

You Get What You Give, Wify Dear:

Comments on the end of another Saturnalia season.

Martial Epigram 5.84

Iam tristis nucibus puer relictis
Clämösö revocätur ä magiströ,
Et blandö male pröditus fritillö,
Arcänä modo raptus ë popinä,
5 Aedilem rogat üdus äleätor.
Saturnälia tränsiëre töta,
Nec münuscula parva nec minöra
Misisti mihi, Galla, quam solëbäs.
Sänë sic abeat meus December:
10 Scis certë, putö, vestra iam veniire
Saturnälia, Märtiäs Kalendäs;
Tunc reddam tibi, Galla, quod dedisti.

© 2003 Ginny Lindzey. *This epigram was prepared with detailed facing notes so that even beginning Latin students could have a true taste of Rome at Saturnalia.*

tristis – sad (modifies **puer**)

nucibus from **nux** – nut (boys played games with nuts, sometimes like marbles)

relictis from **relictus** – abandoned

nucibus relictis – after the nuts had been abandoned (they had left behind their Saturnalia games)

Clämösö – noisy (modifies **magiströ**; teachers were considered noisy because they yelled at students, led drills, etc.)

et – indicates the second half to this sentence with a new subject (**äleätor**)

blandö – charming, mesmerizing (modifies **fritillö**)

male – wrongly, unfortunately

pröditus – betrayed, made known

fritillö – dice box

Arcänä – secret

modo – just recently, just now

raptus – seized (By whom? What official was in charge of insuring that gambling did NOT go on, except during Saturnalia? The aedile!)

popinä – eating house

Aedilem rogat – this is a voting slogan (“*he asks that you make so-n-so as the aedile*”); perhaps it implies that the gambler must return to being a good, voting citizen...

üdus – wet, damp (drunk, besotted)

äleätor – gambler

Saturnälia – festival (plural by nature)

tränsiëre = tränsiërunnt – passed (**Saturnalia töta** is the subject)

nec . . . nec – neither ... nor

münuscula – little presents

minöra – smaller, cheaper

quam – (that) which (modifies **münuscula**)

Sänë – doubtless, to be sure, of course

abeat – may be gone (**meus December** is the subject)

certë – surely, certainly, indeed

Scis . . . veniire – you know that . . . is coming

putö – I think

vestra – your (modifies **Saturnälia**)

Märtiäs Kalendäs – the date of Matronalia, a festival celebrated by the Roman matrons on the 1st of March in honour of Juno Lucina. At this festival wives used to receive presents from their husbands. Hence we find the festival called by Martial the Saturnalia of women.

reddam – I will give back

quod – that which/what