

# The New Criterion

## Poems

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### From Book II, Satire VI

by [A. M. Juster](#)

These were the things I hoped my prayers would bring:  
some land, a kitchen garden and a spring  
that's always flowing by a house below  
a modest stand of trees. The gods bestow  
on me far more and better; I am content.  
Except to make these blessings permanent,  
O son of Maia, I won't try to gain  
by asking more of you. If I refrain  
from adding assets by malevolence  
or causing losses through my negligence  
and waste; if I don't offer prayers like these:

“O let me own abutting properties  
intruding into mine; for they distort  
the borders of my farm!”

“O let some sort  
of lucky break provide me with a pot  
of silver, like that guy who, when he got  
his treasure, bought and plowed the very land  
on which he labored as a hired hand,  
and so became enriched by being tied  
to Hercules.”

If I am satisfied,  
and grateful for my personal possession ...

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