

Sappho's 'Hymn to Aphrodite'

fr. 1 Voigt / Lobel-Page

ποικιλόθρον' ἀθανάτ' Ἀφρόδιτα,
παῖ Δίος δολόπλοκε, λίσσομαί σε,
μή μ' ἄσαισι μηδ' ὀνίαισι δάμνα,
πότνια, θῦμον,

ἀλλὰ τυίδ' ἔλθ', αἶ ποτα κἀτέρωτα 5
τὰς ἔμας αὔδα·ς αἰοῖσα πῆλοι
ἔκλυες, πάτρος δὲ δόμον λίποισα
χρῦσιον ἦλθες

ἄρμ' ὑπασδεύξαισα· κάλοι δέ σ' ἄγον 10
ῶκεες στροῦθοι περὶ γᾶς μελαίνας
πύκνα δίνεντες πτέρ' ἀπ' ὠράνω ἴθε-
ρος διὰ μέσσω·

αἶψα δ' ἐξίκοντο· σὺ δ', ὦ μάκαιρα,
μειδιαίσις' ἀθανάτῳ προσώπῳ 15
ἦρε' ὅτι δηῦτε πέπονθα κῶττι
δηῦτε κάλημμι

κῶττι μοι μάλιστα θέλω γένεσθαι
μαινόλαι θύμῳ· τίνα δηῦτε πείθω
.].σάγην ἐς σὰν φιλότατα; τίς σ', ὦ 20
Ψάφ', ἀδικήει;

καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,
αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ δώσει,
αἰ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει
κῶκ ἐθέλοισα.

ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν, χαλέπαν δὲ λῦσον 25
ἐκ μερίμναν, ὅσσα δέ μοι τέλεσσαι
θῦμος ἱμέρρει, τέλεσον, σὺ δ' αὔτα
σύμμαχος ἔσσο.

Sappho's 'Hymn to Aphrodite'

(transl. Martine Cuypers)

Immortal Aphrodite of the dazzling throne,
child of Zeus, weaver of wiles: I beg you,
mistress, do not pain my heart
with anguish and disturbance.

Come here, if ever at some other time
from far away you heard my cries
and came to me. You left your father
and his golden house, and

yoked your chariot. Lovely sparrows
bore you speedily across dark earth
with whirring wings, down from heaven,
straight through the sky;

and there they were. You smiled, bless you,
with your immortal countenance and asked:
what was it now that was the matter?
why was it now that I was calling?

what was it most that in my crazy heart
I wanted to accomplish? "Who is it now
I should entice into your love? Who *is* it,
Sappho, wrongs you?

"For if she flees, soon she will chase you;
offer you gifts, not spurn your presents.
Does she reject you? Soon she will love you,
whether she wants it or not!"

So, goddess, also help me now;
come free me from my heavy sorrows.
All my heart's desires fulfil,
my trusted ally always.