

For the Benefit of Mortals: Diogenes' Philosophical Epitaphs for Plato.

1. DL 8.44 AP 7.121 (Pythagoras)

καὶ ἡμῶν ἐστὶν εἰς αὐτὸν πεπαιγμένα οὕτως ἔχοντα:
οὐ μόνος ἐμψύχων ἄπεχες χέρας, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡμεῖς.
τίς γάρ, ὃς ἐμψύχων ἦψατο, Πυθαγόρη;
ἀλλ' ὅταν ἐψηθῆ τι καὶ ὀπηθῆ καὶ ἀλισθη,
δὴ τότε καὶ ψυχὴν μὴ ἔχον ἐσθίομεν.

And my jest on him goes like this: You were not the only one to keep away from living creatures. So did I! For who was there that ever fed on living creatures, Pythagoras? But once a living thing was boiled, roasted and salted, then I ate it surely without any life in it.

2. Ps.-Aristotle, *Peplos* 35 (32 MS B)

σῆμα τὸ μὲν Γουνῆος ὄρας, ψυχὴ δὲ θανόντος
ἀέρ' ἐς ὑγρὸν ἔβη, σῶμα δὲ πόντος ἔχει.

Behold the tomb of Gouneus. The dead man's soul has gone to the moist air, but the sea holds his body.

3. DL 3.43 AP 7.60 (Plato)

σωφροσύνη προφέρων θνητῶν ἦθει τε δικαίῳ
ἐνθάδε δὴ κεῖται θεῖος Ἀριστοκλῆς·
εἰ δέ τις ἐκ πάντων σοφίης μέγαν ἔσχεν ἔπαινον
τοῦτον ἔχει πλεῖστον καὶ φθόνος οὐχ ἔπεται.

Surpassing mortals in temperance and just character, the god-like Aristocles lies here. And if anyone ever had great praise from all for his wisdom, he had the most, and jealousy does not follow.

4. DL 3.44 AP 7.61 (Plato)

γαῖα μὲν ἐν κόλπῳ κρύπτει τόδε σῶμα Πλάτωνος,
ψυχὴ δ' ἀθάνατον τάξιν ἔχει μακάρων
υἱοῦ Ἀρίστωνος, τὸν τις καὶ τηλόθι ναίων
τιμᾶ ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς θεῖον ἰδόντα βίον.

Here the Earth hides the body of Plato in her bosom, but his soul has an immortal station with the Blessed, the son of Ariston whom a certain good man, though he dwells far from him, honors when he has seen his divine life.

5. DL 3.45 AP 7.108 (Plato)

ἔστι καὶ ἡμέτερον οὕτως ἔχον:
καὶ πῶς, εἰ μὴ **Φοῖβος** ἀν' Ἑλλάδα **φῦσε Πλάτωνα,**
ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων γράμμασιν **ἠκέσατο;**
καὶ γὰρ ὁ τοῦδε γεγώς **Ἀσκληπιός** ἐστὶν **ἰητὴρ**
σώματος ὡς **ψυχῆς** ἀθανάτοιο Πλάτων.

There is my own (epigram) which goes like this: And except that **Phoebus Apollo** begat **Plato**, how would he have **healed the souls of men** throughout Greece by letters? Truly even as **Asclepius** is a **doctor** for the **body**, so is Plato for the immortal **soul**.

6. DL 3.45 AP 7.109 (Plato)

καὶ ἄλλο, ὡς ἐτελεύτα:
Φοῖβος ἔφουσε βροτοῖς **Ἀσκληπιὸν** ἠδὲ **Πλάτωνα,**
τὸν μὲν, ἵνα **ψυχὴν**, τὸν δ' ἵνα **σῶμα** **σάοι·**
δαισάμενος δὲ γάμον πόλιν ἤλυθεν, ἦν ποθ' ἑαυτῷ
ἔκτισε καὶ δαπέδῳ Ζηνὸς ἐνιδρύσατο.

And another on how he died: **Phoebus Apollo begat for mortals Asclepius and Plato**, so the former could **save the body**, the latter the **soul**. And while dining at a wedding, he went to the city, which he once built himself and set on the plain of Zeus.

7. DL 4.3 AP 7.101 (Speusippus)

καὶ ἔστιν ἡμῶν εἰς αὐτόν:
Ἄλλ' εἰ μὴ Σπεύσιππον ἐμάνθανον ᾧδε θανεῖσθαι,
οὐκ ἂν ἔπεισέ μέ τις τόδε λέξαι,
ὡς ἦν οὐχὶ Πλάτωνι πρὸς αἵματος· οὐ γὰρ ἀθυμῶν
κάτθανεν ἂν διὰ τι σφόδρα μικρόν.

And this is my own [epitaph] for him: Had I not learned the way Speusippus died, no one would have convinced me to say this: that he was not related by blood to Plato. Surely, he would not have died in despondency because of some extremely petty matter.