QUINTUS LUTATIUS CATULUS (c. 152-87 BCE), ROMAN POLITICIAN, SENATOR, ORATOR, AND CONSUL. Not to be confused with the famed epigrammatist and love poet, Gaius Valerius Catullus, Quintus Lutatius Catulus was a patron of literature, philosophy, and art; Cicero indicates his respect and admiration for Catulus by including him among the characters in his De Oratore ['On the Orator']. As a pre-Catullan poet, he was among a group of writers who began to adapt the themes and conventions of Greek love poetry to their own ends. Sadly, his works are not extant, with the exception of two epigrams.

RICHARD LOVELACE (1617-1657), POET AND ROYALIST ARMY OFFICER. For a brief biography of Lovelace, the translator of the following epigrams, along with his translation of Catulus, see the print anthology, p. 194.

CATULUS’ AND NOVOCOMENSIS’ HOMOEROTIC EPIGRAMS. I have not been able to find any other English translations between 1550 and 1735 of the following epigrams attributed to Catulus. These two poems are ‘run together’ in Lovelace’s Lucasta (1649; exp. edn., 1659), both in their translations and in their facing Latin originals, making one poem of two. As Cummings has noted, however, this error can be traced back to the Latin text Lovelace himself used, Pithoeus the Younger’s Epigrammata et Poematia Vetera ['Ancient Epigrams and Poems'] (Paris, 1590), and in fact while the first four lines of this mistakenly compounded poem are indeed by Catulus, the last four are actually the work of an Italian contemporary of Lovelace’s, the poet Hieronymus Vulpius Novocomensis. Although Catulus’ ‘As Once I Bad Good Morning to the Day’ (below) celebrates the beauty of Rome’s most famous actor, Roscius, his other surviving epigram describes his love and longing for the young man Theotimus (Cummings, pp. 101-02). As far as I have been able to ascertain, this latter epigram was not published in a print translation between 1550 and 1735. For more information, see Robert Cumming’s “Richard Lovelace’s Latin Anthology.” Translation and Literature 2 (1993): 101-04.

LUCASTA: POSTHUME POEMS (1659)

AS ONCE I BAD GOOD MORNING TO THE DAY

As once I bad good morning to the day, 2
O’th’ sudden Roscius breaks in a bright ray; 3
Gods, with your favour, I’ve presumed to see
A mortal fairer than a deity.

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1 With facing Latin text; this first epigram was preserved in Cicero’s dialogue De Natura Deorum (On the Nature of the Gods), Book 1, sec. 79-80, where the speaker is discussing how real love is seldom vitiated by one physical defect in the beloved.
2 bad i.e., bid.
3 Roscius Quintus Roscius Gallus (d. 62 BCE), famous Roman comic actor; he was handsome but had a squint.
**WITH LOOKS AND HANDS A SATyr COURTS A BOY**

With looks and hands a satyr courts the boy,⁴
Who draws back his unwilling cheek as coy.
Although of marble hewn, whom move not they?
The boy ev’n seems to weep, the satyr, pray.

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⁴ satyr a mythical creature, the top-half resembling a man, the bottom-half a goat; satyrs were notoriously licentious.