LUCRETIUS, *DRN* 4.990

> Quippe uidebis equos fortis, cum membra quiescunt,
> in somnis sudare tamen spirareque semper
> et quasi de palma summas contendere uiris
> aut quasi carceribus patefactis saepe quiete. 990

So OQ. The chapter of accidents by which *saepe quiete* displaced what originally stood at the end of line 990 (helpfully set out by David Butterfield in his 'Supplementa Lucretiana', *Arctos* 42 [2008], 17–30 at 28 n. 37) need not detain us here. This note is solely concerned with those missing words or, as I shall suggest, word.

Of the 27 previous attempts to fill the gap, conveniently assembled by Butterfield (op. cit. 28 n. 38) all seem to me to be vitiated by their failure to provide what ought to be the climactic touch to Lucretius' graphic description, the force of whatever verb is supplied being fatally weakened by what is often little more than complementary padding. This defect, it seems to me, is shared by Butterfield's *proruere acres* (op. cit. 29), in which the strong and in itself effective and appropriate *proruere* is robbed of much of its force by the adverbial adjective *acres* usurping the commanding position of the last word in the verse.

I suggest that Lucretius wrote *praecipitare* or *praecipitari*. This word, which occurs six times in the *DRN* (1.251, 2.248, 4.628, 4.1021, 6.292, 6.1040), thrice at the end of the verse, is *uox propria* of headlong motion: compare also 3.1063, where Lucretius' spendid adverbial coinage vividly conveys the abrupt departure hell-for-leather of the rich man, suddenly bored by his town house, to the country: *currit agens mannos ad uillam praecipitanter*. As between *praecipitari* and *praecipitare*, though the transitive use 'drive headlong' (*OLD* 6a) is somewhat more common than the intransitive 'rush headlong' (*OLD* 7), *DRN* 6.1040, describing the action of an iron ring attracted by a magnet, *scilicet ille eodem ferri quo praecipitauit*, perhaps supports *praecipitare*. Sense cannot decide: both readings, I would suggest, are at least worthy of a '*fort. recte*'.

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HORACE, *ODES* 3.7.21: SCOPVLIS SVRDIOR ICARI

Gyges, a daring Roman merchant, must spend his winter in a harbour in Epirus. Back in Rome his girlfriend Asterie is worried about his fidelity. Yet, the poet/omniscient narrator assures Asterie, Gyges' *constantia* and *fides* are firm. Love messages are sent by the lady of his host's house, but

> frustra: nam scopulis surdior Icari
> voces audit adhuc integer … (*C.* 3.7.21–2)

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