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# On the Nature of Things

*Lucretius, Translated by Ian Johnston*

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**On the Nature of Things** Lucretius, Translated by Ian Johnston
On the Nature of Things by Titus Lucretius Carus (written around 60 BC) has for centuries been one of the most popular and influential works from our classical past. The poem is a long, impassioned plea for a materialistic understanding of the universe and of human life, without reference to divine creativity or benevolence or to a future life. Only such a view, Lucretius claims, can liberate human beings from religious superstitions, irrational fears, and false ambitions and thus enable us to live successfully. Long celebrated as the greatest expression of faith in Epicurean philosophy, the poem has exercised a decisive influence on the development of Western scientific thought since the Renaissance and is a vitally important part of our humanist traditions. Ian Johnston s new poetic translation brings out the full emotional range of this great work and captures the restless and intense urgency of the original text. The English is an accurate rendition of Lucretius in a fluent modern idiom, so that it makes this important vision of the world accessible to the modern reader. The translation includes notes to assist the reader who is encountering Lucretius for the first time.

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