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## 1. Life Is a Dog

(Selections from Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, Book 6)

*Diogenes of Sinope (c. 412–323 BCE) is the figure-head of Cynicism, yet almost nothing he is reported to have said or done can be verified with complete certainty. Most of what we hear, however, is likely to be generally true or as good as true in the sense that Diogenes spawned a movement, and with it a legend, and attracted the attention of many imitators throughout the course of antiquity.*

*Diogenes's characteristic schtick is called the chreia, a short witticism thought to be “useful” (chrēsimos) for seasoning one's discourse or for enlarging one's perspective on human folly. Writing chreiai attributed to historical persons eventually became a school exercise, which contributes to some of the difficulty in knowing what Diogenes really did or said.*

*The following compilation is a Greatest Hits album of Diogenes's antics and bon mots, plus a few lesser-known B-Sides, drawn from Diogenes Laertius (fl. 3rd century CE), an important source for the history of early Greek philosophy. The Cynic founder's caustic wit, austere lifestyle, yet quiet, serious integrity are on full display here.*

## HOW TO SAY NO

Διογένης Ἴκεσίου τραπεζίτου Σινωπεύς. φησὶ δὲ Διοκλῆς, δημοσίαν αὐτοῦ τὴν τράπεζαν ἔχοντας τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ παραχαράξαντος τὸ νόμισμα, φυγεῖν. Εὐβουλίδης δ' ἐν τῷ Περὶ Διογένους αὐτόν φησι Διογένην τοῦτο πράξει καὶ συναλαῖσθαι τῷ πατρί. οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς περὶ αὐτοῦ φησιν ἐν τῷ Πορδάλῳ ὡς παραχαράξει τὸ νόμισμα. ἔνιοι δ' ἐπιμελητὴν γενόμενον ἀναπεισθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν τεχνιτῶν καὶ ἐλθόντα εἰς Δελφοὺς ἢ εἰς τὸ Δήλιον ἐν τῇ πατρίδι Ἀπόλλωνος πυνθάνεσθαι εἰ ταῦτα πράξει ἄπερ ἀναπείθεται· τοῦ δὲ συγχωρήσαντος τὸ πολιτικὸν νόμισμα, οὐ συνείς, τὸ κέρμα ἐκιβδήλευσε καὶ φωραθεῖς, ὡς μὲν τινες, ἐφυγαδεύθη, ὡς δέ τινες, ἐκῶν ὑπεξῆλθε φοβηθεῖς. ἔνιοι δὲ φασὶ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτόν λαβόντα τὸ νόμισμα διαφθεῖραι· καὶ τὸν μὲν δεθέντα ἀποθανεῖν, τὸν δὲ φυγεῖν ἐλθεῖν τ' εἰς Δελφοὺς καὶ πυνθανόμενον οὐκ εἰ παραχαράξει, ἀλλὰ τί ποιήσας ἐνδοξότατος ἔσται, οὕτω λαβεῖν τὸν χρησμὸν τοῦτον.

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### Exile and Conversion to Philosophy (§§20–22)

Diogenes, the son of Hicesius, a banker, hailed from Sinope. Diocles<sup>1</sup> says that Diogenes was exiled because his father, the man in charge of the public bank, defaced the currency, though Euboulides<sup>2</sup> asserts that it was Diogenes who did this and that his father joined him in exile. Indeed, in the *Pordalus*<sup>3</sup> Diogenes says exactly this in the first person, that he himself defaced the currency. Some also say that while he was acting as overseer he was persuaded by the workers to undertake the deed and traveled either to Delphi or to the Delian Oracle of Apollo in his home country to inquire if he should do what was being asked of him. When the god assented to defacing the *political* currency, Diogenes, not grasping what he meant, adulterated the coinage. When he was found out, he was banished, according to some, while others say he left of his own accord out of fear. Still others say Diogenes took over the currency exchange from his father and engaged in counterfeiting, whereupon his father was imprisoned and died, while Diogenes was exiled,

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Γενόμενος δὲ Ἀθήνησιν Ἀντισθένης παρέβαλε τοῦ δὲ διωθουμένου διὰ τὸ μηδένα προσίεσθαι, ἐξεβιάζετο τῇ προεδρίᾳ. καὶ ποτε τὴν βακτηρίαν ἐπανατεινόμενος αὐτῷ τὴν κεφαλὴν ὑποσχών, “παῖε,” εἶπεν· “οὐ γὰρ εὐρήσεις οὕτω σκληρὸν ξύλον ᾧ με ἀπείρξεις ἕως ἄν τι φαίνη λέγων.” τὸν τεῦθεν διήκουσεν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἄτε φυγὰς ὧν ὥρμησεν ἐπὶ τὸν εὐτελεῆ βίον.

Μῦν θεασάμενος διατρέχοντα . . . καὶ μήτε κοίτην ἐπιζητοῦντα μήτε σκότος εὐλαβούμενον ἢ ποθοῦντά τι τῶν δοκούντων ἀπολαυστῶν, πόρον ἐξεῦρε τῆς περιστάσεως.

Διττὴν δ’ ἔλεγεν εἶναι τὴν ἄσκησιν, τὴν μὲν ψυχικὴν, τὴν δὲ σωματικὴν· ταύτην καθ’ ἣν ἐν γυμνασία συνεχεῖ γινόμενα φαντασίαι εὐλυσίαν πρὸς τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἔργα παρέχονται. εἶναι δ’ ἀτελεῆ τὴν

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made the trip to Delphi, and inquired not if he should deface the currency, but rather what he could do to become famous and that's how he received the oracle.

On arriving in Athens, he importuned Antisthenes. When Antisthenes rebuffed him, on the grounds that he wasn't accepting students, Diogenes wore him down by pestering. On one occasion, when Antisthenes raised his walking stick at him, Diogenes bowed his head and said, "Strike! You won't find any wood so hard as to keep me away so long as I think you've got something to say." From that point on he became Antisthenes's disciple and, since he was an exile, he embarked upon a life of simplicity.

It was by watching a mouse scurrying about—not anxious for a place to sleep, not afraid of the dark, nor pining away for any of the so-called pleasures—that he discovered the resourcefulness needed to handle tough situations.

### Summary of Beliefs (§§70–73 and 103–105)

He used to say that training is twofold, one kind mental, the other physical. Physical training requires constant exercise and enables mental impressions to pass through the system easily with a view to

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έτέραν χωρὶς τῆς έτέρας, οὐδέν ἦττον εὐεξίας καὶ ἰσχύος ἐν τοῖς προσήκουσι γενομένης, ὡς περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ περὶ τὸ σῶμα. παρετίθετο δὲ τεκμήρια τοῦ ῥαδίως ἀπὸ τῆς γυμνασίας ἐν τῇ ἀρετῇ καταγίνεσθαι· ὁρᾶν τε γὰρ ἐν τε ταῖς τέχναις ταῖς βαναύσοις καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ὀξυχειρίαν τοὺς τεχνίτας ἀπὸ τῆς μελέτης περιπεποιημένους τοὺς τ' αὐλητὰς καὶ τοὺς ἀθλητὰς ὅσον ὑπερφέρουσιν ἑκάτεροι τῇ ἰδίᾳ πονήσει τῇ συνεχεῖ, καὶ ὡς οὗτοι εἰ μετήνεγκαν τὴν ἄσκησιν καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν, οὐκ ἂν ἀνωφελῶς καὶ ἀτελῶς ἐμόχθουν.

Οὐδέν γε μὴν ἔλεγε τὸ παράπαν ἐν τῷ βίῳ χωρὶς ἀσκήσεως κατορθοῦσθαι, δυνατὴν δὲ ταύτην πᾶν ἐκνικῆσαι. δέον οὖν ἀντὶ τῶν ἀχρήστων πόνων τοὺς κατὰ φύσιν ἐλομένους ζῆν εὐδαιμόνως, παρὰ τὴν ἄνοιαν κακοδαιμονοῦσι. καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ τῆς ἡδονῆς ἢ καταφρόνησις ἡδυτάτη προμελετηθεῖσα, καὶ ὡς περ οἱ συνεθισθέντες ἡδέως ζῆν, ἀηδῶς ἐπὶ τούναντίον μετίασιν, οὕτως οἱ τούναντίον ἀσκηθέντες ἡδίων αὐτῶν τῶν ἡδονῶν καταφρονοῦσι. τοιαῦτα διελέγετο καὶ ποιῶν ἐφαίνετο, ὄντως νόμισμα παραχαράπτων, μηδὲν οὕτω τοῖς κατὰ νόμον ὡς τοῖς κατὰ φύσιν διδούς· τὸν αὐτὸν χαρακτῆρα τοῦ βίου λέγων διεξάγειν ὄνπερ καὶ Ἡρακλῆς, μηδὲν ἐλευθερίας προκρίνων.

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performing virtuous deeds. The one kind of training is incomplete without the other, since good conditioning and strength form no less a part of matters that concern us, whether they involve the mind or the body. He would offer proof that abiding in virtue is easy through exercise, for in manual work and other arts craftsmen acquire extraordinary precision in the work of their hands through practice. Shawm players<sup>4</sup> and athletes, too, excel in their craft owing to constant, personal effort. If these individuals were similarly to shift their training to the mind, their efforts would not be ineffectual or without benefit.

Nothing whatsoever in life, he used to say, comes out right without training, and yet training can conquer everything. Accordingly, although those who make choices in accordance with Nature (instead of pursuing fruitless toils) necessarily live a happy life, people persist in stupid misery. For even the despising of pleasure is itself most pleasant once it's become a habit. And just as those who've gotten accustomed to a pleasant life become miserable when they pass over to the opposite state of affairs, so those persons whose training has been the opposite of theirs enjoy despising pleasures with more pleasure than the pleasures themselves.



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προσυπογράφομεν δὲ καὶ τὰ κοινῇ ἀρέσκοντα αὐτοῖς, αἴρεσιν καὶ ταύτην εἶναι ἐγκρίνοντες τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, οὐ, καθά φασί τινες, ἔνστασιν βίου. ἀρέσκει οὖν αὐτοῖς τὸν λογικὸν καὶ τὸν φυσικὸν τόπον περιαιρεῖν . . . μόνῳ δὲ προσέχειν τῷ ἠθικῷ. καὶ ὅπερ τινὲς ἐπὶ Σωκράτους, τοῦτο Διοκλῆς ἐπὶ Διογένους ἀναγράφει, τοῦτον φάσκων λέγειν, Δεῖ ζητεῖν

ὅτι τοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακὸν τ' ἀγαθὸν τε τέτυκται.

παραιτοῦνται δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐγκύκλια μαθήματα . . . περιαιροῦσι δὲ καὶ γεωμετρίαν καὶ μουσικὴν καὶ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα. ὁ γοῦν Διογένης πρὸς τὸν ἐπιδεικνύντα αὐτῷ ὠροσκοπεῖον, “χρήσιμον,” ἔφη, “τὸ ἔργον πρὸς τὸ μὴ ὑστερῆσαι δείπνου.” πρὸς τὸν ἐπιδεικνύμενον αὐτῷ μουσικὸν ἔφη·

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Such was the character of his discourse, and he displayed it in action, too, a true defacer of the currency, granting nothing to practices arising from Custom compared to those in accordance with Nature, declaring that he pursued the same quality of life as did Heracles, preferring nothing to freedom.

We will now sketch out some doctrines the Cynics held in common to convey my belief that this sect, too, is a proper philosophical school and not, as some assert, just a way of life. Their official position is to strip away Logic and Physics and apply themselves to Ethics only. And that quip that some ascribe to Socrates, Diocles says originated with Diogenes, namely that what needs looking into is

Whatever bad or good is fashioned in our halls.<sup>5</sup>

They reject the subjects of general education too . . . doing away with geometry and music and such like. Indeed, when someone showed Diogenes a clock, he pronounced it “A useful device to ensure you’re not late for dinner.” To someone who was performing music for him he said:

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γνώμαις γὰρ ἀνδρῶν εὖ μὲν οἰκοῦνται πόλεις,  
εὖ δ' οἶκος, οὐ ψαλμοῖσι καὶ τερετίσμασιν.

Ἄρέσκει δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ τέλος εἶναι τὸ κατ' ἀρετὴν  
ζῆν . . . ὁμοίως τοῖς στωικοῖς· ἐπεὶ καὶ κοινωνία τις  
ταῖς δύο ταύταις αἰρέσεσιν ἐστίν. ὅθεν καὶ τὸν κυ-  
νισμὸν εἰρήκασι σύντομον ἐπ' ἀρετὴν ὁδόν.

Ἄρέσκει δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ λιτῶς βιοῦν, αὐτάρκεσι  
χρωμένοις σιτίοις καὶ τρίβωσι μόνοις, πλούτου καὶ  
δόξης καὶ εὐγενείας καταφρονοῦσιν. ἔνιοι γοῦν καὶ  
βοτάναις καὶ παντάπασιν ὕδατι χρῶνται ψυχρῶ  
σκέπαις τε ταῖς τυχούσαις καὶ πίθοις, καθάπερ Δι-  
ογένης, ὃς ἔφασκε θεῶν μὲν ἴδιον εἶναι μηδενὸς  
δεῖσθαι, τῶν δὲ θεοῖς ὁμοίων τὸ ὀλίγων χρῆζειν.

Ἄρέσκει δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν διδακτὴν  
εἶναι . . . καὶ ἀναπόβλητον ὑπάρχειν· ἀξιέραστόν τε  
τὸν σοφὸν καὶ ἀναμάρτητον καὶ φίλον τῷ ὁμοίῳ,  
τύχη τε μηδὲν ἐπιτρέπειν. τὰ δὲ μεταξὺ ἀρετῆς καὶ  
κακίας ἀδιάφορα λέγουσιν.

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It is by human intelligence that cities are well-managed,  
As is the household, not by the picking and plucking of strings.<sup>6</sup>

It's also their position that to live according to virtue is the end or goal in life, just like the Stoics. Indeed, there is a certain affinity between these two schools, because of which it has been said that Cynicism is a shortcut on the road to virtue.<sup>7</sup>

Another of their doctrines is to live frugally, to eat food conducive to self-maintenance, to wear only one cloak, and to despise wealth, reputation, and noble birth. Some Cynics, at least, are vegetarians, drink only cold water and take cover in whatever shelter presents itself, including large storage jars, as did Diogenes, who used to say that it is the gods' business to lack nothing, but for the god-like to need only a little.

They also hold that virtue is teachable and a possession that can't be taken away; that the wise man deserves love, is blameless and friendly to his ilk; and that we should leave nothing to Fortune. Things that fall in between virtue and vice they reckon as morally indifferent.

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6.22–23 τρίβωνα διπλώσας πρῶτος κατά τινος διὰ τὸ ἀνάγκην ἔχειν καὶ ἐνεύδειν αὐτῷ, πήραν τ' ἐκομίσατο, ἔνθα αὐτῷ τὰ σιτία ἦν, καὶ παντὶ τόπῳ ἐχρηῆτο εἰς πάντα, ἀριστῶν τε καὶ καθεύδων καὶ διαλεγόμενος. ὅτε καὶ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἔφασκε, δεικνὺς τὴν τοῦ Διὸς στοὰν καὶ τὸ Πομπεῖον, αὐτῷ κατεσκευακέναι ἐνδιαιτᾶσθαι. βακτηρίᾳ δ' ἐπεστηρίζετο ἀσθενήσας· ἔπειτα μέντοι καὶ διὰ παντὸς ἐφόρει, οὐ μὴν ἐν ἄστει, ἀλλὰ καθ' ὁδὸν αὐτῇ τε καὶ τῇ πήρᾳ . . . ἐπιστείλας δέ τινα οἰκίδιον αὐτῷ προνοήσασθαι, βραδύνοντος, τὸν ἐν τῷ Μητρῷφ πίθον ἔσχεν οἰκίαν . . . καὶ θέρους μὲν ἐπὶ ψάμμου ζεστῆς ἐκυλινδεῖτο, χειμῶνος δ' ἀνδριάντας κεχιονισμένους περιελάμβανε, πανταχόθεν ἑαυτὸν συνασκῶν.

6.37 συνελογίζετο δὲ καὶ οὕτως· τῶν θεῶν ἐστὶ πάντα· φίλοι δὲ οἱ σοφοὶ τοῖς θεοῖς· κοινὰ δὲ τὰ τῶν φίλων. πάντ' ἄρα ἐστὶ τῶν σοφῶν.

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### Diogenes in Action . . .

Diogenes was the first, according to some, to fold his cloak double since he had to sleep in it as well. He also carried a knapsack to store his food. When he had grown weak from age, he took to leaning upon a staff and carried it everywhere thereafter—not in town, but on the road—that and his knapsack.<sup>8</sup> . . . He made use of all places for all purposes—for eating breakfast, for sleeping, and for discussions. Sometimes he would say, pointing to the Stoa of Zeus<sup>9</sup> and the Pompeion,<sup>10</sup> that the Athenians had furnished him with places to live. . . . He had written a letter to someone once asking him to buy him a small house. He got a slow response, so he made the large storage jar in the Metroön<sup>11</sup> his home instead. . . . In summer he would roll around in hot sand. In winter he would hug statues covered in snow, thus subjecting himself to training by every means possible. (§22–23)

This is a syllogism he used to employ:

Everything belongs to the gods.

The wise are the gods' friends.

Friends hold things in common.

*Ergo*: Everything belongs to the wise. (§37)

## HOW TO SAY NO

6.64 εἰς θέατρον εἰσῆει ἐναντίος τοῖς ἐξιούσιν· ἐρωτηθεὶς δὲ διὰ τί, “τοῦτο,” ἔφη, “ἐν παντὶ τῷ βίῳ ἐπιτηδεύω ποιεῖν.”

6.46 ἐπ’ ἀγορᾶς ποτε χειρουργῶν, “εἴθε,” ἔφη, “καὶ τὴν κοιλίαν ἦν παρατρίψαντα μὴ πεινῆν.” (cf. 6.69 χειρουργῶν τ’ ἐν τῷ μέσῳ συνεχές, “εἴθε ἦν,” ἔλεγε, “καὶ τὴν κοιλίαν παρατριψάμενον τοῦ λιμοῦ παύσασθαι.”)

6.35 ξένων δέ ποτε θεάσασθαι θελόντων Δημοσθένην, τὸν μέσον δάκτυλον ἐκτείνας, “οὗτος ὑμῖν,” ἔφη, “ἐστὶν ὁ Ἀθηναίων δημαγωγός.”

6.37 Θεασάμενός ποτε παιδίον ταῖς χερσὶ πῖνον ἐξέρριψε τῆς πήρας τὴν κοτύλην, εἰπὼν, “παιδίον με νενίκηκεν εὐτελεία.” ἐξέβαλε δὲ καὶ τὸ τρυβλίον, ὁμοίως παιδίον θεασάμενος, ἐπειδὴ κατέαξε τὸ σκεῦος, τῷ κοίλῳ τοῦ ψωμίου τὴν φακὴν ὑποδεχόμενον.

6.24 συνεχές τε ἔλεγεν εἰς τὸν βίον παρεσκευάσθαι δεῖν λόγον ἢ βρόχον.

6.49 εἰπόντος τινός, “Σινωπεῖς σου φυγὴν κατέγνωσαν,” “ἐγὼ δέ γε,” εἶπεν, “ἐκείνων μονήν.”

6.63 ἐρωτηθεὶς πόθεν εἶη, “κοσμοπολίτης,” ἔφη.

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He used to enter the theater, walking against the flow of people exiting. When asked why, he replied, “I’ve been pursuing this course of action my entire life.” (§64)

He would often give himself a hand job in the middle of the Agora and say, “If only hunger were relieved by stroking one’s stomach!”<sup>12</sup>

On one occasion some foreigners were in town and wanted to see the orator Demosthenes. Diogenes pointed him out with his middle finger and said, “There you go—the demagogue of Athens!” (§65)

Once, after observing a child drink water from his hands, he hurled his cup from his knapsack, saying “A child has vanquished me in simplicity!” He tossed out his bowl, too, when he saw in like manner a child who had broken his plate take his lentils in a hollowed-out hunk of bread. (§37)

He was constantly saying that with respect to living life one must either use one’s noodle or a noose.<sup>13</sup> (§24)

When someone observed, “The Sinopeans have condemned you to exile,” he replied, “Yes, but I have condemned them to stay put.” (§49)

When asked where he was from, he replied, “I am a Cosmopolite.”<sup>14</sup> (§63)



## HOW TO SAY NO

6.40 πρὸς τὸν πυθόμενον ποία ὥρα δεῖ ἀριστᾶν, “εἰ μὲν πλούσιος,” ἔφη, “ὅταν θέλῃ· εἰ δὲ πένης, ὅταν ἔχῃ.”

6.54 ἐρωτηθεὶς ποῖον οἶνον ἠδέως πίνει, ἔφη, “τὸν ἀλλότριον.”

6.56 ἐρωτηθεὶς διὰ τί προσαίταις μὲν ἐπιδιδόασι, φιλοσόφοις δὲ οὐ, ἔφη, “ὅτι χωλοὶ μὲν καὶ τυφλοὶ γενέσθαι ἐλπίζουσι, φιλοσοφῆσαι δ’ οὐδέποτε.”

6.49 ἦται ποτὲ ἀνδριάντα· ἐρωτηθεὶς δὲ διὰ τί τοῦτο ποιεῖ, “μελετῶ,” εἶπεν, “ἀποτυγχάνειν.”

6.41 λύχον μεθ’ ἡμέραν ἄψας περιῆει λέγων “ἄνθρωπον ζητῶ.”

6.58 πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα, “οἱ πλείους σου καταγελῶσι,” “κάκείνων τυχόν,” εἶπεν, “οἱ ὄνοι· ἀλλ’ οὐτ’ ἐκεῖνοι τῶν ὄνων ἐπιστρέφονται, οὐτ’ ἐγὼ ἐκείνων.”

6.60 ἐρωτηθεὶς τί ποιῶν κύων καλεῖται, ἔφη, “τοὺς μὲν διδόντας σαίνων, τοὺς δὲ μὴ διδόντας ὑλακτῶν, τοὺς δὲ πονηροὺς δάκνων.”

6.46 ἐν δείπῳ προσερρίπτουν αὐτῷ τινες ὀστάρια ὡς κυνί· καὶ ὃς ἀπαλλαττόμενος προσεούρησεν αὐτοῖς ὡς κύων.

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To someone who asked at what hour one should eat lunch he said, “If rich, whenever you want; if poor, whenever you can.” (§40)

When asked what kind of wine he enjoyed drinking, he replied, “Somebody else’s.” (§54)

When he was asked why people give to beggars but not to philosophers, he said, “Because people expect they might become lame or blind, but never that they’ll become philosophers!” (§56)

He once begged from a statue. When asked why he was doing so, he replied, “To get practice at being refused.” (§49)

It was his custom to light a lamp in the middle of the day, walk around with it and say, “I’m looking for a human being.” (§41)

To someone who said, “Most people laugh at you,” he replied, “And, probably, asses laugh at them. People pay no heed to asses. I pay no heed to them.” (§58)

When asked what it was that he did to be called a dog, he said, “Because I fawn on those who give, I bark at those who don’t, and I bite scoundrels.” (§60)

At a dinner party people kept tossing him bones as one would do to a dog, whereupon, like a dog, he pissed on them and left. (§46)

## HOW TO SAY NO

6.54 Ἐρωτηθεὶς ὑπὸ τινος, “ποῖός τίς σοι Διογένης δοκεῖ;” “Σωκράτης,” εἶπε, “μαινόμενος.”

6.69 Ἐρωτηθεὶς τί κάλλιστον ἐν ἀνθρώποις, ἔφη, “παρρησία.”

6.60 Ἀλεξάνδρου ποτὲ ἐπιστάντος αὐτῷ καὶ εἰπόντος, “ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ μέγας βασιλεύς,” “κάγώ,” φησί, “Διογένης ὁ κύων.”

6.38 ἐν τῷ Κρανεῖῳ ἡλιουμένῳ αὐτῷ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπιστάς φησιν, “αἴτησόν με ὃ θέλεις.” καὶ ὅς, “ἀποσκοτήσόν μου,” φησί.

6.40 Πλάτωνος ὀρισαμένου, Ἄνθρωπός ἐστι ζῶον δίπουν ἄπτερον, καὶ εὐδοκιμοῦντος, τίλας ἀλεκτρυόνα εἰσήνεγκεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν σχολὴν καὶ φησιν, “οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Πλάτωνος ἄνθρωπος.” ὅθεν τῷ ὄρφῳ προσετέθη τὸ πλατυώνυχον.

6.74 Καὶ πρᾶσιν ἤνεγκε γενναιότατα· πλέων γὰρ εἰς Αἴγιναν καὶ πειραταῖς ἀλοῦς ὧν ἦρχε Σκίρπαλος, εἰς Κρήτην ἀπαχθεὶς ἐπιπράσκετο· καὶ τοῦ κήρυκος ἐρωτῶντος τί οἶδε ποιεῖν, ἔφη, “ἀνθρώπων ἄρχειν.” ὅτε καὶ δεῖξας τινὰ Κορίνθιον εὐπάρυφον, τὸν προειρημένον Ξενιάδην, ἔφη, “τούτῳ με πώλει οὗτος δεσπότης χρῆζει.” ὠνεῖται δὴ αὐτὸν ὁ Ξενιάδης καὶ ἀπαγαγὼν εἰς τὴν Κόρινθον ἐπέστησε

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When someone asked Plato,<sup>15</sup> “What sort of person does Diogenes seem to you?” he replied, “Socrates gone insane.” (§54)

When asked “What is the finest possession of humankind?” he replied, “To speak frankly.” (§69)

Alexander once stood before him and declared, “I am Alexander, the Great King.” “And I,” he replied, “am Diogenes the Dog.” (§60)

While Diogenes was sunbathing in the Craneum,<sup>16</sup> Alexander stood in front of him and said, “Ask me for whatever you want,” to which Diogenes replied, “Get out of my sunshine.” (§38)

While Plato was receiving accolades for defining a human being as a featherless biped, Diogenes plucked a chicken, brought it into the lecture hall and said, “Behold, Plato’s human.” Whereupon Plato added “flat-fingernailed” to his definition. (§40)

He even bore being sold as a slave with the greatest dignity. For, en route by boat to Aegina, Diogenes was captured by pirates under Scirpalus’s command, brought to Crete, and put up for sale. When the auctioneer asked what he knew how to do, he replied, “Rule over people.” Then he pointed at a certain Corinthian named Xeniadēs, who was dressed in fine purple. “Sell me to him,” he said.

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τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ παιδίοις καὶ πᾶσαν ἐνεχείρισε τὴν οἰκίαν. ὁ δὲ οὕτως αὐτὴν ἐν πᾶσι διετίθει, ὥστε ἐκεῖνος περιῶν ἔλεγεν· “ἀγαθὸς δαίμων εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν μου εἰσελήλυθε.”

Λέγεται δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἐνενήκοντα ἔτη βιοὺς τελευτῆσαι. περὶ δὲ τοῦ θανάτου διάφοροι λέγονται λόγοι· οἱ μὲν γὰρ πολύποδα φαγόντα ὤμῶν χολερικῆ ληφθῆναι καὶ ὧδε τελευτῆσαι· . . .” Ἄλλοι φασὶ πολὺπουν κυσὶ συμμερίσασθαι βουλόμενον οὕτω δηχθῆναι τοῦ ποδὸς τὸν τένοντα καὶ καταστρέψαι. οἱ μέντοι γνώριμοι αὐτοῦ, καθά φησιν Ἀντισθένης ἐν Διαδοχαῖς, εἵκαζον τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος συγκράτησιν. ἐτύγχανε μὲν γὰρ διάγων ἐν τῷ Κρανείῳ τῷ πρὸ τῆς Κορίνθου γυμνασίῳ· κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἔθος ἦκον οἱ γνώριμοι καὶ αὐτὸν καταλαμβάνουσιν ἐγκεκαλυμμένον καὶ εἵκασαν αὐτὸν κοιμᾶσθαι· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦν τις νυσταλέος καὶ ὑπνηλός. ὄθεν, ἀποπετάσαντες τὸν τρίβωνα ἔκπνουν αὐτὸν καταλαμβάνουσι καὶ ὑπέλαβον τοῦτο πρᾶξι βουλόμενον λοιπὸν ὑπεξελθεῖν τοῦ βίου.

”Ἐνθα καὶ στάσις, ὡς φασιν, ἐγένετο τῶν γνωρίμων, τίνες αὐτὸν θάψουσιν· ἀλλὰ καὶ μέχρι χει-

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“He needs a master.” And so Xeniaades bought him, took him to Corinth, and put him in charge of his children and all his household. Diogenes managed everything so well that Xeniaades went around saying, “A good spirit has entered my home.” (§74)

### Death (§§76–78)

They say that Diogenes was nearly ninety when he died. Accounts differ as to the manner of his death. Some say he was taken ill after eating raw octopus and that’s how he died. . . . Others say that in attempting to share the octopus with dogs he was bitten on the tendon of his foot and succumbed to that. Those who knew him, however, as Antisthenes says in his work *The Successions*, reckon it likely that he died from holding his breath. For he happened to be living in the Craneum, a place for exercise just outside Corinth, and his acquaintances came, as usual, and found him all wrapped up and guessed that he was sleeping. But because he was not, they inferred, the drowsy type, nor prone to nodding off, they peeled back his cloak, found that he wasn’t breathing, and supposed he had done the deed on purpose to escape the remainder of his life.

Thereupon an argument arose among his companions about who should bury him. Indeed, they

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ρῶν ἦλθον. ἀφικομένων δὲ τῶν πατέρων καὶ τῶν ὑπερεχόντων, ὑπὸ τούτοις ταφῆναι τὸν ἄνδρα παρὰ τῇ πύλῃ τῇ φερούσῃ εἰς τὸν Ἴσθμόν. ἐπέστησάν τ' αὐτῷ κίονα καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῷ λίθου Παρίου κύνα. ὕστερον δὲ καὶ οἱ πολῖται αὐτοῦ χαλκαῖς εἰκόσιν ἐτίμησαν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐπέγραψαν οὕτω·

γηράσκει καὶ χαλκὸς ὑπὸ χρόνου, ἀλλὰ σὸν οὔτι  
κῦδος ὁ πᾶς αἰὼν, Διόγενες, καθελεῖ·  
μοῦνος ἐπεὶ βιοτᾶς αὐτάρκεα δόξαν ἔδειξας  
θνατοῖς καὶ ζωᾶς οἶμον ἐλαφροτάταν.

Ἔνιοι δὲ φασὶ τελευτῶντα αὐτὸν [καὶ] ἐντείλασθαι ἄταφον ρῖψαι ὡς πᾶν θηρίον αὐτοῦ μετάσχοι, ἢ εἷς γε βόθρον συνῶσαι καὶ ὀλίγην κόνιν ἐπαμῆσαι· οἱ δέ, εἰς τὸν Ἴλισσὸν ἐμβαλεῖν, ἵνα τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς χρήσιμος γένηται.

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came to blows over it. But their fathers and leading citizens arrived on the scene and, with their intervention, Diogenes was buried beside the gate that leads to the Isthmus. They erected a column over his grave and placed upon it a dog sculpted in Parian marble. Later his fellow citizens also honored him with statues of bronze, on which they inscribed the following:

Diogenes—  
Bronze grows gray with time, but your renown  
No eternity can topple down.  
You alone showed us, who mortals be,  
Life's easiest road and autarky.<sup>17</sup>

But others say his dying wish was to be chucked aside, unburied, so that wild animals could partake of him, or pushed into a ditch at least, with a little dust sprinkled on top; still others that he wanted to be thrown into the river Ilissus so that he might be of some use to his brethren.