

LANGUAGE FAIR 2023
UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS
DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION
Level 2-Male or Female Character

Lucretius: Eulogy of Epicurus (DRN, I, 62)

*Humana ante oculos foede cum vita iaceret
in terris oppressa gravi sub religione,
quae caput a caeli regionibus ostendebat
horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans,
primum Graius homo mortalis tollere contra
est oculos ausus primusque obsistere contra;
quem neque fama deum nec fulmina nec minitanti
murmure compressit caelum, sed eo magis acrem
inritat animi virtutem, effringere ut arta
naturae primus portarum claustra cupiret.*

When man's life lay for all to see foully groveling upon the ground, crushed beneath the weight of Superstition, which displayed her head from the regions of heaven, lowering over mortals with horrible aspect, a man of Greece was the first that dared to uplift mortal eyes against her, the first to make stand against her; for neither fables of the gods could quell him, nor thunderbolts, not heaven with menacing roar, but all the more they goaded the eager courage of his soul, so that he should desire, first of all men, to shatter the confining bars of nature's gates.