

A message to Lesbia

Furius and Aurelius, companions of Catullus,
whether he will be among the Indians,
where the shore is pounded by the far resounding
eastern wave,

whether he will go among the Hyrcanians or the gentle Arabs,
or to the Scythians or the arrow-bearing Parthians,
or the seas which the sevenfold
Nile colours,

whether he will walk across the high Alps,
gazing upon the monuments of great Caesar,
the Gallic Rhine, the terrifying English Channel,
the most remote Britons,

wherever the will of the gods takes him,
you who are prepared to attempt all these things with him,
announce to my girl a few
not good words.

May she live and may she be well with her 300 lovers,
whom she holds at the same time in an embrace,
loving none truly, but repeatedly breaking
the loins of all;

and may she not look back, as before, at my love,
which, by her fault, dies like the flower at
the edge of a meadow, after it was touched by the plough
passing.