

PETRONIUS

Our main source for the life of Petronius is Tacitus - *Annals XVI 18*

Died AD65: one time Consul and Governor of Bithynia, intimate of Nero who appointed him ARBITER OF TASTE (*elegantiae arbiter*)
he incurred enmity of Tigellinus (Prefect of the Praetorians) whose denounced him to Nero.
Petronius took his own life, when, ominously he was instructed by Nero to remain at Cumae.

Character: a man of polished luxury, indolent in his ordinary life, but capable of energy in public affairs.

Works: Satyricon
a satirical, picaresque novel. 'Satura' is a medley of prose, interspersed with verse on a variety of topics. describes the disreputable adventures of two rogues, ENCOLPIUS and ASCLYTUS, and their serving boy GITON as they wander the semi-Greek cities of S. Italy.

Banquet of Trimalchio

the principal episode in the surviving portion.

TRIMALCHIO

vulgar, wealthy, simple and good-natured. Invites Encolpius and Asclytus to his banquet.

The Banquet

ostentatious, lavish, comical, grotesque, as Trimalchio gets more and more outrageously drunk, eventually arranging his own will and funerary monument.
two good stories are told during the banquet: one of a werewolf, one a witch story.

Story of the Werewolf; told by NICEROS.

The whole work gives a dramatic picture of Italian life in the time of Nero and reproduces in the conversation of some of the characters the actual speech of the lower classes, with amusing bits of slang, and some passages of gross indecency.

Petronius

13. A Proud Father (Satyricon 46)

1 - 4 (46, 1-4)

You seem to me to be saying, Agamemnon:

"What's that bore going on about?" Because you, a good talker like you don't talk. You're a cut above us and, therefore, you laugh at the words of us poor ones. We know that you are off your head with all that learning. Never mind! Can I hope to persuade you some day to come to my house in the country and see our little bit of a cottage. We'll find a bit to eat, chicken, eggs. It'll be nice, even if this year the foul weather has made havoc of everything. Anyway, we'll find enough to fill our bellies. And now my lad is growing up to be a pupil of yours. He can already divide by four. If God spares him, you'll have him ready to do anything for you. For in his spare time he doesn't take his head out of his exercise book. He's gifted and there's good stuff in him, even if he is crazy about birds. I've already killed his three goldfinches, and I told him a weasel ate them. But he's found other hobbies and thoroughly enjoys painting.

5 - 8 (46, 5-8)

But he is getting his Greek behind him and has begun to take his Latin quite well, even if his tutor is self-satisfied, and is unreliable - he just comes and goes. He knows his stuff but does not want to work. There's another (teacher) who is not so knowledgeable, but conscientious and teaches more than he knows. And so he makes a habit of coming round (to our) home on holidays, and whatever you give him, he's happy. So I have bought for the boy ^{some} law books with headings in red, because I want him to get a taste of law for home use. This business has a living in it. He's dabbled enough in literature. But if he objects, I've decided he's going to learn a trade, which is something he can't lose till he dies, either as a barber, or auctioneer, or at any rate a lawyer. Therefore, I shout at him every day: " Primigenius, believe me, whatever you

studied, today he would be starving. It's no time at all since he carried on his back stuff for sale, now he can even measure up to Norbanus. An education is an investment and a proper profession never dies.

Litterae thesaurum est, et artificium numquam moritur

PETRONIUS

1.

"Videris mihi, Agamemnon, dicere: 'quid iste argutat molestus?' quia tu, qui potes loquere, non loquis. non es nostrae fasciae, et ideo peuperorum verba derides. scimus te prae litteras fatuum esse."

- a) Who is the speaker and how does he differ in character and upbringing from Agamemnon?
- b) Translate the phrase "*non es nostrae fasciae*" and explain what is meant by it.
- c) What invitation does the speaker go on to extend to Agamemnon and why?

2.

"et iam tibi discipulus crescit cicaro meus."

- a) Who is '*cicaro meus*' and what connection does he have with Agamemnon?
- b) What two possible ideas are suggested by the word '*cicaro*'?

3.

"ego illi iam tres cardeles occidi, et dixi quia mustella comedit"

- a) What happened to the '*cardeles*' and why?
- b) Why is it not so unlikely to have had something to do with a '*mustella*'?
- c) What is unusual about the expression '*dixi quia mustella comedit*'?

4.

"est et alter non quidem doctus, sed curiosus, qui plus docet quam scit. itaque feriatis diebus solet domum venire, et quicquid dederis, contentus est."

- a) How does this teacher differ from the other one described by the speaker?
- b) What arrangements were there for education in Rome in Petronius' day?

PETRONIUS ; Story of the Werewolf (from the Satyricon, a novel
of Mediterranean life in the 1st century A.D.)

When I was still a slave, we used to live in Narrow Street; the house belongs to Gavilla now. There, as the gods would have it, I fell in love with the wife of Terentius the innkeeper; you knew Melissa, the girl from Tarentum, a really lovely little peach. If I asked her for anything, it was never refused me. She made a penny, I got half of it. Whatever I got, I deposited in her pocket, and she never let me down. Her husband met his end on the estate. So by hook or by crook I struggled and planned how I could reach her; you know after all, it's in times of trouble that friends show themselves.

As it happened the master had gone to Capua to fix up some bits and pieces. I seize my chance and persuade a guest of ours to come with me to the fifth milestone. Now he was a soldier, as brave as hell. We get ourselves going about cock-crow; the moon was shining like mid-day. We get to the tombstones; my mate starts making for the grave-stones; I sit there, singing away, and count the stones. Then when I looked round at my companion, he stripped off and put all his clothes at the side of the road. My heart was in my mouth; I stood there like a dead man. But he suddenly turned into a wolf. Don't think I'm joking; for telling a lie about this, no one's fortune would make it worth my while. But, as I began to say, after he turned into a wolf, he began to howl and ran off into the woods. As for me, at first I didn't know where I was; then I went up to collect his clothes; but they were turned into stone.

Who ever died of fright, except me? Still, I drew my sword and all along the road I killed shadows until I could get to my girl-friend's house. I went in like a ghost, nearly gasped out my life, the sweat was running down my crotch, I hardly revived at all. My Melissa began to express surprise at my walking out so late, and she said "if you'd come earlier, you could at least have helped us. A wolf got into the grounds and attacked all the livestock; he spilt their blood like a butcher. Still, he didn't have the last laugh, even though ~~he~~ got away; a slave of ours stabbed his neck with a spear." When I heard this, I couldn't keep my eyes closed any longer, but when it was broad daylight I rushed to my (master) Gaius' house like an innkeeper who's been robbed, and when I came to the place where the clothes had been turned to stone, I found nothing but blood. But when I got home, my soldier friend was lying in bed like an ox, and a doctor was attending to his neck. I realised that he was a werewolf, and after that I couldn't take a bite of bread with him, not if you'd killed me. Let other people see what they would have thought about this; if I'm lying, may I have your guardian spirits angry (with me).

The Werewolf

Questions on Section 1:

What does the speaker tell us about Melissa?

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)

Who died on the country estate?

What is the point of the proverb quoted in the last line?

Who is the subject for each of these verbs:

servirem, habitabamus, volunt, coepi, noveratis, fecit, demandavi,
obiit, pervenirem, scitis, apparent.

Questions on Section 2:

Who had gone to Capua?

Why does the speaker mention this?

Find three verbs which have the soldier as subject. What tense are these verbs?

When did the speaker begin to feel frightened? Why?

What does he say about the soldier's clothes?

- (i)
- (ii)

Questions on Section 3 :

What action did the speaker take after the wolf disappeared? Quote the Latin verbs that indicate what he did.

Why was Melissa surprised?

Who "didn't have the last laugh"? Why does Melissa say this?

Who is the subject for each of these verbs:

derisit, fugit, traiecit; audivi, potui, fugi; iacebat, curabat.

Why does the speaker mention bread (no. 13)?

ego si mentior..... Where else in the story does the speaker insist he is telling the truth?

QUESTION 3

Read the following **two** extracts, which are taken from the set text you have studied, and answer the questions beneath.

Petronius

Forte dominus Capuam exierat ad scruta scita expedienda. nactus ego occasionem persuadeo hospitem nostrum ut mecum ad quintum miliarium veniat. erat autem miles, fortis tamquam Orcus. apoculamus nos circa gallicinia; luna lucebat tamquam meridie. venimus intra monimenta; homo meus coepit ad stelas facere; sedeo ego cantabundus et
5 stelas numero. deinde ut respexi ad comitem, ille exiit se et omnia vestimenta secundum viam posuit. mihi anima in naso esse; stabam tamquam mortuus. at ille subito lupus factus est. nolite me iocari putare; ut mentiar, nullius patrimonium tanti facio. sed, quod coeperam dicere, postquam lupus factus est, ululare coepit et in silvas fugit. ego primitus nesciebam ubi essem, deinde accessi ut vestimenta eius tollerem: illa autem lapidea facta
10 sunt.

- 1 (a) Name the man telling the story. (1)
(b) What was the purpose of his journey? (1)
- 2 What **two** facts are we told in lines 2–3 about the man who accompanied the story-teller? (2)
- 3 *monimenta* (line 4).
(a) What are these? (1)
(b) Give **two** reasons why Romans located *monimenta* by the roadside. (2)
- 4 *cantabundus* (line 4).
What do you think that this word suggests about the story-teller's state of mind? Give a reason for your answer. (2)
- 5 Petronius' Latin is colloquial, sometimes even slang. Choose **three** examples of this from the passage, and translate them into appropriate English. (3)
- 6 How does Petronius make his account vivid and interesting? Refer to Latin in your answer. (2)
- 7 Werewolf stories are common in many cultures. Identify **three** elements from this passage which are likely to be found in similar stories elsewhere. (3)