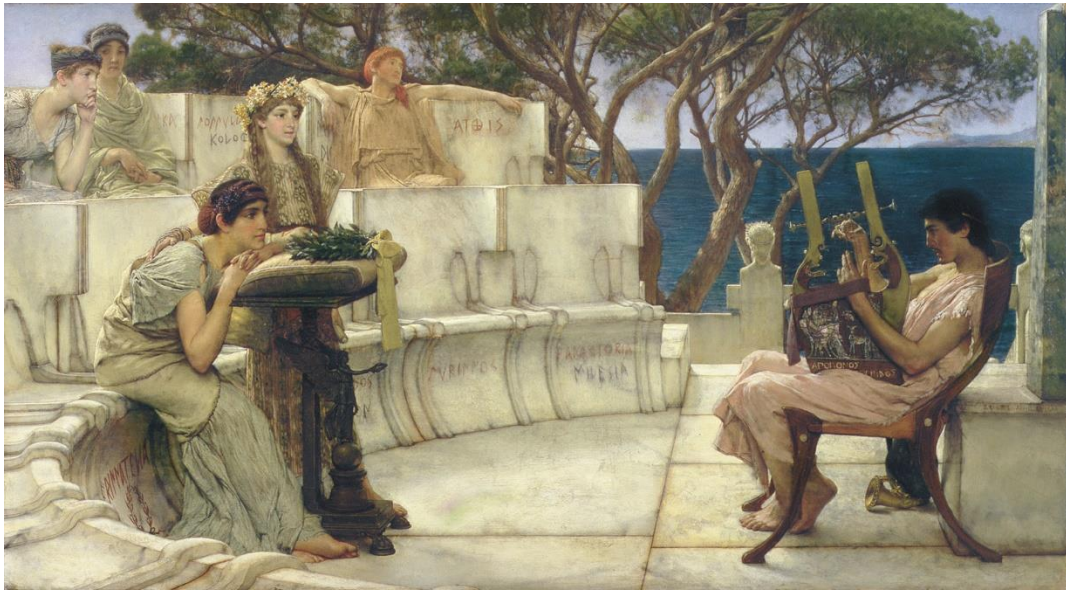


## BELLARIA LXXII



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

### THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY V

Really insightful prophet



‘Should he sail to Rhodes?’ one came asking Olympicus  
the prophet, and how should he sail there safely.  
And the prophet said, ‘First have a new ship,  
and don’t start in winter, but in summer.  
5 If you do this you will go there and back,  
unless a pirate catches you at sea.’

εἰς Ῥόδον εἰ πλεύσει τις Ὀλυμπικὸν ἦλθεν ἐρωτῶν  
τὸν μάντιν, καὶ πῶς πλεύσεται ἀσφαλῶς.  
χὼ μάντις, ἄρῳτον μὲν, ἔφη, καινὴν ἔχε τὴν ναῦν,  
καὶ μὴ χειμῶνος, τοῦ δὲ θέρουσ ἀνάγου.  
5 τοῦτο γὰρ ἂν ποιῆς, ἤξεις κάκεῖσε καὶ ὧδε,  
ἂν μὴ πειρατῆς ἐν πελάγει σε λάβῃ.

Nicharchus ii 11.162

## No balls

Brief is the whole span of life that we wretched men  
live, even if grey old age awaits us all,  
and briefer yet is the span of our prime. Therefore, while the season is ours,  
let all be in abundance—song, love, carousing.  
5 Henceforth is the winter of heavy old age. Not for ten minae  
Will you get a hard-on: such are the balls that await you.

ἀνθρώποις ὀλίγος μὲν ὁ πᾶς χρόνος, ὃν ποτε δειλοὶ  
ζῶμεν, κῆν πολὺν γῆρας ἅπασι μένη,  
τῆς δ' ἀκμῆς καὶ μάλλον. ὅτ' οὖν χρόνος ὤριος ἡμῖν,  
πάντα χύδην ἔστω, ψαλμός, ἔρως, προπόσεις.  
5 χειμῶν τούντεῦθεν γήρως βαρύς· οὐδὲ δέκα μνῶν  
στύσεις· τοιαύτη σ' ἐκδέχεται ὄρχιπέδη.

Antiphanes 10.100

## Honest appraisal



After drinking much and eating much and speaking much ill  
of men, here I lie, Timocreon from Rhodes.

πολλὰ πιὼν καὶ πολλὰ φαγὼν καὶ πολλὰ κάκ' εἰπὼν  
ἀνθρώπους, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων Ῥόδιος.

Simonides 7.348

## Lament for the dead



Funeral stele of a woman (in the middle, supported either side) in childbirth

As a woeful gift to Hades did your mother, Charixenus,  
dress you, eighteen, in your chlamys.  
Even the very stones groaned aloud, when from the house  
the young men with wailing bore your corpse.  
5 A song of mourning, no wedding hymn, did your parents chant.  
Alas for the cheated joys of the breasts,  
alas for the birth-pangs endured in vain! O Fate, you evil maiden,  
barren, you spat to the winds a mother's love for her child.  
It remains for your companions to regret you, your parents  
10 to mourn you and, to whom you are unknown, to pity when they learn of  
[you.

οἰκτρότατον μάτηρ σε, Χαρίξενε, δῶρον ἐς ᾄδαν,  
ὀκτωκαιδεκέταν ἐστόλισεν χλαμύδι.  
ἦ γὰρ δὴ καὶ πέτρος ἀνέστενεν, ἀνὶκ' ἀπ' οἴκων  
ἄλικες οἰμωγᾶ σὸν νέκυν ἠχθοφόρευν.  
5 πένθος δ', οὐχ ὑμέναιον ἀνωρύοντο γονῆες·  
αἰαῖ, τὰς μαστῶν ψευδομένας χάριτας,  
καὶ κενεὰς ὠδίνας· ἰὼ κακοπάρθενε Μοῖρα,  
στεῖρα γονᾶς στοργὰν ἔπτυσας εἰς ἀνέμους.  
τοῖς μὲν ὁμίλησασι ποθεῖν πάρα, τοῖς δὲ τοκεῦσι  
10 πενθεῖν, οἷς δ' ἀγνώως, πευθομένοις ἐλεεῖν.  
**Meleager 7.468**

## Heliodora

Down through the earth I send my tears, Heliodora,  
tears, the last gift of my love, and into Hades,  
Painful tears. Over your much-bewailed tomb  
I pour my memories of desire, memories of affection.

5 Piteously, piteously, Meleager mourns my own dear one among the dead,  
in futile thank-offering to Acheron.

Aiai! Where has the young bloom I long for gone? Hades has snatched her,  
snatched her, and dust defiled that youthful bloom.

I beseech you, all-nurturing earth, fold gently

10 into your bosom, as a mother, the one I eternally lament.

δάκρυά σοι καὶ νέρθε διὰ χθονός, Ἥλιοδώρα,  
δωροῦμαι, στοργᾶς λείψανον, εἰς αἴδαν,  
δάκρυα δυσδάκρυτα· πολυκλαύτῳ δ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ  
σπένδω μνᾶμα πόθων, μνᾶμα φιλοφροσύνας.

5 οἰκτρὰ γὰρ οἰκτρὰ φίλαν σε καὶ ἐν φθιμένοις Μελέαγρος  
αἰάζω, κενεὰν εἰς Ἀχέροντα χάριν.

αἰαῖ, ποῦ τὸ ποθεινὸν ἐμοὶ θάλος; ἄρπασεν Ἄιδας,  
ἄρπασεν, ἀκμαῖον δ' ἄνθος ἔφυρε κόνις.

ἀλλὰ σε γουνοῦμαι, Γᾶ παντρόφε, τὰν πανόδυρτον

10 ἥρέμα σοῖς κόλποις, μάτερ, ἐναγκάλισαι.

**Meleager 7.476**

## Cleisthenes

Foreign dust covers your body, and in the Black Sea,  
Cleisthenes, the fate of death overtook you  
on your travels. Your delicious, honey-sweet, home return  
You missed, nor did you reach sea-girt Chios.

σῶμα μὲν ἄλλοδαπὴ κεύθει κόνις, ἐν δέ σε πόντῳ,  
Κλείσθηνες, Εὐξείνῳ μοῖρ' ἔκιχεν θανάτου  
πλαζόμενον· γλυκεροῦ δὲ μελίφρονος οἴκαδε νόστου  
ἤμπλακες, οὐδ' ἴκευ Χίον ἐπ' ἀμφιρύτην.

**Pseudo-Simonides 7.510**



I, Eurynome the Bacchant, who used to race over the rocks, who once  
ripped the breasts of many long-horned bulls,  
who boasted of victories killing lions,  
and made toys of the heads of irresistible beasts,  
5—pardon me, Dionysus—I abandoned your dance,  
eager rather to join the revels of Cypris [Aphrodite].  
I dedicate this club to you; throwing aside my ivy crown,  
I will clasp rich gold bracelets round my wrists.

Βασσαρίς Εὐρυνόμη σκοπελοδρόμος, ἢ ποτε ταύρων  
πολλὰ τανυκραίων στέρνα χαραξαμένη,  
ἢ μέγα καγχάζουσα λεοντοφόνοις ἐπὶ νίκαις,  
παίγνιον ἀτλήτου θηρὸς ἔχουσα κάρη,  
5—ἰλήκοις, Διόνυσε—τεῆς ἀμέλησα χορείης,  
Κύπριδι βακχεύειν μᾶλλον ἐπειγομένη.  
θῆκα δέ σοι τάδε ρόπτρα· παραρρίψασα δὲ κισσόν,  
χεῖρα περισφίγξω χρυσοδέτῳ σπατάλη.  
**Agathias Scholasticus 6.74**

### A bull's reward

By the furrows and old age worn out, his working bull  
Alcon did not lead to the bloody axe,  
revering it for its service; and now somewhere in the deep meadow grass  
it lows rejoicing in its freedom from the plough.

αὔλακι καὶ γῆρα τετρυμένον ἐργατίνην βοῦν  
Ἄλκων οὐ φονίην ἤγαγε πρὸς κοπίδα,  
αἰδεσθεῖς ἔργων· ὁ δὲ που βαθέη ἐνὶ ποιή  
μυκηθμοῖς ἀρότρου τέρπετ' ἐλευθερίη.  
**Addaios 6.228**

## First fruits

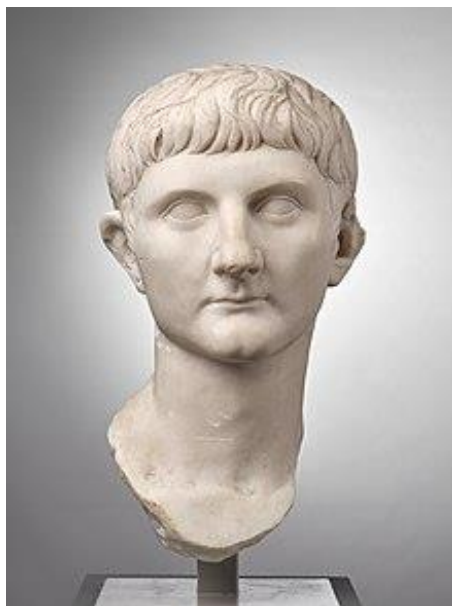


I, old Euphron, farm no many-furrowed plain  
nor vineyard rich in wine,  
but with a plough scratching a little shallow soil I turn up  
my land, and I get the juice from a few grapes.  
5 From my small holding there is small return; but if you give  
me more, you shall have the first fruits, god, of my plenty.

Εὐφρων οὐ πεδίου πολυαύλακός εἰμ' ὁ γεραιὸς  
οὐδὲ πολυγλεύκου γειομόρος βότρυος,  
ἀλλ' ἀρότρῳ βραχύβωλον ἐπικνίζοντι χαράσσω  
χέρσον, καὶ βαιοῦ πίδακα ῥαγὸς ἔχω.  
5 εἴη δ' ἐξ ὀλίγων ὀλίγη χάρις· εἰ δὲ διδοίης  
πλείονα, καὶ πολλῶν, δαῖμον, ἀπαρξόμεθα.

**Apollonides 6.238**

## Germanicus



You janitors of the dead, block all the roads of Hades,  
and gates, accept bolts on your entrances.  
I myself, Hades, order it. Germanicus belongs to the stars,  
not to me; Acheron has no room for so great a ship.

Κλειδοῦχοι νεκῶν, πάσας Ἄϊδαο κελεύθους  
φράγνυτε· καὶ στομίους κλειῖθρα δέχοισθε, πύλαι.  
αὐτὸς ἐγὼν Ἄϊδας ἐνέπω· Γερμανικὸς ἄστρων,  
οὐκ ἐμός· οὐ χωρεῖ νῆα τόσῃν Ἀχέρων.

**Lollius Bassius 7.391**

### Get on with it

If you see a lovely boy, strike while the iron is hot.  
Say what you mean, grab handfuls of his balls.  
But if you say 'I respect you and will be like a brother',  
propriety will close your route to doing it.

ἦν τινα καλὸν ἴδης, εὐθύς τὸ πρῆγμα κροτεῖσθω·  
βάζ' ἃ φρονεῖς· ὄρχεων δράσσεο χερσὶν ὄλαις·  
ἦν δ' εἴπης, 'τίω σε, καὶ ἔσσομαι οἷά τ' ἀδελφός,'  
αἰδώς σου κλείσει τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦργον ὁδόν.

**Addaios 10.20**

### Too true



Of limb-relaxing Bacchus and limb-relaxing Aphrodite  
The daughter is limb-relaxing Gout.

Λυσιμελοῦς Βάκχου καὶ λυσιμελοῦς Ἀφροδίτης  
γεννᾶται θυγάτηρ λυσιμελῆς ποδάγρα.

**Hedylus 11.414**

### Less true

A fart which cannot find an outlet kills many a man;  
a fart also saves, sending forth its lispings music.  
Therefore if a fart saves, and on the other hand kills,  
a fart has the same power as kings.

πορδὴ ἀποκτέννει πολλοὺς ἀδιέξοδος οὔσα·  
πορδὴ καὶ σώζει, τραυλὸν ἰεῖσα μέλος.  
οὐκοῦν εἰ σώζει, καὶ ἀποκτέννει πάλι πορδὴ,  
τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν ἴσην πορδὴ ἔχει δύναμιν.

**Nicarchus ii 11.395**



She who formerly at Athene's shuttle and on the loom,  
stretching out many a warp—Nikarete—,  
in honour of Cypris [Aphrodite], her work-basket and bobbins and all her other  
gear in front of her house placed on the fire, saying  
5 'Away with you, wretched women's starving work,  
knowing how to waste away the bloom of youth.'  
She chose garlands and the plectrum and with revels,  
did the girl, to have the pleasure of a life in festivity.  
She said, 'I will pay you a tenth of all my gains,  
10 Cypris; provide work and take your share.'

ἢ πρὶν Ἀθηναίης ὑπὸ κερκίσι καὶ τὰ καθ' ἰσῶν  
νήματα Νικαρέτη πολλὰ μιτῶσαμένη,  
Κύπριδι τὸν κάλαθον τὰ τε πηνία καὶ τὰ σὺν αὐτοῖς  
ἄρμεν' ἐπὶ προδόμου πάντα πυρῆς ἔθετο,  
5 'ἔρρετε,' φωνήσασα, 'κακῶν λιμηρὰ γυναικῶν  
ἔργα, νέον τήκειν ἄνθος ἐπιστάμενα.'  
εἶλετο δὲ στεφάνους καὶ πηκτίδα καὶ μετὰ κώμων  
ἢ παῖς τερπνὸν ἔχειν ἐν θαλίαις βίσιον·  
εἶπε δέ: 'παντός σοι δεκάτην ἀπὸ λήμματος οἶσω,  
10 Κύπρι, σὺ δ' ἐργασίην καὶ λάβε καὶ μετάδος.'  
Nicharchus i 6.285



## A schoolmaster's tools



The staff that guided his feet, his tawse, and the ready-to-hand fennel-rod—the head-tapper of small boys—his bull's pizzle, shrill and easily bending, his one-soled slipper, and the skull-cap of his hairless pate, 5 did Callon dedicate to Hermes the Lord, as tokens of his career in teaching, his limbs fettered by grey fatigue.

Σκήπωνα προποδαγόν, ἰμάντα τε, καὶ παρακοίταν  
νάρθηκα—κροτάφων πλάκτορα νηπιάχων—  
κέρκον τ' εὐμόλπαν φιλοκαμπέα, καὶ μονόπελμον  
συγχίδα, καὶ στεγάναν κρατὸς ἔρημοκόμου,  
5 Κάλλων Ἑρμεία θέτ' ἀνάκτορι, σύμβολ' ἀγωγᾶς  
παιδείου, πολιῶ γυῖα δεθεῖς καμάτῳ.

Phanias 6.294

## Puteoli's harbour\*



**The Sea.** Tell me, Dicaearchia, why by you has so vast a mole in the sea been built, reaching out to the middle of the deep?

Cyclopes' hands planted in the sea

These walls. How long, O Land, are we to be oppressed?

**Puteoli.** I can receive the navies of the world. Look at Rome near by, if my harbour has its measure!

\*Greeks founded Puteoli as Dicaearchia in 520 BC. It became a Roman colony in 194 BC. Its harbour served Rome until Ostia was completed by Trajan (AD 113).

**The Sea.** εἰπέ, Δικαιάρχεια, τί σοι τόσον εἰς ἄλα χῶμα  
βέβληται, μέσσου γευόμενον πελάγους;

Κυκλώπων τάδε χεῖρες ἐνιδρύσαντο θαλάσση  
τείχεα· μέχρι πόσου, Γαῖα, βιαζόμεθα;

**Puteoli.** κόσμου νηίτην δέχομαι στόλον· εἶσιδε Ῥώμην  
ἐγγύθεν, εἰ ταύτης μέτρον ἔχω λιμένα.

**Antiphilus 7.379**

### A Greek Spring

Already the fair-foliaged field, at her fruitful birth-tide,

is aflower with roses bursting from their buds;

already on the branches of the alleyed cypresses

the cicada, mad for music, soothes the sheaf-binder;

5 and the swallow, loving parent, making her house under the eaves,

shelters her brood in the mud-plastered chamber.

The sea sleeps, the calm dear to the Zephyrs

spreads tranquilly over the expanse that bears the ships.

No longer do the waters rage against the high-built poops,

10 or belch forth spray on the shore.

Mariner, to Priapus,\* the lord of the deep and the giver of good havens,

a slice of a cuttle-fish or of lusted red mullet,

or a vocal scarus having by his altars roasted,

then go fearlessly on your voyage to the bounds of the Ionian Sea.

\* More usually known as the god whose huge erection warned people off trespassing, he was also god of merchant sailors

ἤδη καλλιπέτηλον ἐπ' εὐκάρποισι λοχείαις

λήιον ἐκ ῥοδέων ἀνθοφορεῖ καλύκων,

ἤδη ἐπ' ἀκρεμόνεσσιν ἰσοζυγέων κυπαρίσσω

μουσομανῆς τέτιξ θέλγει ἀμαλλοδέτην·

5 καὶ φιλόπαις ὑπὸ γεῖσα δόμους τεύξασα χελιδῶν

ἔκγονα πηλοχύτοις ξεινοδοκεῖ θαλάμοις.

ὑπνώει δὲ θάλασσα, φιλοζεφύροιο γαλήνης

νηοφόροις νώτοις εὐδία πεπταμένης,

οὐκ ἐπὶ πρυμναίοισι καταιγίζουσα κορύμβοις,

10 οὐκ ἐπὶ ῥηγμίνων ἀφρὸν ἐρευγομένη.

ναυτίλε, ποντομέδοντι καὶ ὄρμοδοτῆρι Πριήπῳ,

τευθίδος ἢ τρίγλης ἀνθεμόεσσαν ἴτυν,

ἢ σκάρων αὐδήεντα παραὶ βωμοῖσι πυρώσας,

ἄτρομος Ἴονίου τέρμα θαλασσοπόρει.

**Theaetetus 10.16**

## Hard luck



Help at hand?

Now erect, damn you, and well-tuned, when nothing's about.  
When there was something about yesterday, not a hint of a hard.

νῦν ὀρθή, κατάρατε, καὶ εὖτονος, ἠνίκα μηδέν·  
ἠνίκα δ' ἦν ἐχθές, οὐδέν ὄλως ἀνέπνεις.

**Strato 12.216**

### Now he tells us ...

Perhaps someone in future years, listening to these trifles of mine,  
will think these pains of love were all my own.  
No! For this or that boy-lover, I scribble this or that  
Poem, since some god gave me the gift.

ἢ τάχα τις μετόπισθε κλύων ἐμὰ παίγνια ταῦτα,  
πάντας ἐμοὺς δόξει τοὺς ἐν ἔρωτι πόνους·  
ἄλλα δ' ἐγὼν ἄλλοισιν ἀεὶ φιλόπαισι χαράσσω  
γράμματ', ἐπεὶ τις ἐμοὶ τοῦτ' ἐνέδωκε θεός.

**Strato 12.258**

### Daryl Hine

Some reader of this child's play in another  
Age may think these heart-throbs all were mine.  
For writing different epigrams for other  
Lovers of boys, my talent was divine.

\*Permission granted to quote this translation from Daryl Hine *Puerilities: Erotic Epigrams of the Greek Anthology* (Princeton 2001)

**Next week:** The Letters of Cicero