Sappho’s ‘Hymn to Aphrodite’
fr. 1 Voigt / Lobel-Page

ποικιλόθρον’ ἀθανάτ’ ἀφρόδιτα,
pai̱ Δios dolőploke, líssomai sei, μή μ’ ἁσαι μηδ’ ὀνίαιο δόμαν, πόντια, θύμον,

ἀλλὰ τυίδ’ Ἕλθ’, αἱ ποτα κάτερωτα τὰς ἑμας αὐδας ἀιώσα πήλοι ἡκλυνες, πάτρος ἐ δόμον λίποισα χρύσιον ἠλθες

ἄρμι’ ὑπασδεύξαισα· κάλοι δὲ σ’ ἃγον ἅτις στροοῦθοι περὶ γάς μελαινας πύκνα δίννεντες πτέρ’ ἀπ’ ὤρανωθῆθε-

ῥος δι’ ἡμέσω·

αἴψα δ’ ἐξίκοντο· σὺ δ’, ὦ μάκαιρα, μειδιαῖαςι’ ἀθανάτωι προσώπωι ἡρε’ ὅτι δηῦτε πέπονθα κὐττὶ δηῦτε κάλημι

κὐττὶ μοι μάλιστα θέλω γένεσθαι μαινόλαι θύμωι· τίνα δηῦτε πείθω

καὶ γὰρ αἱ φεῦγει, ταχέως διώξει, αἰ δὲ δῷρα μὴ δέκετ’, ἀλλὰ δὔσει, αἱ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλῆσε κωὰ ἐθέλοισα.

ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν, χαλέπαν ἐ δ λύσον ἐκ μερίμναν, ὅσσα δὲ μοι τέλεσαι θύμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον, σὺ δ’ αὕτα σύμμαχος ἐσσο.
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.