sound effect that transcends meaning. In a way, Vergil speaks of even heavier drinking than Alcaeus. Whereas Alcaeus speaks of 'drenching the lungs', in Vergil the drinking vessels are massive troughs.²⁹ The difference is, of course, that Vergil does not speak of wine for men but of water for flocks. The evocation of Alcaeus creates a drinking-party for flocks: whereas in Hesiod and Alcaeus humans are asked to enjoy the season, in Vergil's world of humanised animals the flocks do that and even beat Alcaeus at drinking. The combined reference to more than one model is characteristic of Vergil's 'art of reference',³⁰ and it is almost certain in the present case when we know that ancient commentators were already well aware of the Alcaean reference to Hesiod.³¹ Vergil, here, continues dynamics of excerpting that are already present in archaic literature: Hesiod creates a self-contained purple passage, Alcaeus excerpts it, and Vergil's version points to this textual history.

²⁸ The etymology of *hora* from ὥρα was well known to the Augustans, and Horace played with the original Greek sense of the word at *C.* 1.12.16, as Gitner (2012) 25 notes. Also cf. Maltby (1991) s.v. 'hora'. Admittedly, thirst is also present at Varro *R.* 2.2: *sole exorto potum propellunt*; but the word *hora* does not appear in Varro, while Alcaeus owes ὥρα to Hes. *Op.* 584. In another passage influenced by Alcaeus, Hor. *C.* 4.12.13, already adduced by Heyne (1826) *ad loc.*, the seasons bring thirst: *adduxere sitim tempora, Vergili*. The line addresses Vergil, as if to say that he, too, has translated this Alcaeus passage (for the vexed question of who the Vergilius in the ode is, see, e.g., Thomas (2011) 226–8 with further bibliography and recently Tarrant (2015a)).

²⁹ Thomas (1988) and Mynors (1990) at *Verg. G.* 3.330 say that *ilignis canalibus* must refer to troughs. Thomas notes that *currentem undam* is difficult to square with troughs, but the expression is arguably an attempt to instil some Hesiodic wisdom into the poem, translating κρήνης ἀπορρύτου of the purple model at Hes. *Op.* 595.

³⁰ Thomas (1986). Also see Thomas (1988) *passim*.

³¹ Proclus quotes the Alcaeus fragment in his Hesiod commentary, noting: τοιαῦτα δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἀλκαῖον ἔδειν. The fact that Proclus does not include Alcaeus' half-line on thirst in his quotation (Marzillo (2010) 214, 354) also indicates that this has no parallel in Hesiod.

Vergil's flocks enjoy the summer day with ample drink and shade. Yet, there is some haste implied and the danger that enjoyment does not last forever (324–5): *frigida rura | carpamus, dum mane nouum, dum gramina canent* ('let us take to the cool fields, while the morning is young, while hoar frost whitens the grass'). This is a difficult sentence, as the meaning of *carpo* is not clear. To appropriate the meaning of the sentence, we can adduce a comparable passage from Tibullus (2.5.56): *carpite nunc, tauri, de septem montibus herbas, | dum licet: hic magnae iam locus urbis erit* ('now, bulls, graze on the grass of the seven hills while you may; soon here will be the site of a great city'). Tibullus exhorts steers to graze (*carpite*) on the future site of Rome, while they still can (*dum licet*). The enjoyable time for steers will pass and the tag *dum licet* strongly points to *carpe diem*.³² In Vergil, the limiting factor introduced by an anaphora of *dum* is the freshness of the meadow in the morning, which will not last. Ironically, here whiteness marks a time of enjoyment, whereas in the context of *carpe diem* it usually signifies oppressive old age.³³ But what to make of *carpamus*? The *dum* clause about the appeal of morning fields to flocks points to the meaning 'grazing' for *carpamus*. Yet, the first-person plural is somewhat surprising and suggests that, unlike in Tibullus, this does not describe flocks 'grazing' the fields, but humans 'taking to' the fields. Perhaps in a book that uses *carpo* in both these meanings, we should exclude neither option.³⁴ The first-person plural then expresses exuberance and shows humans taking part in the enjoyment of animals.³⁵ *Carpere* with a sense of enjoyment includes, once more, references to 'plucking' the products of the seasons (here: dewy grass), as I have discussed in Chapter 3. Horace would, of course, apply a much bolder object to *carpere* in the *Odes* by joining it with *dies*.

³² For *dum licet* as a part of *carpe diem*, see Hor. *C.* 2.11.16, 4.12.26, *S.* 2.6.96, *Epist.* 1.11.20, as well as Petron. 34.10, discussed on pages 205–10 of this chapter. Cf. Sen. *Dial.* 10.19.2, and page 9 n.28 in the Introduction.

³³ For example, Hor. *C.* 1.9.17.

³⁴ See Verg. *G.* 3.142 and 3.347 for walking and 3.465 for grazing. For *carpo* in Vergil, see, in particular, Traina at *EV* 1.676–7 s.v. 'carpo'.

³⁵ Mynors (1990) *ad loc.* suggests a notion of enjoyment in *carpo*, Thomas (1988) *ad loc.* says that the first person implies exuberance. Already Heyne (1826) *ad loc.* noted the ambiguity of *carpamus*.

Excerpts of *Carpe Diem*

We have seen how a purple passage from Hesiod and in turn one of Alcaeus become excerpted and re-excerpted, while in their new contexts they still always point back to the archaic originals and their advice. In the discussion of the next passage, the sense of detachment of the statement will become clearer. Here, Vergil exhorts the farmer to haste when it comes to cattle-breeding. As Vergil humanises his animals once more, he says that cattle only enjoy a fleeting time of happy youth, before old age and death overcome them (Verg. *G.* 3.63–71):

interea, superat gregibus dum laeta iuventas,
solue mares; mitte in Venerem pecuaria primus,
atque aliam ex alia generando suffice prolem. (65)
optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi
prima fugit; subeunt morbi tristisque senectus
et labor, et durae rapit inclementia mortis.
semper erunt quarum mutari corpora malis:
semper enim refice ac, ne post amissa requiras, (70)
ante ueni et subolem armento sortire quotannis.

In the meantime, while the cattle have joyful youth in abundance, let loose the males; be first to send the cattle to Venus, and by breeding supply generation upon generation. All life's best days flee first for unhappy mortals; diseases come about and gloomy old age and suffering, and the harshness of stern death snatches them away. Always there will be cattle whose shape you want to change. Yes, always renew them; stay ahead so that you don't regret your losses afterwards, and every year choose new stock for the herd.

As in the previous section, Vergil creates a *carpe diem* for animals. At first sight the placement of such a *carpe diem* section in *Georgics* 3 may seem natural enough; the urgent tone that the farmers had better make good use of their cattle's short period of fertility is solid animal husbandry (modern farming manuals also stress that a key factor for cattle breeding is the critical time of the cows' oestrus). Formally, the motif of *carpe diem* also seems to work well within a didactic poem. After all, the motif of *carpe diem* is naturally instructive: it supposedly expresses advice, imperatives are prominent, an authoritative speaker is required, and so is an addressee who

will profit from the advice.³⁶ Thus, we have seen in the previous section how Vergil successfully blends Hesiodic wisdom with Alcaean largesse in creating a heavy drink. Yet, when Vergil applies the motif to cattle-breeding he takes the instructive nature of *carpe diem* to its limits and possibly beyond. The traditional lyric advice on the human condition constitutes a contrast to the technicalities of cattle-breeding. Vergil's style in these lines is a far cry from the precision and technicality usual in treatments of cattle-breeding.³⁷

The misplacement of this purple patch in the *Georgics* is reflected in its reception. Lines 66 to 68, in particular, have proved popular with posterity: Seneca discussed them at length at *Epistulae* 108.24–9 and *De breuitate uitae* 9.2, and Samuel Johnson is said to have recited the passage 'with great pathos'.³⁸ For Seneca, Johnson, and many besides them, these lines encapsulate the human condition. And yet the lines appear in a section on cattle-breeding, a context that is widely ignored.³⁹ This detachment of the passage from its context of cattle is suggestive. In other words, I do not so much wish to emphasise the fault of Seneca and others who ignore the context of the passage as I wish to show how

³⁶ See pages 23–4 in the Introduction on *carpe diem* and didactic poetry.

³⁷ Cf. Varro *R.* 2.2.18, Pliny *Nat.* 8.176–7. This involves precision with dates, such as *coitus a delphini exortu a. d. pr. non. Ianuarias diebus triginta, aliquis et autumnno at Nat.* 8.177 or the technical term *ineo* ('to tup') for the mating of animals in both texts. On *ineo*, see Adams (1990) 190, 206. Vergil avoids such explicit vocabulary that would almost seem obscene for his humanised cows.

³⁸ Boswell's *Life*, under 1770 (Hill and Powell (1934) ii. 129), as noted by Parry (1972) 41, Mynors (1990) *ad loc.* Pointedly, we encounter this passage, too, excerpted and collected through Rev. Dr Maxwell's *Collectanea* of Johnson's witticisms. The humanist Rodolphus Agricola also ignored the context of the Vergilian passage in his *De formando studio*.

³⁹ Della Corte (1986) at 68 speaks of 'vita umana'. Mynors (1990) *ad loc.*: 'the transition to human beings is made quite without warning'. Erren (2003) at 66 comments, 'unerbitliche Vergänglichkeit ist den Menschen von Natur auferlegt' (my emphasis). Mazzoli (1970) 217 characterises the Vergilian quote in Seneca thus: 'versi altamente commossi, che cantano e profetizzano la perenne tragedia del destino umano' (my emphasis). Gummere (1917–25) translates the passage at Sen. *Epist.* 108.24–9: 'hapless human life' (though, to his credit, this is also how Seneca arguably understands the passage). Some scholars note the original context of cattle: Krauß (1957) 33, W. Richter (1957) *ad loc.*, Klingner (1967) 285, Putnam (1979) 176, Thomas (1988) *ad loc.* G. D. Williams (2003) 172 points out at Sen. *Dial.* 10.9.2 that the lines in Vergil are 'quite different in tone and emphasis', as they deal with 'cattle, not human beings'.

their reception makes us see more clearly that the passage is already detached in the *Georgics*. Even there the passage feels separated from the rest of the text, as it does not quite fit into the context of cattle-breeding. Indeed, Samuel Johnson may have a point that the *carpe diem* sentiments are more naturally at home at the dinner table than in discussions about mating cows and bulls.

It is arguably one expression in particular that seems an ill match for cattle and invited readers from Seneca onwards to see in these lines a statement on the human condition, namely *miseris mortalibus* ('unhappy mortals', Verg. *G.* 3.66). This expression is naturally evocative of human affairs, not cattle. Servius may have felt the mismatch, as he insisted that we should not limit the passage to cattle, but understand it as referring to everything: *ista sententia non solum ad animalia pertinent, sed generaliter ad omnia*.⁴⁰ When Vergil applies the term *miseris mortalibus* to cattle, the expression seems to resist this application. The expression *miseris mortalibus* is taken from Lucretius 5.944. Monica Gale has shown that the anthropomorphic features of Vergil's animals in *Georgics* 3 owe much to Lucretius, who already blurred the lines between humans and beasts.⁴¹ Indeed, when Lucretius uses the term *miseris mortalibus*, he does so in a description of prehistoric humans who behave much like beasts.⁴² The Lucretian model might have suggested itself for Vergil's humanised animals. Elsewhere, Vergil also applies the term *mortalis* to animals; before Mezentius meets Aeneas in battle, he speaks to his horse Rhaebus and includes it along with humans among the *mortales*, in a passage in a similar tone to the one in the *Georgics* (Verg.

⁴⁰ Parry (1972) 41 is characteristically sensitive to the tone of the passage: 'The limits of the proper age for breeding, a practical matter of animal husbandry, is transformed by Virgil's quick thought into a melancholy reflexion on the transience of happiness and life itself'. Cf. Knox (1992) 47: 'with the phrase *miseris mortalibus* Virgil throws off the pretense that he is writing only of animals'.

⁴¹ Gale (1991). Vergil humanises animals throughout *Georgics* 3, for example, in closest proximity to the passage of interest here Verg. *G.* 3.60–1: *aetas Lucinam iustosque pati hymenaeos | desinit ante decem, post quattuor incipit annos*. Also see Liebeschuetz (1965) and, in particular, the examples collected at 64–5.

⁴² Lucr. 5.925–47; see, in particular, 932: *uolgiuago uitam tractabant more ferarum* and in 947 the comparison of humans with *saecla ferarum*. See the reading of G. Campbell (2003) 204: 'This coarse fodder was *quite sufficient* for these tough bestial early humans'. Cf. Gale (1991) 417.

A. 10.861–2):⁴³ *Rhaebe, diu, res si qua diu mortalibus ulla est, | uiximus* ('Rhaebus, we have lived for a long time, if anything lasts long for mortals').

Vergil uses the word *mortalis* for animals but, when he does so, he is aware that this is a term which *carpe diem* poems use to describe the human condition.⁴⁴ This is what Heracles does in Euripides' *Alcestis* when he mentions 'all mortals' in the context of *carpe diem* (βροτοῖς ἅπασσι, line 782), and a character from a lost play directs his *carpe diem* advice to 'all mortals' (πᾶσιν δὲ θνητοῖς, *TrGF Aespota* 95.1 *apud* Ath. 8.336b–c).⁴⁵ As Vergil turns this description of the human condition into a description of cows and uses almost entirely human terms, the passage becomes detached from the surrounding text, a detachment that can be felt in its reception. Conte described this effect of allusion in his *Rhetoric of Imitation* thus: 'the foreign body remains distinct from, and hostile to, the coherent design of the whole work within which it "refuses" to be integrated'.⁴⁶ This refusal to be integrated characterises the excerpts of *carpe diem* in this chapter. Thus, the passage in the *Georgics* has the appearance of a lyric purple patch stitched onto the fabric of the *Georgics*; whether we think of Horace, *Odes* 2.14.1–4 here, which Richard Thomas speculates may have been influenced by Vergil, or about Mimnermus, *fr.* 1, we are reminded of lyric poetry, which bears little relation to cattle-breeding.

When Seneca takes the passage out of context and quotes it misleadingly, he gets away with it, because the passage is already detached from the rest of the text in the *Georgics*.⁴⁷ Seneca introduces the passage in *De breuitate uitae*, as if Vergil, half-lyric sage, half-prophet, were standing in front of him performing a song (9.2): *clamat ecce maximus uates et uelut diuino ore*

⁴³ Cf. Harrison (1991) *ad loc.* For the very similar case of *mortalis animas* referring to mice at Hor. *S.* 2.6.93–5, see Chapter 5.2. Vergil also uses the variation *mortalibus aegris* (e.g., A. 12.850 with Tarrant (2012) *ad loc.*).

⁴⁴ Cf. Thomas (1988) at Verg. *G.* 3.66, who calls these terms 'wholly human'.

⁴⁵ Also see Thgn. 1007, *GV* 1978.16, and the slightly different but still generalising Choerilus *SH* 335.1 (discussed in detail in Chapter 1.2), Amphis, *Ialemus fr.* 21.1, Lucr. 3.912–15, Petron. 34.10.

⁴⁶ Conte (1986) 88. Cf. Hardie (2012) 229–38.

⁴⁷ For Seneca's technique of taking Vergilian passages out of context, see Krauß (1957), Setaioli (1965), Tischer (2017).

instinctus salutare carmen canit ('look, the greatest poet shouts out and as if inspired with divine utterance he sings a saving song'). This is hardly a good characterisation of Vergil's voice, talking of cattle-breeding in the *Georgics*, but we will see throughout this chapter the prevalent association of the *carpe diem* motif with song and lyric: Seneca quotes a passage of text, but for him the passage is evocative of song and performance. Seneca invites us then to see Vergil as if he were present in front of us (*ecce*). And, perhaps appropriately, Seneca virtually lets us see Vergil's words presently performed on the stage when he uses the Vergilian expression *optimos uitae dies* ('life's best days') in a *carpe diem* section of one of his plays (*Phaed.* 450). His introduction of Vergil's line in *De breuitate uitae* also shows us how excerpts of *carpe diem* were commonly received: we will encounter throughout this chapter readers who admire the *carpe diem* motif as if it were the purest form of poetry and wisdom, even if it reappears in as base a context as cattle-breeding. This reception is part of the culture of excerpting; enduring admiration for the motif leads to further excerpting and so a cliché is created. Vergil's exhortation for constant renewal proves as true for poetic excerpts as it does for cows: *semper enim refice* ('yes, always renew them').⁴⁸

5.2 Plucking the Road, or Of Mice and Muses: Horace, *Sermones* 2.6

In Horace's *Sermones* 2.6, the *carpe diem* motif is again applied to animals, in this case mice. The rustic Cervius tells a fable of a town and a country mouse. Though the country mouse does his utmost to offer a good dinner to the town mouse during his visit, the latter is displeased with the rustic meal and uses the idea of *carpe diem* as an argument for preferring the luxurious life in the city to impoverished simplicity in the countryside (Hor. *S.* 2.6.90–7):

tandem urbanus ad hunc 'quid te iuuat' inquit, 'amice, (90)
praerupti nemoris patientem uiuere dorso?
uis tu homines urbemque feris praepondere siluis?

⁴⁸ Cf. J. Henderson (1996) 129–30 n.11 on Vergil's 'careful selection' of cows and poetry here.

carpe uiam, mihi crede, comes, terrestria quando
 mortalis animas uiuunt sortita neque ulla est
 aut magno aut paruo leti fuga: quo, bone, circa, (95)
 dum licet, in rebus iucundis uiue beatus,
 uiue memor, quam sis acui breuis.’

Finally, the town mouse said to him [i.e., the country mouse]: ‘How can it please you, my friend, to endure a life on the ridge of a rugged forest? Why don’t you prefer people and the town to the savage forests? Trust me, my friend, seize the way, since terrestrial beings live with mortal souls as their lot, and neither the great nor the small can escape death; therefore, my good fellow, while you may, live a happy life among pleasures; live and keep in mind how short-lived you are.’

There is something enticing about the presence of a passage on *carpe diem* already in the *Sermones*, before Horace made this one of the most important themes of his poetry in the *Odes*.⁴⁹ Indeed, *carpe uiam* in the passage from the *Sermones* already seems to look forward to the daring lyric expression *carpe diem* of *Odes* 1.11. Andrea Cucchiarelli speculates that this ode had already been written and published separately, but as there is no evidence for this it seems more likely that in this case the humorous usage of an expression precedes the serious one.⁵⁰ Wieland might have recognised the connection, as he included in his translation of the passage from the satire the phrase ‘so sei du weise’ (‘be wise’), which has no direct equivalent in the Latin of *Sermones* 2.6, but is an excerpt from the *carpe diem* ode, 1.11, where Horace writes *sapias* (‘be wise’).⁵¹ The similarity between the speech of the *urbanus mus* and *Odes* 1.11 is arguably not accidental. Indeed, I will argue that the section in *Sermones* 2.6 is poignantly different

⁴⁹ Horace has treated the theme in *Epod.* 13, published around the same time as *Sermones* 2 (see Chapter 2.1).

⁵⁰ Cucchiarelli (2001) 165 n.177. Cf. Commager (1962) 121, Harrison (2007b) 237. The expression *carpe uiam* would be reused by the Sibyl at Verg. *A.* 6.629 and several times by Ovid. A well-known example of an expression which first appears in a humorous context before it is re-used in a serious one is *inuitta, o regina, tuo de uertice cessi* at Cat. 66.39, adopted with slight changes at Verg. *A.* 6.460, on which see Conte (1986) 88–90. An example from Horace’s *Sermones* is the kitchen fire at 1.5.73–4, which Vergil may imitate in a more serious context in his description of the fires of Troy (*A.* 2.310–2), on which see Gowers (2012) 204–5.

⁵¹ Wieland (1813) 437. The usage of *sapias* at Ov. *Am.* 1.4.29 with McKeown (1987–) *ad loc.* suggests that this was a recognisable Horatian expression. Veyne (1967) 106 notes the usage of *sapias* at Pers. 5.167.

from its surroundings and sticks out as an excerpt of lyric poetry within the humble mouse tale. Horace's foray into lyric poetry risks crossing the generic boundaries of satire.⁵² On the following pages, I will analyse how the purple patch (cf. *Ars* 14–23) stands out among the surrounding clothes, or how the lyric *carpe diem* excerpt intrudes on the satirical fable of mice.⁵³

Numerous features of the town mouse's speech display a much loftier style than befits Horace's pedestrian muse, and show the mouse's aspiration to being *urbanus* in every sense.⁵⁴ Thus, commentators have long noted the rare tmesis of *quocirca* in line 95, the mannered *uiuunt sortita* instead of *sortiti sunt in uita*, and the elevated register of *letum*, which Horace elsewhere only uses in the *Odes*, as well as the high register of *aeuum*.⁵⁵ The last one is part of the expression *sis aevi breuis*, which deserves closer

⁵² I follow the important thoughts on generic play in *Sermones* 2.6 of Cucchiarelli (2001) 162–8 and Freudenburg (2006), who already described Horace as 'playing at lyric's boundaries'. On the fable in general, see, above all, Fraenkel (1957) 138–44, Brink (1965), Rudd (1966) 243–57, D. West (1974), Harrison (2013) 164–6; also Seel (1972), Barbieri (1976), Warmuth (1992) 119–25, Hopkins (1993), Leach (1993) 285–7, Fedeli (1994a) 289–97, Schmidt (1997) 56–73, Oliensis (1998) 46–51, and Knorr (2004) 207–14.

⁵³ In a satire that uniquely refers to itself as *carmen* (22), this is not the only foray into lyric. Earlier, Horace already began to sing a hymn (16–23), as has been analysed by Fraenkel (1957) 139–40, Cucchiarelli (2001) 165–6, and Freudenburg (2006). It might be added that this hymn, too, possesses the characteristics of an excerpt. When Horace excerpts lyric poetry in the *Odes*, he most notably does so with 'mottoes' taken from *incipits* under which poems were catalogued (Pasquali (1964) [1920] 9, Feeney (1993) 44, Cavarzere (1996)). Horace's hymn in *S.* 2.6 also begins with a Pindaric motto in line 17, *quid prius inlustrem saturis musaque pedestri?* (cf. *Pi. O.* 2.1–2, *fr.* 89a Maehler, *Hor. C.* 1.12.1–3 with Fraenkel (1957) 139–40). This 'pompous beginning' of a purple patch (*inceptis gravibus*, *Ars* 14) is soon contrasted with the cacophony of satiric interjections (on interjections, see Rudd (1966) 243–57, Thomas (2010)). A similar cacophonous return to satire will also be observed after the *carpe diem* excerpt.

⁵⁴ On *urbanitas*, see Ramage (1973) and, in particular, 77–86 on Horace.

⁵⁵ Orelli and Baiter (1850) *ad loc.* on *quo* [...] *circa*: 'tmesis rarissima'. See Fedeli (1994b) *ad loc.* on *uiuunt sortita*, and Kießling and Heinze (1961b) *ad loc.* on *letum*. Persius in his *Satires* tellingly uses *letum* only in another parodic passage on *carpe diem* (*Pers.* 5.153; quoted on page 217 in this chapter). On *aeuum*, see Ruckdeschel (1911) 37–8, Smereka (1935) 68, Brink (1982a) at *Hor. Epist.* 2.1.159, and, in particular, Mayer (1994) at *Hor. Epist.* 1.3.8 and (2012) at *Hor. C.* 1.12.45. It does not seem to be recognised that Housman excerpted Horace's *mortalis animas sortita* for his dedication of the Manilius edition to Moses Jackson, where he wrote *fataque sortitas non immortalia mentes* (at A. Burnett (1997) 289–91). The mock grandiloquence of Horace's words suits Housman's ironic and melancholic preface well, which he directs to the love of his youth, the 'scorner of these studies' (for Housman's preface, see Harrison (2002), and page 33 n.138 in the Introduction).

attention. Kießling and Heinze, here, see a translation of the Greek βραχύβιος, while the Homeric ὠκύμορος is also used in the context of *carpe diem* at *AP* 11.23 (= Antipater of Thessalonica 38 *GP*) and the epitaph *SGO* 05/01/62.4 (= *GV* 1364.4); but, arguably, Paul Lejay, who thinks of ἀλιγοχρόνιος, hits the mark.⁵⁶ Though Adam Gitner does not discuss this expression in his dissertation on Grecisms in Horace, his analysis of a different expression seems valuable for the present passage. Gitner says of Horace's periphrastic expression *seri studiorum* ('late learners') at *Sermones* 1.10.21, translating Greek ὀψιμαθεῖς, that 'it serves to draw attention to the translation as a translation, so that one feels the Greek moving beneath it'.⁵⁷ In *Sermones* 2.6, the *urbanus mus*, who misses a certain *je ne sais quoi* at the rustic dinner, is eager to show off his cosmopolitanism and *urbanitas*. His Grecism draws attention to this passage as a set piece of Greek-style lyric poetry. In this genre ἀλιγοχρόνιος indeed appears in a *carpe diem* poem (*Mimn. fr.* 5.5 *apud* Stob. 4.50.69 = Thgn. 1020).⁵⁸ Further, a Hellenistic *carpe diem* epigram ascribed to Plato ends on a very similar note to the little speech of Horace's mouse: σκέψαι τὴν ὄρην ὡς ἀλιγοχρόνιος ('consider how short-lived youth is', *AP* 5.79 = [Plato] 4 *FGE*). The town mouse seems to ask the country mouse to remember (97: *memor*) poetry of this kind as well as to remember the sentiment.⁵⁹ Indeed, Persius would in turn answer Horace's call and remember the passage: at *Satire* 5.153, he uses the Horatian expression *uiue memor leti* in a *carpe diem* context.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Kießling and Heinze (1961b) and Lejay (1966) [1911] *ad loc.* However, βραχύβιος is not attested in poetry, and ὠκύμορος is rendered by Horace as *cita mors* at *S.* 1.1.8, *C.* 2.16.29 with Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) *ad loc.* Landolfi (1995) 231 notes that Sallust uses *aeui brevis* in the first sentence of the *Bellum Iugurthinum* in a statement on the human condition. It is possible that this sentence influenced Horace, but alternatively the parallel may point to a shared interest of Sallust and Horace in archaisms and the like.

⁵⁷ Gitner (2012) 234–5. The link with ὀψιμαθεῖς had already been recognised by Porphyrio. Kießling and Heinze (1961b) at *Hor. S.* 1.1.33 note on *magni formica laboris* that a genitive of quality often substitutes Greek compound adjectives as at *Hor. C.* 1.36.13, 3.9.7. Cf. Muecke at *EO* ii.760 s.v. 'Lingua e stile' with further examples and references.

⁵⁸ Lejay (1966) [1911] *ad loc.*

⁵⁹ I owe this point to Thomas J. Nelson, who suggested to me that *memor* may function here as an intertextual marker.

⁶⁰ See Hooley (1997) 109–10, and page 217 in this chapter.

Moreover, Horace himself uses a comparable expression in one of his *carpe diem* poems. For in *Odes* 2.14, the Postumus ode, Horace describes Postumus as a ‘shortlived master’, *brevis dominus* (C. 2.14.24).⁶¹ When Kießling and Heinze say about this expression ‘noch kühner gesagt’ (‘an even bolder expression’), their note almost sounds like a German translation of Quintilian’s characterisation of Horace (*uerbis felicissime audax*; ‘fortuitously bold with his words’, *Inst.* 10.96).⁶² Indeed, such a *callida iunctura* formed *ex Graeco fonte* is characteristic of Horace’s project of writing Greek lyric in Latin (see Hor. *Ars* 45–71, discussed in Chapter 3.1 and 3.2). It is thus rather apt that Brink discerns a ‘sudden lyric touch’, when Horace uses the expression *aeui brevis* again in the *Epistles* in the context of *carpe diem* (*Epist.* 2.1.144).⁶³ In *Sermones* 2.6, however, the marked translation and the high register show that the town mouse’s speech is inserted here from a different language, a different genre, and a different dinner. Indeed, when a mouse uses the expression *aeui brevis*, one cannot but think of the mouse’s ‘short’ stature.⁶⁴ So much for the purple patch, but what about the surrounding clothing, the story of the mice?

While few conversation topics are more sympotic than *carpe diem*, fables on mice are the opposite of elegant dinner conversation.⁶⁵ Indeed, mice have certain characteristics that link them with small-scale writing such as fables and satire.⁶⁶ Thus, in the *Ars Poetica*, Horace criticises writers of epic, who promise too much and come up with too little, by referring to

⁶¹ Glossed as δεσπότης ὀλιγοχρόνιος by Orelli and Baiter (1850) *ad loc.*, an expression used at Lucian *Nigr.* 26, as Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) note *ad loc.* Also cf. the noun-adjective combination ὀλιγος χρόνος in the *carpe diem* poems Simon. *fr.* 20.10, *AP* 10.100 = Antiphanes 7 *GP*. In comparison, the antonym *longus* is a leitmotif of mortality in Horace (Davis (1991) 157–9).

⁶² Kießling and Heinze (1966) *ad loc.*

⁶³ Brink (1982a) *ad loc.* Already Porphyrio’s comment here paraphrases the *carpe diem* motif.

⁶⁴ *Ov. F.* 2.574 applies the adjective *brevis* to *mus*. Cf. Freudenburg (2021) at Hor. *S.* 2.6.97, who notes that a mouse’s life lasts only five to six months, and his note at 2.6.95 on *magno et paruo*.

⁶⁵ A case in point is *Ar. V.* 1181–5, where the boorish Philocleon is rebuked by his son for wishing to tell a fable of a mouse and a weasel at a symposium (‘Once there was a mouse and a weasel’).

⁶⁶ Cf. the *Batrachomyomachia*, adduced by Cucchiarelli (2001) 166 n.178.

a Greek proverb that involves a mouse (Hor. *Ars* 139): *parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* ('mountains are in labour and give birth to – a ridiculous mouse').⁶⁷ This poetic embarrassment, the tiny single-syllabic *mus* ending the hexameter, is contrasted with Homer, who gets epic right, perhaps by adding just one letter to *mus*: *dic mihi*, Musa, *uirum* ('tell me, Muse, of the man'; Hor. *Ars* 141). Rather than in epic, mice find their appropriate generic place in Cervius's *fabella* in *Sermones* 2.6, where the diminutive makes the fable look almost as small as its subject matter. The fable arises as a cognate of Horace's *Sermones* at the countryside dinner (2.6.71): *sermo oritur* ('a chat begins').⁶⁸ There is one other thing that links mice and satire. Horace describes the style of his satires in *Sermones* 2.6 with the oxymoron *Musa pedestris* (2.6.17; cf. Hor. *Ars* 95 *sermone pedestri*). And what could be better suited to a 'muse that goes on a foot' or is even 'crawling on the ground' (*sermones* [. . .] *repentes per humum*, *Epist.* 2.1.250–1) than mice, who are 'terrestrial beings' (*terrestria*, 2.6.93) and 'crawl' over the ground (*urbis auentes* | *moenia nocturni* *subrepere*; 'eager to creep under the walls of the town at night', 2.6.99–100)?⁶⁹ Indeed, ancient etymologies link *mus* with *humus*, the natural territory for Horace's satires, as he claims in the *Epistles*.⁷⁰ Yet Horace's pedestrian m(o)use most risks leaving the humble path when the talk turns to *carpe diem*.⁷¹ It does not come that far, though: the mice are soon to find out that they are too 'terrestrial' and that the danger of death can materialise for the 'small' much faster than for the 'great'. The excerpt is parodic and cannot be simply cut out and pasted in the *Odes*.

Few poets who appeal to the *carpe diem* motif really think that there is a genuine chance that actually 'tomorrow we die'. For the two mice, however, this does almost materialise, when they can

⁶⁷ Cf. Cucchiarelli (2001) 165–6, Calboli (2002). Phaedr. 4.24 adopts the proverb.

⁶⁸ Harrison (2013) 165, Freudenburg (2021) 229.

⁶⁹ On *Musa pedestris*, see Freudenburg (1993: 183–4; 2021: *ad loc.*), Cucchiarelli (2001) 57–66, Gowers (2005) 53, L. Morgan (2010) 334–45, and, in particular, Gowers (1993a) for an analysis of the journey to Brundisium at *Sermones* 1.5, which shows the 'walking Muse' in action.

⁷⁰ See Maltby (1991) s.v. 'mus' quoting Isidorus, *Etymologiae siue Origines* 12.3.1.

⁷¹ Though in the fable we have already seen high style pouring through, as epic diction is used in the description of the mice. See D. West (1974) 70 and Muecke (1993) at 2.6.97.

scarcely escape the Molossian dogs that break into their luxurious city dinner (2.6.110–15):

ille cubans gaudet mutata sorte bonisque (110)
 rebus agit laetum conuiuiam, cum subito ingens
 ualuarum strepitus lectis excussit utrumque.
 currere per totum pauidi conclaue magisque
 exanimis trepidare, simul domus alta Molossis
 personuit canibus. (115)

The country mouse was reclining and enjoyed his changed lot and played the guest delighting in all the good things, when suddenly loud dashing of the doors made them both tumble from their couches. Panicked, they ran through the whole room and they were even more terrified – more dead than alive – when the lofty house rang with the barking of Molossian dogs.

This scene quickly finds the mice's lofty ambitions cut short and sees them close to the ground, running on their feet again (*currere*).⁷² The scene also literalises the pretensions of the earlier lyric excerpt; there, the *urbanus* asserted that there is no 'flight from death' (*leti fuga*) but, once a danger of death materialises, he quickly forgets his sentiment and flees. Finally, the scene also lets us hear the last, barking sound of this satire (before the closing words of the country mouse): the Molossian dogs are exclusively perceived as a barking sound. Certainly, this is sufficient to restrain the ambitions of the country mouse, who looks for simple fare again instead of lavish symposia. But maybe the barking is a call to order in more than one sense. The barking dogs are probably an invention of Horace, which is neither present in Aesop's, nor Babrius', nor Phaedrus' version of the fable (Aesop 314 Hausrath and Hunger, Babrius 108, Phaedrus *fabulae nouae* 9 Postgate).⁷³ Moreover, the sound of barking dogs has been associated with the sharp sound of satire since Lucilius, who repeatedly portrays himself as a barking dog.⁷⁴ So possibly in *Sermones* 2.6,

⁷² Cf. Graverini (2011–12) 165–6 on how mice cannot reach the lofty regions of Horace's lyric, such as *C.* 2.20.

⁷³ For the reconstructed version of Phaedrus, see Holzberg (1991). Babrius 60 includes another mouse that voices a *carpe diem* sentiment; see page 57 n.60 in Chapter 1.

⁷⁴ See Lucilius' self-stylisation as a wild dog at *fr.* 2 M(arx) = 3–4 W(armington), *fr.* 377–80 M = 389–92 W, *fr.* 1095–6 M = 1000–1 W with Haß (2007) 90–1, Persius' characterisation of the sound of satire as *canina littera* at 1.109–10 with W. S. Anderson (1958) and Bramble (1974) 151–2 against Kibel (1990) *ad loc.*, and

which is ranging between low and high style and is in acute danger of leaning towards the latter – maybe here Lucilius' barking sound of satire calls not just the mice to order but also Horace the satirist. As it is not the time yet to turn to lyric, the chaotic canine cacophony offers an appropriately satirical ending, reminiscent of the similar scene that ended *Sermones* 1.2.⁷⁵ The country mouse happily lay on 'purple coverlets' (*purpurea ueste*, 2.6.106) at the town dinner until the barking frightened him. Yet, if anyone should know the danger of an unfitting purple patch it is, of course, Horace, and the Molossian guard dogs of genre make sure that he does not forget it.

5.3 Butchering Poetry: Trimalchio, Petronius' *Satyrical*, and Athenaeus

In the person of Trimalchio in Petronius' *Satyrical* we find another would-be-urbanus, who attempts to stage recitals of literary and not-so-literary works, which are supposed to show his sophistication.⁷⁶ In the following section, I will look at Trimalchio's epigrams on *carpe diem* and analyse how their aesthetics are shaped by cutting and fragmentation. As Trimalchio's poems can be compared to carefully (or perhaps not-so-carefully) cut-up portions of food, we can witness a debased version of the quotation culture of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*. But the comparison of texts with delicate bits of food links Trimalchio's epigrams not only with Athenaeus' fragmented quotations but also with over-seasoned rhetorical *sententiae*, such as the schools of rhetoric teach. An exploration of this rhetorical scope of Trimalchio's epigrams is the other focus of this section.

Towards the beginning of the meal, Trimalchio decides to serve some Opimian wine which he alleges is 100 years old. The

Horace's self-stylisation as a dog at *S.* 2.1.85, *Epod.* 6. Further sources for dog imagery can be found at, for example, Freudenburg (1993) 77–80, Cucchiarelli (2001) 127–9, L. C. Watson (2003) 251–6, Hawkins (2014). Cucchiarelli (2001) 162–8 notes the originality of the barking dogs in *S.* 2.6, but interprets them as an iambic voice from the *Epodes* in contrast to a satirical voice in one of several generic 'intersezioni' he discusses in the *Sermones* (152–68).

⁷⁵ Cf. Lejay (1966) [1911] at *S.* 2.6.114. Also see the barking ending at *Hor. S.* 2.1.85.

⁷⁶ For *urbanitas* as Trimalchio's aspiration, see *Petron.* 36.7, 39.6, 48.5, 52.7.

combined sight of the wine and a skeleton puppet makes Trimalchio think of human transience, a topic that occupies him throughout the dinner, and he expresses his thoughts in a *carpe diem* poem (Petron. 34.10):⁷⁷

‘eheu nos miseros, quam totus homuncio nil est!
sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet Orcus.
ergo uiuamus, dum licet esse bene.’

‘Poor us! The life of human creatures amounts to nothing! We’ll all end up like this, after Orcus has carried us off. So, let’s live it up while we may.’

The 100-year-old wine raises the expectation of a poem that emulates and surpasses Horace, who frequently links his *carpe diem* poems with vintage wines – though none as old as Trimalchio’s (see Chapter 2). Yet, where Horace masters most difficult Greek metres, Trimalchio falls short of elegiacs. For the metrical form of his poem is unusual: although there are parallels for a sequence of hexameters followed by a pentameter in inscriptions, it is surprising when encountered in a book.⁷⁸ The unusual metrical form makes the poem seem compressed; but, even though one pentameter line seems to be missing, there are enough *carpe diem* expressions for four lines crammed into three lines. The word *homuncio*, for example, bears some resemblance to *homullus*, which Lucretius uses in a similar context at *De rerum natura* 3.914;⁷⁹ *uiuere* with the pregnant sense of ‘enjoying life’ is used in this context by Catullus and Horace, among others, and so is *dum licet*.⁸⁰ Trimalchio crams all these well-known expressions into three lines. The result is a poem that seems almost cut and pasted.

⁷⁷ On death and dining at the *Cena Trimalchionis*, see Arrowsmith (1966), Grondona (1980), Gagliardi (1989), Herzog (1989), Dunbabin (1986: 194–5, *passim*; 2003: 132–7). For other instances of the *carpe diem* motif in Petronius, see 64.3 with Schmeling (2011) *ad loc.*, 99.1, 111.12 featuring an excerpt of Verg. *A.* 4.34, and 114.9.

⁷⁸ See Aldo Setaioli at Schmeling (2011) *ad loc.*, who cites *CLE* 1105, 1179, 1260, 1292. Cf. Setaioli (2011) 99–100.

⁷⁹ Aldo Setaioli at Schmeling (2011) *ad loc.*

⁸⁰ For *uiuere*, see Cat. 5.1, Hor. *S.* 2.6.96–7 and further sources at Aldo Setaioli at Schmeling (2011) *ad loc.* and Setaioli (2011) 106. Petronius uses *dum licet* again in the same context at 114.9 The expression is a regular feature of Horatian *carpe diem*: *C.* 2.11.16, 4.12.26, *S.* 2.6.96, *Epist.* 1.11.20. Cf. page 9 n.25 and n.28 in the Introduction for both expressions. The importance of the Horatian references here have been described by, for example, Cugusi (1967) 90, Gagliardi (1989) 14 n.6, Stucchi (2002) 215–16, and recently stressed again by Setaioli (2011) 101.

Gregson Davis says that 'it is this bare skeleton [*sc.* of the Horatian *carpe diem* ode] that Petronius, a demonstrably percipient reader of Horace, parodies'.⁸¹ Indeed, I described above how Horace, *Odes* 1.11 already seems to play with its form, as the exhortation to 'cut back long-term hopes' (*spatio breui | spem longam reseces*) is voiced in a poem that, extraordinarily in the *Odes*, is wider than it is long and thus seems itself pruned or cut back (see pages 131–5 in Chapter 3). Trimalchio's epigram goes further still; it has the appearance of a lyric excerpt, something cut out and cut back from familiar motifs, a pseudo-quotation that attempts to evoke a lyric atmosphere, albeit with one missing line.⁸² A comparable case is perhaps Simonides' *carpe diem* poem that adapts Homer's image of the generations of leaves (*fr.* 19 + 20; also see pages 113–16 and 128–30 in Chapter 3); in Stobaeus, Simonides' elegy begins with a pentameter, so that a preceding hexameter seems to have been cut out (Stob. 4.34.28). Otherwise, the poem seemed complete, until papyrus evidence revealed that Stobaeus had additionally omitted a central section and the ending in order to create a condensed *carpe diem* poem (*P.Oxy.* 3965 *fr.* 26).⁸³ This condensed poem fits well into the section title of Stobaeus, περὶ τοῦ βίου ὄτι βραχύς ('On the brevity of life'). Trimalchio's three lines are no less condensed, but the difference is that Stobaeus' (or his intermediary's) surgical knife fooled us for centuries: it created a neat little poem, and without the papyrus evidence no one would have ever suspected that a central section is missing. Trimalchio's butchering is rather different from Stobaeus' surgical approach, and his poem has never found much favour.

⁸¹ Davis (1991) 147, who also speaks of a 'witty Petronian travesty' of a 'Horatian exemplar'. For a revival of Horace's poetry under Nero, see Mayer (1982).

⁸² Cf. Bakhtin (1981) 70 on the *Cena Cypriani*, a parodic text from late antiquity or the Middle Ages, in which 'the entire Bible, the entire Gospel was as it were cut up into little scraps, and these scraps were then arranged in such a way that a picture emerged of a grand feast at which all the personages of sacred history from Adam and Eve to Christ and his Apostles eat, drink and make merry'.

⁸³ This is how Bowie (2010) 599–601 describes Stobaeus' technique of cutting here, whose view I follow. *Aliter* Sider (1996) 269, who argues that Stobaeus might have excerpted two passages from Simonides' poem, one under the lemma Σιμωνιδου, the other one under the lemma ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ. Once the second lemma got lost, the two excerpts would have been combined in the manuscript tradition. On excerpting and Stobaeus, see Konstan (2011). For the aesthetics of cutting lyric in Stobaeus, see Hose (2008) 304–5.

The method, however, is the same – both readers prune poetry in order to create a highly condensed *carpe diem* piece.

Trimalchio, of course, would protest against my characterisation of his mediocre cutting skills. For if anyone truly cares about the art of cutting it is Trimalchio. At his dinner, it is not only in the realms of poetry that cutting is treated as an art and poems become excerpts (*carpere*), but cutting meat is also a form of art for Trimalchio. Thus, at one point a slave dressed as the Homeric hero Ajax attacks a boiled calf as if he is mad, cuts it, and presents the pieces to the guests (Petron. 59). This spectacle of cutting is closely connected with Trimalchio butchering Homer. For Trimalchio introduces this Ajax while he summarises Homer's *Iliad* and creates arguably the worst epitome of this epic: Agamemnon kidnaps Helen, who is the sister of Diomedes and Ganymedes and so on and so forth. Cutting meat and poetry are strongly entwined; the literary digest and the digestible are connected. Elsewhere, cutting up food is a spectacle not unlike gladiatorial games (Petron. 36.6):⁸⁴ '*Carpe*' [*sc.* Trimalchio] *inquit. processit statim scissor et ad symphoniam gesticulatus ita lacerauit obsonium, ut putares essedarium hydraule cantante pugnare* ("Cut", said Trimalchio. Immediately the meat-cutter came forth and cut the dish, moving in rhythm to the music; you would have thought that a gladiator in a chariot was fighting to the sound of the water organ'). Trimalchio highlights the importance of cutting with an exhortation that puns on the name of the carver (*Carpus*) and the exhortation to cut (*carpe!*) (Petron. 36.7): '*Carpe, Carpe*'. Even before the narrator learns the meaning of the pun, he suspects that here again Trimalchio aspires to *urbanitas* (Petron. 36.7): *ego suspicatus ad aliquam urbanitatem totiens iteratam uocem pertinere* ('I suspected that the frequent repetition of the word aimed at some sort of urbane witticism').

Poems and meat-cutting alike rely on staged repetitions, but a gag that depends on the repetition of one word becomes stale when the whole gag is repeated all over again and old dinner

⁸⁴ See Rosati (1999) [1983] 88. Cf. Juv. 5.120–4 with Braund (1996) *ad loc.* Just as Roman writers increasingly learn their trait in the rhetorical schools, the meat-carver is also taught by a *magister* (Juv. 5.122), or he is the *discipulus* of a *doctor* (Juv. 11.137). Also see Schnurbusch (2011) 103–4 on the meat-carver in Rome. For *Carpus* as the name of one of Nero's cutters, see Grimal (1941). For food and literature in Rome, see Gowers (1993b).

guests know it all too well (Petron. 36.8). I can only tentatively suggest that the parallels between the meat-cutting incident and Trimalchio's poems may go further still. Though Horace's expression 'carpe diem' might not have had quite the proverbial meaning in Petronius' time that it would later acquire in English, Ovid, as well as Petronius' probable contemporary Persius, used *carpere* in a *carpe diem* context (Ov. *Ars* 3.79; Pers. 5.151). Furthermore, this chapter has shown two instances in Vergil and Horace where *carpo* already expresses urgency and enjoyment in exhortations of *carpe diem*, before the *Odes* were written. Thus, it is possible that in a dinner that relies as heavily on the idea of *carpe diem* as Trimalchio's, the repeated *Carpe, Carpe!* also points to the idea of enjoyment. At any rate, Trimalchio's dinner indulges in excerpts: both poems and meat are more or less artfully cut up and the excerpt becomes a spectacle. Trimalchio's poems were in turn also excerpted and collected in the *Florilegium Gallicum*.⁸⁵ There, his little *carpe diem* poem received the moralising heading *Quod uiuendum sit bene dum licet* ('Why we must live it up while we may'). No doubt, Trimalchio would have been pleased. Once more a purple passage seems to call for its future excerption.

Aesthetics of excerpting, of 'sampling' older culture, may also help to explain what is going on with the peculiar wine Trimalchio serves. Its label praises it as 100-year-old Opimian (*Falernum Opimianum annorum centum*; Petron. 34.6) and it inspires Trimalchio to his thoughts on *carpe diem*. In an ingenious article, Barry Baldwin suggested that Trimalchio's faux pas in this scene consists of serving a wine so old that it was only used as a bitter by his time.⁸⁶ Thus, Pliny tells us that by his time Opimian was reduced to a thick liquid, with which younger wines were spiced (*Nat.* 14.55). When Trimalchio serves this wine at his dinner and responds to it with his *carpe diem*

⁸⁵ On the *Florilegium Gallicum*, see the text of Brandis and Ehlers (1974), and the notes of Ullman (1930) and Reeve (1983). For florilegia and their relation to anthologies, see Chadwick (1969).

⁸⁶ Baldwin (1967). This is more convincing than the theory of Bicknell (1968), who argues that the wine is a forgery, since wines from 121 BC did not mention their provenance on the label, according to Pliny *Nat.* 14.94. Pliny, however, is wrong, as *CIL* i² 2929 (= Rigato and Mongardi (2016) 108, no. 1) shows, a label of a Falemian wine from 160 BC (also mentioned by Cic. *Brut.* 287). Apparently this wine label is not known to Tchernia (1986), in the seminal account of wine in Rome. Thus, Tchernia's *terminus ante quam* for the appearance of 'grand crus' in Rome and provenances on wine labels is set not early enough.

poetry, he seems to act in the tradition of Horace (see Chapter 2), but the samples of the past he serves, whether wine or poetry, are too condensed and leave a stale taste in his guests' mouths.⁸⁷

Literature as over-spiced dish, pastiche of repeated and all-too-well-known motifs – this is something that is not only an important theme of Trimalchio's poems but also of the *Satyrica* as a whole and Neronian literature in general.⁸⁸ At some point, Petronius even alludes to Horace's purple patch (Petron. 118.5).⁸⁹ In the opening of the novel as it has been handed down, Encolpius blames the schools of rhetoric for this type of literature (Petron. 1–5). Gian Biagio Conte in *The Hidden Author* says of this section: 'In Petronius' eyes the great myths of literature have become simply patterns, forms of expression, collections of memorable gestures.'⁹⁰ This rhetorical approach to literature also characterises Trimalchio's poems, which treat *carpe diem* as such a pattern.⁹¹ It is thus not surprising that 'Encolpius' image of clichéd *sententiae* as "honey-balls of phrases, every word and act sprinkled with poppy-seed and sesame" (1.15) gets served up by [...] Trimalchio'⁹² (31.10). Trimalchio's poems are all about *loci communes* and rhetorical imitation.

In his *Rhetoric of Imitation*, Conte distinguishes between two different types of allusion, both linked to rhetorical devices: 'integrative allusions', which can be compared to metaphors and harmonise the voices of two poets, and 'reflective allusions', which can be compared to similes and contrast the voices of two poets.⁹³ Earlier in this chapter, I showed how Vergil's *carpe diem* for cows

⁸⁷ Perhaps a misguided attempt to offer *aliquid decoctius* (Pers. 1.25 with Gowers (1994))? Cf. Rimell (2002) 185–7.

⁸⁸ For the *Satyrica* as a treatment of Neronian culture, whatever its creation date may be, see Vout (2009). For the *Satyrica* as a parody of Greek and Latin literature, see Conte (1996), Connors (1998), and, more recently, Panayotakis (2009). For Trimalchio and 'uses of literacy', see Horsfall (1989a), and, more pertinently, (1989b) 197–200.

⁸⁹ Noted by Brink (1971a) 96. Brink also points to Quint. *Inst.* 8.5.28, which mentions the purple patch. For the purple patch in late antiquity, see Pelttari (2016).

⁹⁰ Conte (1996) 47. The entire second chapter of Conte's book is relevant for the present discussion.

⁹¹ Already Holzberg (1998) in his review of Conte (1996) noted that we could also apply Conte's findings to Trimalchio's literary output.

⁹² Rimell (2007) 119. Also see Rimell (2002) 132 and Kißel (1978) 312–13 on rhetorical over-spicing.

⁹³ Conte (1986) 52–69.

in *Georgics* 3 is an example of a reflective allusion: the allusion to lyric poetry is not integrated in its present context of cattle-breeding and feels detached. Through the analysis of Trimalchio's poetry, this assessment of excerpts can be further modified. The lyric scraps that are inserted in the texts of this chapter feel detached, are treated as quotations, but are often not specific allusions to a single source. Thus, they do not fit easily into the categories that Gian Biagio Conte and Richard Thomas introduce in their studies of ancient allusion.⁹⁴ As the excerpts of *carpe diem* evoke purple passages of a whole genre of poetry and can be adduced in various contexts, I propose to compare them to yet another rhetorical figure: the *exemplum*. Like *exempla*, Trimalchio's *carpe diem* excerpts are recasts of old models, rooted in rhetoric and attempting to convey the paradigms and *auctoritas* of old wisdom, when occasions such as the serving of old wine require a literary response.

The epigram of Trimalchio that has concerned us so far is not the only one that seems incomplete and patched together. When an acrobat falls down during his performance and injures Trimalchio slightly, he marks this event with another epigram (Petron. 55.3):

'quod non expectes, ex transverso fit, [. . .]
 et supra nos Fortuna negotia curat.
 quare da nobis uina Falerna, puer'.

'What you don't expect hits you from the other side, . . . and above us
 Fortune controls our affairs. So bring us Falernian wine, slave.'

The lines do not scan. Though this can be solved with Heinsius' *ubique* | *nostra* filling the gap at lines 1–2, emendation is probably unnecessary, and in this one point my text differs from Müller's Teubner edition. As Aldo Setaioli discussed in detail, the failing arguably derives from the improvised nature of the poem: Trimalchio could not know that the acrobat falls, so that he has to improvise his composition and fails.⁹⁵ Inspired by the sudden *fall* of

⁹⁴ Conte (1986; with the arguments recently revisited in 2017), Thomas (1986). Cf. D. P. Fowler (1997), Hinds (1998).

⁹⁵ Setaioli (2011) 109–10 with further sources at 109 n.104 and 110 n.105. The opinion that the metrical shortcomings of the poem are intended by Petronius goes back to Walsh (1970) 128; yet, recent arguments in favour of an engineered incident can be found at Rimell (2002) 191–4, Schwindt (2004a); also see Huxley (1970), Woodall (1971), Slater (1990) 161 n.11. Yeh (2007) 95–7 argues that the poems at Petron. 34 and 55 form one single poem. I am

the acrobat, the poem presents quite literally *oc-cas*-ional poetry, and the falling artist already foreshadows Trimalchio's failing artistry.⁹⁶ But besides its obvious failure and its improvised nature, these verses again point to the status of Trimalchio's poetry as excerpts that are cut up and pieced together. The one line Trimalchio gets right is *quare da nobis uina Falerna, puer* ('so bring us Falernian wine, slave'). It is telling that this line does not have a direct relation to the occasion, but was probably a line Trimalchio always had in store, so that he could add it to various poems. This is supported by the fact that Trimalchio uses variations of this command in prose at Petronius 34.7, *quare tangomenas faciamus*, and Petronius 73.6, *itaque tangomenas faciamus* ('so let's do some deep drinking'). Such a command is, of course, extremely common in sympotic poetry.⁹⁷

Trimalchio is not the only symposiast who chops up lyric. The effect of reading Trimalchio's parodic lyric scraps is similar to that of reading the fragments of early Greek lyric on the *carpe diem* theme. The similarity may not be accidental. Of course, I am not suggesting that authors such as Petronius only knew fragments of early Greek poetry. Nor am I implying that the quality of all these poems is similar. Rather, I am saying that early Greek poetry came to be treated as prime material for excerpts, which could be quoted at fitting occasions. This is, for example, what happens in Athenaeus. In similar fashion to Trimalchio, the Deipnosophist Ulpian also exhorts a slave to bring more drinks and he does so with a literary excerpt, though here one from Middle Comedy rather than lyric (Ath. 10.426b quoting Xenarchus *Twins fr.* 3.1): $\pi\acute{\iota}\mu\pi\lambda\alpha$ $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\iota$, $\sigma\omicron\iota$ δ' $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega$ $\delta\acute{\omega}\sigma\omega$ $\pi\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ ('fill my cup and I'll return the favour'). Perhaps this literary allusiveness even in the most pedestrian conversation is something Trimalchio also aspires to with the riddling phrase *quare tangomenas faciamus* ('so let's

unconvinced. For the poem as a 'perversion' of Horace's *carpe diem*, see Vogt-Spira (2002) 203–4.

⁹⁶ On the pun of *casus* and more words related to 'falling' in this section, see Connors (1998) 53, Schwindt (2004a). For similarities with the falling tapestries at the *Cena Nasidieni* at Hor. S. 2.8, see Schmeling (2011) at Petron. 54.1, 55.2. At the *Cena Nasidieni*, the diners also respond to the incident with platitudes on the nature of fate (S. 2.8.61–74).

⁹⁷ For example, Alc. *fr.* 346.4–6, Anacr. *fr.* 356, *Anacreont.* 48.8, Hor. *Epod.* 9.33–6, C. 1.9.5–12. For further commands, see Hutchinson (2016) 269, no. 123.

do some deep drinking'), which may or may not be an allusion to Alcaeus. In Athenaeus, the Deipnosophists heap up literary excerpts, which, as Christian Jacob has analysed, are as carefully prepared as the food at the dinner: food and texts alike are artfully cut up and rearranged into delicate little portions.⁹⁸ When we read early Greek lyric, we often read it as fragments through Athenaeus' perspective. This sympotic filter is similar to the filter of Trimalchio, as fragmentary texts interact with sympotic activity. At one point, for example, the Deipnosophist Democritus first drinks and then quotes a long list of texts that show how Alcaeus is drinking in every season (ταῦτ' εἰπὼν ὁ Δημόκριτος καὶ πιῶν ἔφη; 'Democritus finished his point, drank and said', 10.429f). This list also includes Alcaeus *fr.* 335 at Athenaeus 10.430c:

Οὐ χρῆ κάκοισι θῦμον ἐπιτρέπην.
 προκόψομεν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀσάμενοι,
 ὦ Βύκχι, φάρμακον δ' ἄριστον
 οἶνον ἐνεικαμένους μεθύσθην

We must not surrender our hearts to misfortunes for we won't achieve anything if we are troubled, Bycchis. The best medicine is to get wine and get drunk.

As it is handed down, the text quickly proceeds from the condition of misery in human life to the exhortation to drink, just as Trimalchio's epigrams do. Again, this is not to say that Alcaeus and Trimalchio are two poets of comparable quality. Rather, it shows how the imperial symposium acts as the filter through which we look at *carpe diem* poems as excerpts, whether they are Alcaeus' or Trimalchio's. The phenotype of the poetry at the two very different symposia is comparable, as they result from cutting lyric up to smallest excerpts that resemble little delicacies. Readers have quite literally *shaped* the texts they received; we look at the *carpe diem* motif of early Greek lyric, filtered through Athenaeus, as a sequence of similar gnomic expressions, which can be cut up and heaped up in a similar way to Trimalchio's epigrams (see Ath. 8.335d–336f, 10.430a–d). The fragmentation

⁹⁸ Jacob (2004) 167: 'les extraits de textes, comme les plats cuisinés, participent du même processus de préparation et de présentation, entre l'art et la technique, par découpage, conditionnement, assemblage, et assaisonnement du matières premières, naturelles ou linguistiques'. Cf. Jacob (2000) 104–10, J. König (2012) 94–106.

of *carpe diem*, the thematic arrangement of these fragments, and their treatment as rhetorical patterns create excerpted objects, which are commonly known and can be inserted just about anywhere. In the next section, I will turn to an excerpt that appears in most unusual surroundings.

5.4 Plucking Flowers: Naevolus in Juvenal 9

Once more, Juvenal pumps up the volume.⁹⁹ Already in *Satire 1*, he professes that he has received a glut of rhetorical education and has *exempla* and purple passages at his fingertips (Juv. 1.7–14).¹⁰⁰ It is thus hardly surprising that in Juvenal, too, we can identify a rhetorical re-patching of a lyric purple passage. In his ninth satire, Naevolus, a bisexual male prostitute, struggles with his impotence, his profession, and his poverty (all problems that are somewhat intertwined). After some lengthy complaints from Naevolus, his interlocutor advises him to live a good life (Juv. 9.118–23):

uiuendum recte, cum propter plurima, tum est his
 [idcirco ut possis linguam contemnere serui]
 praecipue causis, ut linguas mancipiorum (120)
 contemnas; nam lingua mali pars pessima serui.
 [deterior tamen hic qui liber non erit illis
 quorum animas et farre suo custodit et aere.]

119 post 118 ponunt PA, post 123 Φ, om. Vat. Ottob. 2885, Vat. Pal. 1700, del. Pithoeus **122–3** del. Pinzger

You must live a proper live for many reasons [for that reason so you can ignore the tongue of your slave] but chiefly because of this, namely that you may ignore the tongues of your slaves. For the tongue is the worst part of a bad slave. [Still worse off is the man who will not be free from those he keeps up with his bread and money.]

The gist of the narrator's advice is the recommendation of a proper lifestyle, *uiuendum recte* (119). As has regularly been noted, the

⁹⁹ The expression is taken from J. Henderson (1996). The entire article on Juvenal's treatment of rhetorical set-pieces is relevant for the present discussion.

¹⁰⁰ See J. Henderson (1996). Juv. 1.7–14 seems to engage with Horace's purple patch at *Ars* 14–23 (Brink (1971a) *ad loc.*).

advice seems to come straight from Horace, who used this expression a number of times.¹⁰¹ Naevolus, however, finds that the Horatian commonplace is too trite to offer useful advice,¹⁰² and he does not understand how it can help him, when his time of youth is quickly passing by (Juv. 9.124–9):¹⁰³

‘utile consilium modo, sed commune, dedisti.
nunc mihi quid suades post damnum temporis et spes (125)
deceptas? festinat enim decurrere uelox
flosculus angustae miseraeque breuissima uitae
portio; dum bibimus, dum sarta, unguenta, puellas
poscimus, obrepat non intellecta senectus.’

126–7 uelox . . . breuissima *del. Ruperti*

‘You’ve just given me some good advice, but it’s a bit trite. Can you tell me what to do now after my time has been wasted and my hopes deceived? The fleeting flower, you know, the shortest portion of our brief and miserable life, hurries to run its course; while we are drinking, while we are asking for garlands, perfumes, and girls, old age stealthily creeps up.

This passage contains a textual problem in lines 126–127. The text seems to offer an odd mixture of metaphors, which involves the description of a flower as ‘running’. Various solutions have been proposed. Wakefield, for instance, places a comma before *uelox flosculus*, so that it stands in apposition to *breuissima portio angustae miseraeque uitae*.¹⁰⁴ Housman, too, puts *uelox flosculus* into apposition by placing it within commas, and Courtney recommends this in his commentary.¹⁰⁵ This solution disentangles the mixed metaphor and neatly makes *portio uitae* the subject of

¹⁰¹ Bellandi (2021) *ad loc.* discusses the Horatian flavour of the expression in detail (Hor. C. 2.20.1, *Epist.* 1.2.41, 2.2.213) and offers a rich bibliography.

¹⁰² There is an issue with interpolations at Juv. 9.118–23, as lines 120–1 are a repetition of line 119. Yet, the expression *uiuendum recte* should be retained, as this represents the trite advice Naevolus criticises in his answer (*utile consilium* [. . .] *sed commune*; see Bellandi (2021) at line 124). Willis (1997) goes too far in deleting lines 118–23 in total (following Ribbeck (1865) 112–13). Sensible solutions can be found in Clausen (1959) (deletion of lines 120–3) and Clausen (1992) (deletion of lines 119 and 122–3, printed above). The discussion of Courtney (1980a) *ad loc.* is very valuable (also Courtney (1975) 149–50).

¹⁰³ Clausen (1992) does not mention Ruperti’s claim of an interpolation in his apparatus. I add this here.

¹⁰⁴ Wakefield (1789–95) v.153.

¹⁰⁵ Housman (1931), Courtney (1980a) *ad loc.*, whereas Clausen (1992), Knoche (1950), and L. Friedländer (1895) do not use any punctuation within the sentence.

festinat, while the apposition *uelox flosculus* offers an image of comparison. But does this really solve all issues? Susanna Braund points out that *uelox*, the attribute of *flosculus*, signifies speed and thus goes rather well with the verb *festinat decurrere*. Moreover, she argues that *portio uitae* is no less bold a choice as the subject of a verb of running, so that we have to accept the metaphorical language anyway.¹⁰⁶ Subsequently, Braund opts for a different solution in her Loeb text and places a comma after *flosculus*, effectively putting *angustae miseraeque breuissima uitae portio* in apposition. She renders the sentence, then, thus: ‘The fleeting blossom, you know, the briefest part of our limited and unhappy life, is speeding to an end.’¹⁰⁷ This seems satisfactory (I have adopted Braund’s solution in my translation above). But a more radical solution has also been suggested: Ruperti argued for a deletion from *uelox* to *breuissima*, which Nisbet applauded and Willis printed.¹⁰⁸ Certainly this solves the problems with the odd word order and deletes one of the metaphors, so that the remaining one appears rather clear:¹⁰⁹ *festinat enim decurrere uitae portio* (‘a portion of our life hurries to run its course’). Essentially the problem comes down to the *Gretchenfrage* of Juvenalian textual criticism: how much is interpolated? Here is not the place to repeat the arguments of this hotly contested debate,¹¹⁰ but rather I wish to show that in this passage the question of interpolation is closely linked to the poetics of *carpe diem*.

Naevolus’ first reaction to the interlocutor’s advice, according to which he should live a good life, is the complaint that this advice may be good but is too ‘general’ or ‘trite’ (*commune*; Juv. 9.124). Ironically, the generic *carpe diem* piece that follows is even more trite than anything the interlocutor had mentioned before. This is, of course, a technique Juvenal uses elsewhere in the satire, when

¹⁰⁶ Braund (1988) 154 n.122. Is the last argument fully convincing? The metaphor of life as a run or torch run is common enough, and Sen. *Dial.* 10.8.5 has *uita festinat*, Sen. *Her. F.* 179 has *properat cursu uita citato*.

¹⁰⁷ Braund (2004) 360. ¹⁰⁸ Ruperti (1818), Nisbet (1962) 236, Willis (1997).

¹⁰⁹ As Braund (1988) 133–4 notes, the usage of diminutives is characteristic for Naevolus, whose own name is a diminutive. This may make the deletion of *flosculus* undesirable. Bellandi (2021) *ad loc.* now argues strongly against deletion and says that mixed metaphors are not uncommon in Juvenal.

¹¹⁰ See Ribbeck (1865), Housman (1931) xxxi–xxxvi, Nisbet (1962) 233–6, Reeve (1970), Högg (1971), Courtney (1975), Willis (1989; and the preface of his Teubner (1997)).

Naevolus displays the same self-defeating rhetoric.¹¹¹ Naevolus thus already flags up the triteness of his statement beforehand, and the heaped-up images of *carpe diem* strengthen the appearance of these lines as an excerpt, the half-quotation of a half-educated gigolo.¹¹² Indeed, the beginning of the satire characterises Naevolus as a formerly ‘elegant dinner guest’ (*conuiuia facetus*), whose witticisms full of *urbanitas* were ‘bred within the city limits’ (Juv. 9.9–11).¹¹³ Naevolus’ little *carpe diem* piece would befit such conversation at a dinner, just as Horace’s mouse and Petronius’ Trimalchio attempted to show their *urbanitas* through the *carpe diem* motif at dinner. Thus, Braund points to Trimalchio’s speech in Petronius *Satyrica* 34.10 as a parallel for similar ‘pretentious and fatuous utterances’ on *carpe diem*.¹¹⁴ Possibly even closer in genre is a passage from Persius (5.151–3).¹¹⁵

indulge genio, carpamus dulcia, nostrum est
quod uiuis, cinis et manes et fabula fies,
uiue memor leti, fugit hora, hoc quod loquor inde est.

Enjoy yourself, let’s seize our pleasures, just our life is ours; you’ll be dust and shades, a mere story. Live and keep in mind that you are mortal. The hour is fleeting – even the time that I’m speaking right now.

The rapid asyndetic style is similar to the passage in Juvenal, and when some commentators find fault with Horace for mixing upperworld and underworld concepts in saying at *Odes* 4.7.16 *puluis et umbra sumus* (‘we are dust and shades’), Persius here easily tops this with three metaphors, saying: *cinis et manes et fabula fies* (‘you’ll be dust and shades, a mere story’).¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ See Juv. 9.96–7 with Braund (1988) 152, where Naevolus complains about his patron’s lack of trust and in the same instance reveals his patron’s secrets (note the counterfactual subjunctive): *qui modo secretum commiserat, ardet et odit, | tamquam prodiderim quicquid scio*.

¹¹² Braund (1988) 154 compares the other literary allusions at Juv. 9.37, 9.64–5, and 9.69, and calls the present one ‘the most marked’.

¹¹³ On these lines, see Bellandi (2008). ¹¹⁴ Braund (1988) 154 n.123.

¹¹⁵ Text: Clausen (1992).

¹¹⁶ Thomas (2011) at Hor. *C.* 4.7.16 calls the mixing of upper- (*puluis*) and underworld (*umbra*) concepts an ‘oddity’ and regards Soph. *El.* 1158–9 as the only parallel. Yet, Pers. 5.152 may not be too dissimilar, as Kibel (1990) *ad loc.* notes. For Persius’ general indebtedness to Horace, see, for example, Hooley (1997). Unlike Thomas, Ausonius liked the Horatian expression and used it at *Epitaphia heroum* 17.2 Green, as Green (1991) notes *ad loc.*

Naevolus' mixture of metaphors tops this yet again. The dialogic nature of Persius' fifth *Satire* may have further contributed to the attractiveness of this passage for the dialogic *Satire* 9, a form that is exceptional in Juvenal, but much less so in Persius.¹¹⁷

In Naevolus' speech, some ideas that may remind us in particular of Horace are crudely crammed together in a few lines voiced by a bisexual gigolo, who is complaining about the brief time of sexual potency before pale impotence approaches with *aequo uel forsitan inaequo pede*.¹¹⁸ Yet, though we should understand Naevolus' fleeting youth primarily as the fleeting youth of his *membrum*, this is not explicit in the text (just as in Vergil, *Georgics* 3.63–71, the *carpe diem* passage treats the fertility of cattle in rather oblique terms); the *carpe diem* passage is demarcated and self-contained and one could – if one so wished – take it out of context and quote it, in the spirit of Seneca and Johnson, with pathos at the dinner table.¹¹⁹ In fact, it is not even necessary to imagine such fictional situations (*non est cantandum, res uera agitur!*), for Ausonius actually did this very thing and quoted Naevolus' speech at *Epigrams* 14.1–3:¹²⁰

Dicebam tibi, 'Galla, senescimus: effugit aetas.
utere uere tuo; casta puella anus est.'
spreuisti, *obrepisit non intellecta senectus*

I used to tell you: 'Galla, we are growing old. Time flies. Enjoy your youth. A chaste girl is an old woman.' You turned me down. *Old age has stealthily crept up.*

¹¹⁷ Noted by Hight (1954) 274. Also see Braund (1988) 130.

¹¹⁸ Among the categories of Juvenal's humour that Schmitz (2000) offers, this probably fits best into 'imitation and parody' at 169–207. Then again, if it were possible to put humour systematically into four categories, thirteen sub-categories, twenty-six sub-sub-categories, and fourteen sub-sub-sub-categories, as Schmitz does, German humour would probably be 'more of a thing'. On parody in Juvenal, also see Lelièvre (1958). For the specific Horatian allusions, see Bellandi 2009 [1974] 479 and 479 n.16, Braund (1988) 154 n.122, Keane (2015) 111 and 111 n.43.

¹¹⁹ One should remember that failing potency is the issue that Naevolus first mentions as the cause for his misery at Juv. 9.32–7. The interlocutor also clearly understands the *carpe diem* passage as referring to potency, since his following advice attempts to offer a remedy for this (Juv. 9.134/134A): *tu tantum erucis inprime dentem*. Despite the grave textual issues in these lines, the reference to an aphrodisiac is quite clear. For impotence and *carpe diem*, also see AP 10.100 (= Antiphanes 7 GP) and 11.30 (= Philodemus 19 Sider).

¹²⁰ I take the numeration and text from Green (1999).

The last words of line 3 adopt Naevolus' *obrepit non intellecta senectus* ('old age stealthily creeps up'), as Robert Colton has noted.¹²¹ Yet, the setting in a poem of persuasion of love in the tradition of *AP* 5.21 (Rufinus) is much more respectable than Naevolus' professional concerns about his waning sexual powers.¹²² In a way, Ausonius pre-emptively responded to Gilbert Highet's rather naïve wish that the 'beautiful poetry of 9.126–9 is worthy of a better setting, and once more shows the peculiar character of Juvenal, who, like Swift, had a soft heart inside his armour of cynicism'.¹²³ Highet here fell for the purple splendour of one of Juvenal's rhetorical set-pieces. This is a typical technique of Juvenal: pumping up the volume by throwing purple passages and excerpts into strange surroundings. This is also what he does, for example, in *Satire* 3, when he throws the description of a cave, a set-piece promised in *Satire* 1, into the gutter of Rome.¹²⁴ Such rhetorical set-pieces are isolated textual objects, purple patches, which can be cut. Philip Hardie has described how certain allusions to locks of hair become pluckable textual objects in their own right.¹²⁵ In *Satire* 9, *flosculus*, the Juvenalian term suspected of interpolation, is ironically also a 'rhetorical ornament' (= *flosculus*), plucked from lyric poetry, though it is not entirely certain who plucked it. What we do know is that this flower is plucked from Horace, and, quite appropriately for a short excerpt, it is made smaller through a diminutive: *Odes* 2.3.13–14, *nimum brevis | flores amoenae [. . .] rosae* ('the all too *brief bloom* of the lovely rose').¹²⁶

As an excerpt, a lyric set-piece in elevated tone, these are not truly Naevolus' words. This brings us back to the question that first concerned us in terms of textual criticism: who is talking? Is it Juvenal's Naevolus overdoing it with his short lyric piece or an interpolator who recognised the *carpe diem* motif and added one more image of his own to the line? This question involves

¹²¹ Colton (1973) 49. ¹²² Cf. Colton (1973) 49.

¹²³ Highet (1954) 274; also see 118. ¹²⁴ J. Henderson (1996) 128.

¹²⁵ Hardie (2012) 229–38.

¹²⁶ For the rose as a Horatian symbol of *carpe diem*, see Gold (1993).

considering the role of interpolation in Latin poetry. Traditionally, textual critics would have described interpolators as dismissively as Robin Nisbet did in his notes on Juvenal: ‘one cannot assume that the interpolator, fool though he was, always wrote gibberish’.¹²⁷ Recently, however, Richard Tarrant offered some stimulating thoughts on interpolation that markedly differ from Nisbet’s portrayal of the interpolator as a μέγα νήπιος.¹²⁸ According to Tarrant, it might be fruitful to look at interpolations as creative work on the text. Tarrant proposes the term ‘collaboration’ for an ‘imaginative response to a text that enhances or amplifies it’.¹²⁹ Here, the interpolator is perhaps amplifying Juvenal’s already-pumped-up volume. He may be someone who is appreciating Juvenal’s poetry and is giving his best go at being Juvenal. Naturally, this explanation does not work for interpolations that are versified glosses, but is arguably fruitful for the present case. If we accept Ruperti’s assumption of an interpolation, an interpolator would have recognised the *carpe diem* motif and enriched it with the *carpe diem* buzzwords *uelox*, *flosculus*, *angustus*, *breuis*. We can then see an interpolator who is shaped by the education of his time, knows his Horace, and can insert flowers from *Odes* 2.3.¹³⁰ For the interpolator, the motif of *carpe diem* was then all too well-known (*commune*), and he could join Naevolus’ imitation game by adding further motifs and making the passage even more absurd than it was before. Of course, this is not a necessary conclusion, and I find it at least as likely that Juvenal wrote the lines as they have been handed down, and that he himself attributed the mix of metaphors and buzzwords to Naevolus. But the important point to note, I think, is that we cannot tell for certain whether Juvenal or an interpolator inserted this motif.¹³¹ The poetic meadows were well explored and the schools had taught

¹²⁷ Nisbet (1962) 233–4.

¹²⁸ Tarrant (2016) 85–104. For objections against this view, see 88 n.8.

¹²⁹ Tarrant (2016) 88.

¹³⁰ If the line is an interpolation, it is surely an ancient one, as it is present in the entire manuscript tradition. Cf. Tarrant (2016) 88–9 on ancient interpolations and 88 on the reflection of the cultural milieu of the time in interpolations.

¹³¹ Excerpts become increasingly more important in the Empire. Yet, even in the case of Alcaeus’ archaic lyric, we have been unable to say whether a *carpe diem* fragment was genuinely Alcaean or an imitation that came with reperformance (*fr.* 352).

everyone how to pluck flowers there. When Mimnermus replanted Homer's leaves, this was daring, and perhaps already a little less so when Simonides followed him. By the time Juvenal was writing, the simile of Homer's leaves was a writing exercise at school.¹³² Everyone plucked the flowers of *carpe diem*.

One reader who was particularly aware of the semantics of plucking was the Renaissance poet Petrarch, who as a young man would look around the 'meadows of poets' (*auctorum pratis*) and excerpt or pluck the flowers of poetry (*haec* [. . .] *decerpsisti*; 'I plucked these'; also *flosculos decerpere*; 'to pluck little flowers', *Epistolae Familiares* (henceforth *Fam.*) 24.1).¹³³ Later, in the *Canzoniere*, too, Petrarch describes himself plucking rhymes and verses as well as herbs and flowers (thus effectively glossing *flosculus*): 'or rime et versi, or colgo herbette et fiori' (*Canzoniere* 114.6). Quite pointedly, Petrarch describes Horace in very much the same way: [*sc. Horatium*] *carpentem riguo gramine flosculos* ('Horace was plucking little flowers on a well-watered meadow', *Fam.* 24.10.118–25).¹³⁴ Here, Horace's *brevis flores rosae* ('all too brief bloom of the rose') from *Odes* 2.3 becomes a small excerpt, a *flosculus*, which brings us back to Juvenal. For the passage from Juvenal 9.124–9 is itself also such a little flower plucked by Petrarch and noted in his reading. Petrarch would then quote the Juvenal passage in a letter to Emperor Charles IV (*Fam.* 23.2.13).¹³⁵ And one can only hope that Charles, who boasted two saints among his ancestors, was unaware of its original context. Petrarch quoted the same passage again in a letter to his patron Philippe de Cabasole, the Bishop of Cavaillon (*Fam.* 24.1.4). In both letters, the passage appears in a sequence of excerpts from Latin literature, all of which deal with transience. Thus, in the letter to Philippe, lines from the usual suspects, Horace's *carpe diem* poems such as *Odes* 1.4, 1.11, 2.11, 2.14, are quoted. But here and in the letter to Charles IV, we also meet Vergil's cows again. Evidently, Petrarch picked up the Vergilian quotation from Seneca, as he

¹³² *P.Oxy.* 761 from the first century AD with Criore (1994).

¹³³ For plucking flowers in miscellanies and anthologies, see Fitzgerald (2016) 153–4.

¹³⁴ Houghton (2009) 165 already compared the two passages, albeit with a different focus.

¹³⁵ As noted by Hight (1954) 316. On the theme of transience in Petrarch's letter to Horace (*Fam.* 24.10), see Houghton (2009) 166–7 with further bibliography. *Fam.* 24.10.88–93 summarises Horatian *carpe diem*.

introduces it in almost the same way.¹³⁶ Vergil's cows, Juvenal's gigolo, and Horace's *Odes* all make it into the same list of excerpts, as the passages have lost their context and are isolated objects, which can be collected and re-arranged as a collection of little flowers. Indeed, Petrarch notes in a letter how he eagerly marked passages dealing with the transience of human life in his editions and was genuinely moved (*Fam.* 24.1). This practice helped Petrarch to imitate a classical style and similar techniques were advanced in the Renaissance in the form of commonplace-books, which were collections of *loci communes* from classical literature. These collections, based on marginal notes, gave authors a toolbox of ancient models, of purple patches full of *auctoritas*.¹³⁷ But when we encounter a list of topoi based on Petrarch's reading in one of his letters, it almost reads like an *inanis strepitus uerborum*, a sequence of marginal notes with no corresponding text; his list shows purple threads below the patches and turns the motif of *carpe diem* into a sequence of completely isolated excerpts (*Fam.* 24.1):

miseræ scilicet uitæ huius angustias, breuitatem, uelocitatem, festinationem, lapsum, cursum, uolatum, occultasque fallacias, tempus irreparabile, caducum et mutabilem uitæ florem, rosei oris fluxum decus, irrediturae iuuentutis effraenam fugem, et tacitæ obrepentis insidias senectutis, ad extremum rugas et morbos et tristitiam et laborem et indomitæ mortis inclementiam implacabilemque duritiem.

The distress and brevity of this miserable life, its speed and haste, its tumbling course, flight, and hidden deceits, time's irrevocability, the perishable and changing flower of life, the fugitive beauty of a rosy face, the frantic flight of unreturning youth, the traps of old age stealthily creeping up, and, finally, the wrinkles, diseases, gloominess, suffering, and the harshness of indomitable death and its stern implacability.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Petrarch *Fam.* 24.1: *audiebam diuino clamantem ore Vergilium*. Cf. Sen. *Dial.* 10.9.2 discussed on pages 195–8 of this chapter: *clamat ecce maximus uates et uelut diuino ore instinctus salutare carmen canit*. Petrarch also follows Seneca in quoting two more texts from Vergil in sequence. The same quotation technique can arguably be observed in Otto Vaenius' *Emblemata Horatiana*, a collection of famous sayings from Horace, which accompany Vaenius' illustrations and are supplemented by sayings from other authors, discussed in detail by Mayer (2009). Vaenius, too, combines quotations of Horace's *Odes*, Seneca's *De breuitate uitæ*, and Vergil's cows. Cf. Mindt (2017) 332–3.

¹³⁷ See Moss (1996). Serendipitously, Porphyrio paraphrases Horace's 'purple patch' as *loci communes*. Cf. the reception of Horatian quotations as described by Most (2010) 459–60, Ziolkowski (2005) 183–5, Holzberg (2009) 11–15, and Dinter (2009).

¹³⁸ Translation: Bernardo (1975–85), adapted.

The possibility of an interpolator inserting an additional image to the *carpe diem* piece of an impotent gigolo, which in turn is inserted into a letter to the self-proclaimed descendant of saints, brings me to a natural close: Juvenal 9 shows the most extreme context for a *carpe diem* excerpt and after this it hardly seems possible to go further. Over the course of this chapter, we have witnessed the ongoing fascination with the *carpe diem* motif, as it was excerpted and re-excerpted. These dynamics of excerpting would continue, as generations of poets would pluck the flower of *carpe diem*. Plucking flowers thus became an important motif of French poetry in the sixteenth century, and perhaps the most Horatian *iunctura* in this time is offered by the Pléiade poet Ronsard, who speaks of gathering the youth ('cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse'; 'pluck your youth, pluck it'). Yet, such later poems of Ronsard or also Herrick's well-known *Gather ye rosebuds* are beyond the scope of this study.¹³⁹ Rather, I wish to stress that when Ronsard and others weave their garlands, they gather their flowers from the same meadows which have been explored by humanists and ancient writers. Indeed, other humanists who followed Petrarch's lead used excerpts of Latin poetry in their compositions. Beside many other motifs, the expression *carpe diem* itself was also adopted; Angelo Poliziano wrote *carpamus uolucrum diem* ('let's pluck the winged day') in a *carpe diem* poem, and probably just two years later Erasmus of Rotterdam finished his *Elegia de mutabilitate temporum* with the following couplet: *utamur, ne frustra abeat torpentibus, aeuo | carpamus primos, dulcis amice, dies* ('let's make use of our time (if we are idle, time's lost); let's pluck the days of our youth, my sweet friend').¹⁴⁰ Yet, as Erasmus himself tells us, it lies in the nature of the commonplace imagery of *carpe diem* that it can also be

¹³⁹ On the reception of ancient *carpe diem* in these and other poems, see Race (1988) 118–41, Hyman (2019).

¹⁴⁰ For Poliziano and *carpe diem* poem, see Gaisser (2017) 122, and see pages 120–5 on *carpe diem* in Latin Renaissance poems. For Horace and Erasmus, see Schäfer (1970), in particular 57 on *carpamus*. The short encyclopaedia article of Braden (2010) looks at the phrase 'carpe diem' in the classical tradition. In ancient poetry after Horace's *Odes*, the expression *carpe* appears in the context of *carpe diem* at Ov. *Ars* 3.79 (*carpite florem*), Pers. 5.151 (*carpamus dulcia*), Mart. 7.47.11 (*gaudia carpe*), and an epitaph at Courtney (1995) 186–7, no. 199 (*flores ama Veneris, Cereris bona munera carpe*). *De ros. nasc.* also admonishes to gather flowers (*collige, uirgo, rosas*). In the Middle Ages,

employed for the opposite cause.¹⁴¹ And thus, in a later poem Erasmus would attribute every possible *carpe diem* image and expression to an interlocutor whose hedonistic arguments he refutes in his reply – if time is short, we should dedicate our life to learning (*Elegia in iuuenem luxuria defluentem atque mortis admonitio*). Erasmus indeed also followed a similar strategy in his great collection of proverbs, the *Adagia*, successors of commonplace-books: when he explains a Horatian idiom on the shortness of time from a *carpe diem* poem, he says that we should dedicate our lives to study as time is short.¹⁴² In the light of Erasmus' interest in commonplaces, it is not surprising that his *carpe diem* poems read like a collection of pseudo-quotations from Horace and others woven into a new garland. Indeed, one of the images of his *Elegia de mutabilitate temporum* again evokes the language of Juvenal's gigolo: *sic, sic flos aevi, sic, dulcis amice, iuuentus | heu properante cadit irreparata pede* ('just so, sweet friend, the flowering bloom of our lifetime, our youth, hastens and dies, never to be recovered'). Here, too, we encounter the odd mixed metaphor of a surprisingly speedy flower. This, however, is just one of many images in a poem pieced together from ancient motifs and phrases, which Erasmus, as he said elsewhere, gathered (*carpo*) like a Matine bee in an image itself gathered from Horace (*C. 4.2.27–32*).¹⁴³

It is easy to smile about Gilbert Highet's naïve wish to have Naevolus' short poem excerpted, and we can see through Seneca's manipulative quotation strategies. Yet, their treatment of the *carpe*

a poem in the *Carmina Burana* begins thus: *Omittamus studia | dulce est desipere | et carpamus dulcia | iuuentutis tenere!* This neatly combines Hor. *C. 4.12.28* with Pers. 5.151. Besides *carpe diem* poems, other poems regularly use the phrase *carpere uitam* to express enjoyment, for example, several epitaphs, including Christian ones, such as *CLE 706.10* from the sixth century AD: *aeternam fisus Christo cum carpere uitam.*

¹⁴¹ Vredeveld (1993) i.xxix–xliv notes that Erasmus says in his *Ecclesiastes* that Horace's *carpe diem* argument on the shortness of life can easily be reversed. Vredeveld also shows how Erasmus puts this into practice in his poetry. In the present paragraph, I follow Vredeveld's argument.

¹⁴² Erasmus *Adagia* iv.iv.21 on *dum uirent genua* from Hor. *Epod. 13.4*. The *Adagia* were also the predecessors of the collection of Roman *Sprichwörter* by Otto (1962) [1890]; see esp. *utere temporibus*, under which *carpe diem* is subsumed (*tempus 2*), and *fugit irreparabile dies* (*dies 1*).

¹⁴³ *De senectute carmen* 96–8: *dum sedulus per omne | auctorum uoluo genus impiger, undique carpo | apis in modum Matinae*. Cf. Schäfer (1970) 59.

diem theme points to something inherently fascinating about the motif. Jonathan Culler argues that one fundamental characteristic of lyric is something he calls after Baudelaire ‘lyric hyperbole’: in lyric, seemingly trivial observations are characterised as extremely significant, whether it is the fall of a leaf or the withering of a rose.¹⁴⁴ Such lyric images succeed in becoming commonplaces – or at least Baudelaire described these dynamics as a success in a passage adduced by Culler: ‘to create a cliché is genius. I must create a cliché.’¹⁴⁵ *Carpe diem*, then, is a quintessentially lyric motif, not despite but because it easily becomes a cliché: as phrases and images are repeated again and again, they paradoxically become solidified as gestures for a momentary now.¹⁴⁶ The passages of this chapter indulge in such lyric hyperboles and clichés, and believe in their splendour. Excerptors strive to catch the hyperbolic essence of lyric. Yet, once the passages are excerpted, we often see clearly the triviality of the hyperbolic statements. On the one hand, *carpe diem* continues to be treated as a lyric motif par excellence, displaying *urbanitas*. It is adduced in excerpts, which present the motif as some poetic or vatic wisdom, a wisdom that is properly expressed through lyric rather than philosophy. Whoever adduces this motif, even if he hardly manages to scramble two or three lines together, believes that he has reached the Parnassus and has become an Alcaeus or Horace, as he has said something quintessentially lyric. On the other hand, excerpting creates a cliché, a text removed from its proper context and occasion, textual objects that are compared to little flowers, dinner delicacies and purple patches. Indeed, the two contrasting sides of *carpe diem* can be understood through its status as a purple patch: the shine of its purple material keeps attracting people who remove the patch and stitch it on ever more

¹⁴⁴ Culler (2015) 258–63. Cf. the stimulating thoughts of Payne (2006) 182 on Pindar’s gnomic statements: ‘gnomic lyric [...] presupposes its own transhistorical reception by addressing abstract formulations to a universal subject created by its own pronominal structures’.

¹⁴⁵ Culler (2015) 131 quoting from the collected works of Baudelaire at Pichois (1975–6) i.662.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Fitzgerald (2021) chapter 4, who analyses how the *Anacreontea* and Leconte de Lisle in his Horatian *Études Latines* aspire ‘to distill an ancient poet to a few verbal gestures whose simplicity produces the maximum of resonance’. The result, as Fitzgerald describes it, is a neoclassical aesthetics that revels in clichés.

Excerpts of *Carpe Diem*

clothes. As a patch or excerpt, the *carpe diem* motif is a textual object: small, cut up, removable, always displaying its noble material, even if it is just a scrap of this material on shabby clothes. The image of the purple patch and the rhetorical scope that is behind it offer further justification for treating the passages in these sections as ‘excerpts’, even when they are no direct quotation; for the purple material has to come from somewhere and always looks all-too-well-known, even if it is an imitation rather than a quotation. As textual objects, the excerpts of this chapter are removed from present occasion to the extent that the *carpe diem* motif is applied to cows, mice, and a gigolo. It is thus perhaps not altogether unfitting when, in our own day, we encounter another decontextualised excerpt, utterly removed from its original context: on a T-shirt that screams ‘Carpe that fucking diem!’¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ For example, numerous versions at www.redbubble.com. ‘Carpe that f*cking diem’ is also the title of a collection of ‘quotes and mottoes for making the most of life’, as the blurb wants it, published by Summersdale in 2018.