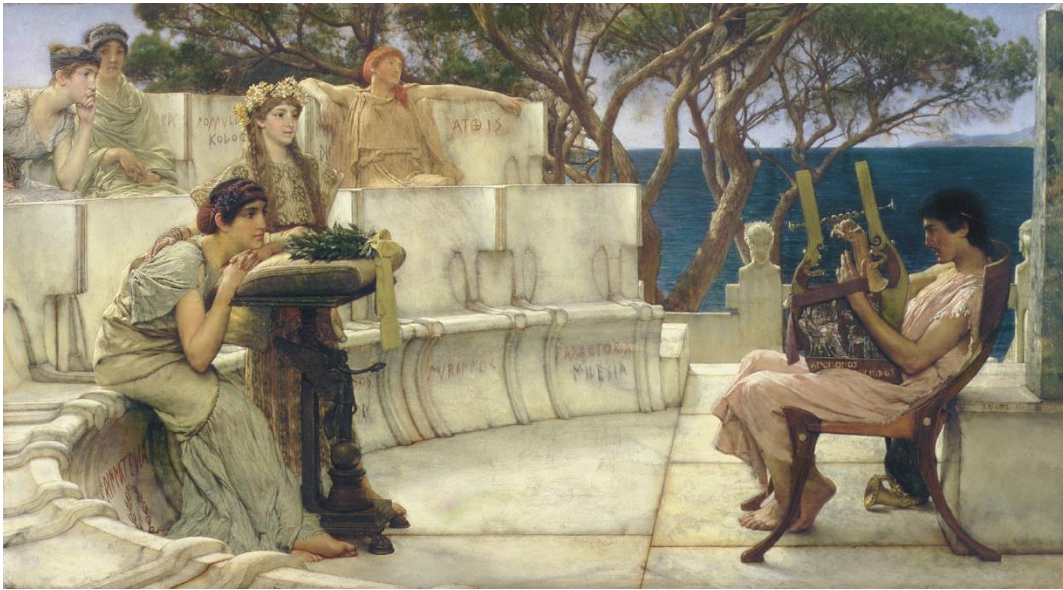


## BELLARIA LXIX



*Sappho and Alcaeus* (Lawrence Alma-Tadema: 1881)

### THE GREEK (PALATINE) ANTHOLOGY II

#### Note

The clunking translations are adapted from the Loeb *Greek Anthology* (W.R. Paton) to match the Greek as closely as possible. The translations by Peter Bradley are taken from his *Epic to Epigram: An Anthology of Classical Verse* (Bristol Classical Press 1991). I have made every effort to get his permission to reproduce his work but have failed to track him down.

*The Greek Anthology* (Penguin Classics) contains 861 mostly very good poetic versions, with notes and glossaries.

They told me...



Callimachus (Naples)

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,  
 They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.  
 I wept as I remembered how often you and I  
     Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.  
 And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,  
     A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,  
 5 Still are thy pleasant voices, thy 'Nightingales'\*; awake;  
     For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

*Willam Johnson Cory*

\* i.e. his poems, or the name of a book of Heraclitus' poems. Nightingales, of course, sing in the dark.

εἶπέ τις, Ἡράκλειτε, τεὸν μόρον, ἐς δέ με δάκρυ  
     ἦγαγεν, ἐμνήσθην δ' ὀσάκις ἀμφοτέροι  
 ἠέλιον λέσχη κατεδύσαμεν. ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν που,  
     ξεῖν' Ἀλικαρνησεῦ, τετράπαλαι σποδιή·  
 5 αἰ δὲ τεαῖ ζώουσιν ἀηδόνες, ἦσιν ὁ πάντων  
     ἀρπακτῆς Ἀΐδης οὐκ ἐπὶ χεῖρα βαλεῖ.

**Callimachus 7.80**

### Heraclitus' one surviving poem



The earth is newly dug and on the faces of the tomb-stone  
 wave the half-withered garlands of leaves.  
 Deciphering the inscription, wayfarer, let us look at the stone,  
 Whose smooth bones the stone says it covers. —  
 5 'Stranger, I am Aretemias, my country Cnidus. I came to Euphro's  
 bed, and I did not escape birth-pains,  
 but bearing twins, I left one child to guide my husband's steps  
 in his old age, the other I took with me to remind me of him.'

ἀ κόνις ἀρτίσκαπτος, ἐπὶ στάλας δὲ μετώπων  
     σεῖονται φύλλων ἡμιθαλεῖς στέφανοι·  
 γράμμα διακρίναντες, ὄδοιπόρε, πέτρον ἴδωμεν,  
     λευρὰ περιστέλλειν ὀστέα φατὶ τίνος. —  
 5 'ξεῖν', Ἀρετημιάς εἰμι: πάτρα Κνίδος: Εὐφρονος ἦλθον

εἰς λέχος: ὠδίνων οὐκ ἄμορος γενόμεν  
δισσὰ δ' ὁμοῦ τίκτουσα, τὸ μὲν λίπον ἀνδρὶ ποδηγὸν  
γῆρως, ἔν δ' ἀπάγω μναμόσυνον πόσιος.'

Heraclitus 7.465

### Loser

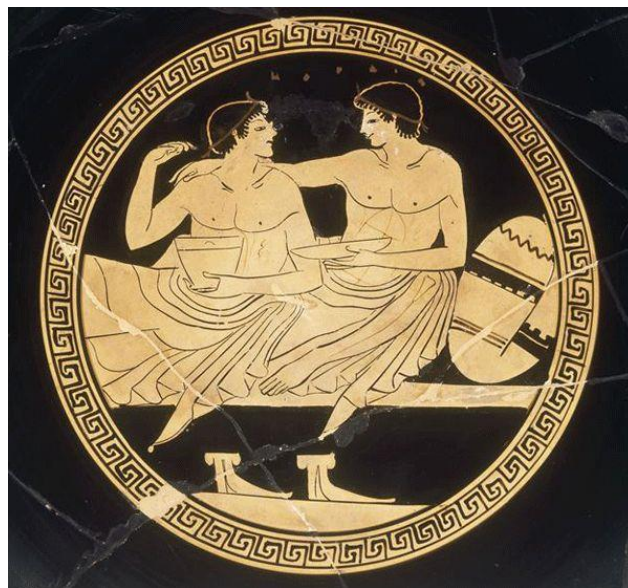


'Hello, girl.' 'And you.' 'Who's walking in front of you?' 'What is that to you?'  
'I have a reason for asking.' 'She is my mistress.'  
'May I hope?' 'What do you want?' 'A night.' 'What do you have for her?'  
'Gold.' 'Then take heart.' 'And this much'. 'Not a chance.'

'χαῖρε, κόρη.' 'καὶ δὴ σύ.' 'τίς ἢ προιοῦσα;' 'τί πρὸς σέ;'  
'οὐκ ἀλόγως ζητῶ.' 'δεσπότις ἡμετέρη.'  
'ἐλπίζειν ἔξεστι;' 'θέλεις δέ τί;' 'νύκτα.' 'φέρεις τι;'  
'χρυσίον.' 'εὐθύμει.' 'καὶ τόσον.' 'οὐ δύνασαι.'

Anon. 5.101

### Apotheosis



Last evening Moeris, at the hour when we bid good night—  
I know not whether in reality or in a dream—embraced me.  
I remember now quite accurately everything else,  
what he said to me and the questions he asked,  
5 but whether he also kissed me is my conjecture; for if it is true,  
how is it that I, become a god, am walking about on earth?

ἔσπερίην Μοῖρίς με, καθ' ἣν ὑγιαίνομεν ὥρην,  
οὐκ οἶδ' εἶτε σαφῶς, εἴτ' ὄναρ, ἠσπάσατο.  
ἤδη γὰρ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα μάλ' ἀτρεκέως ἐνόησα,  
χῶκόσα μοι προσέφη, χῶκόσ' ἐπυρθάνετο.  
5 εἰ δέ με καὶ πεφίληκε, τεκμαίρομαι· εἰ γὰρ ἀληθές,  
πῶς ἀποθειωθεὶς πλάζομ' ἐπιχθόνιος;

**Strato 12.177**

(Strato wrote homoerotic poems, but the sex of the beloved is not actually indicated in the Greek. Moeris – cf. Alexis – is probably masculine)

### Peter Hadley's translation

When Moeris said goodnight she seemed to hold me  
And kiss my lips—and yet, for all I know,  
I dreamed it. I remember all she told me  
And all I said to her, but I can show  
It was a dream: for, if the kiss was given,  
Why now am I on earth, and not in Heaven?

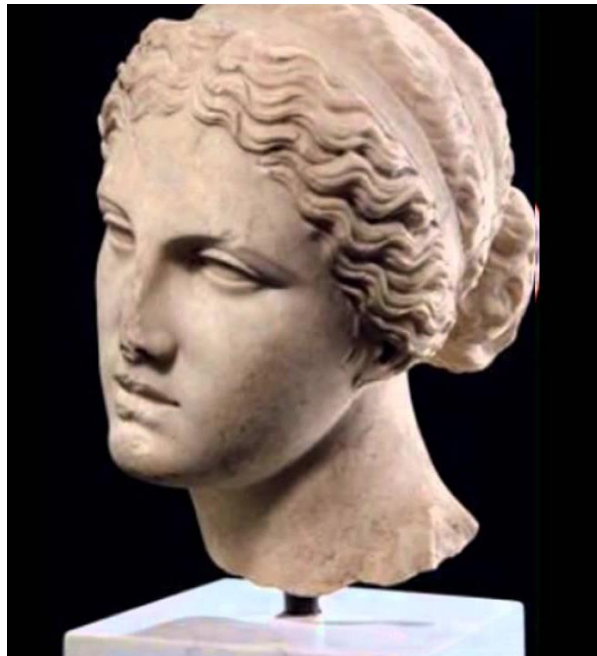
### The logic of love

Who can tell if his beloved begins to pass its prime,  
when he is always with him and never separated?  
Who cannot please today, when he pleased yesterday?  
And if he pleases now, what can happen to make him displease  
[tomorrow?

τίς δύναται γινῶναι τὸν ἐρώμενον εἰ παρακμάζει,  
πάντα συνῶν αὐτῷ μηδ' ἀπολειπόμενος;  
τίς δύνατ' οὐκ ἀρέσαι τὴν σήμερον, ἐχθὲς ἀρέσκων;  
εἰ δ' ἀρέσει, τί παθῶν αὔριον οὐκ ἀρέσει;

**Strato 12.248**

### The logic of beauty



If beauty grows old, share it before it leaves;  
but if it is for ever, why fear to give what is eternal?  
εἰ μὲν γηράσκει τὸ καλόν, μετάδος, πρὶν ἀπέλθῃ·  
εἰ δὲ μένει, τί φοβῆ τοῦθ' ὃ μένει διδόναι;

**Strato 12.235**

### The kiss-tasting

I care not for wine, but if you would make me drunk,  
taste the cup first and I will accept it when you offer it.  
For, once you touch it with your lips, to abstain  
is no longer easy, nor to fly from the sweet cup-bearer.  
5 The cup ferries your kiss to me,  
and tells me what joy it tasted.

εἰμί μὲν οὐ φιλόοινος· ὅταν δ' ἐθέλῃς με μεθύσσαι,  
πρῶτα σὺ γευομένη πρόσφερε, καὶ δέχομαι.  
εἰ γὰρ ἐπιψαύσεις τοῖς χεῖλεσιν, οὐκέτι νήφειν  
εὐμαρές, οὐδὲ φυγεῖν τὸν γλυκὺν οἰνοχόον.  
5 πορθμεύει γὰρ ἔμοιγε κύλιξ παρὰ σοῦ τὸ φίλημα,  
καί μοι ἀπαγγέλλει τὴν χάριν ἣν ἔλαβεν.

**Agathias Scholasticus 5.261**

### Rejection



Finding Prodiike happily alone, I besought her,  
and clasping her ambrosial knees,  
'Save', I said 'a man who is nearly lost,  
and grant me the little breath that has not left me.'  
5 When I said this, she wept, but wiped away the tears,  
and with her tender hands lifted me up.

εὐκαίρως μονάσασαν ἰδὼν Προδίκην ἰκέτευον,  
καὶ τῶν ἀμβροσίων ἀψάμενος γονάτων,  
'σῶσον,' ἔφην, 'ἄνθρωπον ἀπολλύμενον παρὰ μικρόν,

καὶ φεῦγον ζωῆς πνεῦμα σύ μοι χάρισαι.  
5 ταῦτα λέγοντος ἔκλαυσεν, ἀποψήσασα δὲ δάκρυ,  
ταῖς τρυφεραῖς ἡμᾶς χερσὶν ὑπεξέλαβεν.\*

\*ὑπεξέβαλεν 'hoyed me out' is the ms. reading, felt to be too much of a *para prosdokian*. I rather like it.

**Rufinus 5.66**

### Hooked

Beauty without charm only pleases us, but does not hold us;  
it is like a bait floating without a hook.

κάλλος ἄνευ χαρίτων τέρπει μόνον, οὐ κατέχει δέ,  
ὡς ἄτερ ἀγκίστρου νηρόμενον δέλεαρ.

**Capito 5.67**

### Cupid at work



Sell him! Though he's still sleeping at his mother's breast.  
Sell him! Why should I bring up such a little devil?  
He's snub-nosed, has little wings, and lightly with his nails  
scratches, and while he's crying often begins to laugh.  
5 Besides, he can't be suckled, always chatters, doesn't miss a thing,  
and savage too: even his dear mother can't tame it.  
He's a total monster; he shall be sold. If any trader about to sail off  
wants to buy a baby, roll up!  
But look! He's begging me, all tears. Well! I will not sell you, then.  
10 Cheer up; stay here to keep Zenophila company.

Πωλείσθω καὶ ματρὸς ἔτ' ἐν κόλποισι καθεύδων,  
πωλείσθω· τί δέ μοι τὸ θρασὺ τοῦτο τρέφειν;  
καὶ γὰρ σιμὸν ἔφου καὶ ὑπόπτερον, ἄκρα δ' ὄνυξιν  
κνίζει, καὶ κλαῖον πολλὰ μεταξὺ γελᾷ·  
5 πρὸς δ' ἔτι λοιπὸν ἄθρεπτον, αἰίλαλον, ὄξυ δεδορκός,  
ἄγριον, οὐδ' αὐτᾷ μητρὶ φίλα τιθασόν·  
πάντα τέρας· τοιγὰρ πεπράσεται· εἴ τις ἀπόπλους  
ἔμπορος ὠνεῖσθαι παῖδα θέλει, προσίτω.  
καίτοι λίσσετ', ἰδοῦ, δεδακρυμένος· οὐ σ' ἔτι πωλῶ·  
10 θάρσει· Ζηνοφίλα σύντροφος ὦδε μένε.  
**Meleager 5.178**

## Unequal combat

I have armed my breast against Love with—wisdom;  
nor will he conquer, if it be a single combat.  
I, a mortal, will stand up against an immortal. But to help him,  
if he has Bacchus, what can I alone do against two?

ὤπλισμαι πρὸς ἔρωτα περὶ στέρνοισι λογισμὸν,  
οὐδέ με νικήσει, μοῦνος ἔων πρὸς ἓνα·  
θνατὸς δ' ἀθανάτῳ συστήσομαι· ἦν δὲ βοηθὸν  
Βάκχον ἔχη, τί μόνος πρὸς δύο' ἐγὼ δύναμαι;

Rufinus 5.93

## Mosquito on a mission



Fly, mosquito, as my swift messenger, and on the tip of the ears  
of Zenophila settling, whisper thus:  
'Sleepless he awaits you, while you, sluggard, forgetting those who love you,  
Sleep!' Off you go! Fly! Yes, music-lover, away!  
5 But speak quietly to her, in case you wake her bedfellow  
and arouse painful pangs of jealousy against me.  
But if you bring me the girl, I will crown you with the lion's skin,  
mosquito, and give you a club to carry in your hand.

Πταίης μοι, κώνωψ, ταχὺς ἄγγελος, οὔασι δ' ἄκροις  
Ζηνοφίλας ψαύσας προσπιθύριζε τάδε·  
'ἄγρυπνος μίμνει σε· σὺ δ', ὦ λήθαργε φιλοῦντων,  
εὔδεις.' εἶα, πέτευ; ναί, φιλόμουσε, πέτευ·  
5 ἤσυχά δὲ φθέγγαι, μὴ καὶ σύγκοιτον ἐγείρας  
κινήσης ἐπ' ἔμοι ζηλοτύπους ὀδύνας,  
ἦν δ' ἀγάγης τὴν παῖδα, δορᾶ στέψω σε λέοντος,  
κώνωψ, καὶ δώσω χειρὶ φέρειν ῥόπαλον.

Meleager 5.152

## Peter Hadley's translation

Buzz off and take a telegram for me, mosquito dear;  
Go, settle on the tip of my Zenophila's sweet ear:  
'Are you never, never coming?' (runs the song that you'll be humming)  
'You're forgetting how he's fretting while you're slumbering up here.'  
5 Fly away and make your music—ah, but softly, if you please

(Her husband mustn't wake and hear such messages as these),  
And I promise, on condition you're successful in your mission,  
I'll requite you, and this night you'll be a second Hercules.

### When One = Ten



Pour in ten ladles of Lysidice,\* and of desirable  
Euphrante give me, cup-bearer, one ladle.  
You will say I love Lysidice best. No! by sweet  
Bacchus, whom I drain from this cup.  
For me, the one Euphrante is as ten. Yes, and countless stars  
does the light of the one single moon outshine.

\* He is toasting Lysidice at a symposium

ἔγχει Λυσιδίκης κυάθους δέκα, τῆς δὲ ποθεινῆς  
Εὐφράντης ἓνα μοι, λάτρι, δίδου κύαθον.  
φήσεις Λυσιδίκην με φιλεῖν πλέον. οὐ μὰ τὸν ἠδὺν  
Βάκχον, ὃν ἐν ταύτῃ λαβροποτῶ κύλικι·  
5 ἀλλὰ μοι Εὐφράντη μία πρὸς δέκα· καὶ γὰρ ἀπείρους  
ἀστέρας ἐν μήνης φέγγος ὑπερτίθεται.

**Marcus Argentarius 5.110**

### *Eheu fugaces...*

Did I not tell you, Prodike, that we are growing old, did I not foretell  
‘The dissolvers of love shall come soon?’  
So now—the wrinkles and the grey hairs, a shrivelled body,  
and a mouth lacking all its former charm.  
Does anyone, haughty woman, approach you now, or flattering  
plead with you? Like a wayside tomb, we now pass you by.

οὐκ ἔλεγον, Προδίκη, ‘Γηράσκομεν ;’ οὐ προεφώνου  
‘ἥξουσιν ταχέως αἱ διαλυσίφιλοι ;’  
νῦν ρυτίδες καὶ θριξ πολιῆ καὶ σῶμα ρακῶδες,  
καὶ στόμα τὰς προτέρας οὐκέτ’ ἔχον χάριτας.  
5 μή τις σοι, μετέωρε, προσέρχεται, ἢ κολακεύων  
λίσσειται; ὡς δὲ τάφον νῦν σε παρερχόμεθα.

**Rufinus 5.21**



## Keep it simple



I am never going to turn into gold; let someone else become a bull  
or the melodious swan of the shore.  
Let such tricks be Zeus's secret: to Corinna  
I shall give these obols, both of them, and no taking flight.

οὐ μέλλω ρεύσειν χρυσός ποτε· βοῦς δὲ γένοιτο  
ἄλλος, χῶ μελίθρους κύκνος ἐπηρόνιος.  
Ζηνὶ φυλασσέσθω τάδε παίγνια· τῇ δὲ Κορίννη  
τοὺς ὀβολοὺς δώσω τοὺς δύο, κού πέτομαι.

**Bassus 5.125**

## False oaths



O holy Night, and Lamp, no other confidants  
of our oaths but you did we both choose—  
he to love me and I never to leave him  
did we swear, and you were joint witnesses.  
5 But now he says those oaths were written in running water,  
and you, O Lamp, see him in the bosom of others.

νύξ ἱερὴ καὶ λύχνη, συνίστορας οὔτινας ἄλλους  
ὄρκους, ἀλλ' ὑμέας, εἰλόμεθ' ἀμφοτέροι·  
χῶ μὲν ἐμὲ στέρξειν, κεῖνον δ' ἐγὼ οὐ ποτε λείψειν  
ὠμόσαμεν, κοινήν δ' εἶχετε μαρτυρίην.  
5 νῦν δ' ὁ μὲν ὄρκια φησὶν ἐν ὕδατι κεῖνα φέρεσθαι,  
λύχνη, σὺ δ' ἐν κόλποις αὐτὸν ὄρῳς ἐτέρων.

**Meleager 5.8**

## Dangling on a string

My soul warns me to escape my desire for Heliodora,  
knowing well the tears and jealousies of the past.  
It commands, but I have no strength to fly, for the shameless girl  
herself warns me too, and even while she warns—kisses me.

ψυχή μοι προλέγει φεύγειν πόθον Ἡλιοδώρας,  
δάκρυα καὶ ζήλους τοὺς πρὶν ἐπισταμένη.  
φησὶ μὲν, ἀλλὰ φυγεῖν οὐ μοι σθένος· ἢ γὰρ ἀναιδῆς  
αὐτὴ καὶ προλέγει, καὶ προλέγουσα φιλεῖ.

**Meleager 5.24**

## Fair shares

I was much in love with the virgin Alcippe. Once, having persuaded her,  
her secretly I brought to my bed.  
Both our hearts were beating, in case someone came in  
and witnessed the secrets of our overwhelming desires.  
But her mother overheard her talk but, looking in  
suddenly, said, 'Fair shares, daughter'.\*

\*Hermes was the god of unexpected finds.

παρθένον Ἀλκίππην ἐφίλουν μέγα, καὶ ποτε πείσας  
αὐτὴν λαθριδίως εἶχον ἐπὶ κλισίῃ.  
ἀμφοτέρων δὲ στέρνον ἐπάλλετο, μή τις ἐπέλθῃ,  
μή τις ἴδῃ τὰ πόθων κρυπτὰ περισσοτέρων.  
μητέρα δ' οὐκ ἔλαθεν κείνης λάλον ἀλλ' ἐσιδοῦσα  
ἔξαπίνης, "Ἑρμῆς κοινός," ἔφη, "θύγατερ."

**Marcus Argentarius 5.127**

**Next week:** Lais' mirror, honey-bees, raisins, and *odior amo?*