## Propertius 3.21

I'm afraid it's the grand tour to cultured old Athens
Before I can write off this burdensome love as excess baggage.
My feeling for the girl grows with each glance.
Passion is its own fuel, thrives on home-cooking.
I've tried every dodge I could
To get rid of it
                but the god himself blocks me at every turn.
Once or twice she lets me stay
                countless times says no
And even when she comes to my place sleeps on the spare couch.

One hope left—a change of scene.
With Cynthia out of eyesight, love too will decamp.

Come on, gang, thrust the ship through the surf, lean
Back on your oars
                pick lots for the watches
                haul
The straining sail all the way up the mast chock-a-block.
There's a favoring breeze and a glossy highroad before us!
Rooftops of Rome, farewell
                so long, my friends
And whatever we've been to each other,
Take care, pussycat.

This rube will travel courtesy of the Adriatic
Where the sea-gods snub you if you don't pray in Greek
And when the ship finally coasts into Corinth's quiet harbor,
Worn canvas ready to be furled,
Feet, hurry up and help finish the job
                dance over
The Isthmus that sunders two seas.
Then when Piraeus bustles about me, I'll slowly climb
Up that long road sloping away from the port
                eyes on the Acropolis.

There I'll expurgate my mind with the study of Plato
Or else in your garden, cultured old Epicurus,
Or I'll study the language itself, Demosthenes' weapon,
And the salty wit of your books, cultured old Menander.
Or surely paintings will ravish my eyes,
Ivory bas-reliefs or handiworks in bronze.



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The regular years,
The depths of the deep sea between,
In this calm embrace my wounds will heal.

And if I die—
Not heartbroken for a whore
but captain of my soul
With a perfectly respectable funeral.

*Translated by*
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