

Feminine Discourse in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses***Part 1: Lucius and Photis****1. *Met.* 2.7-10, First Encounter**

1a. *Met.* 2.7: *'Quam pulchre quamque festive,' inquam, 'Photis mea, ollulam istam cum natibus intorques! Quam mellitum pulmentum apparatus! Felix et ter beatus cui permiseris illuc digitum intingere.'*

Tunc illa, lepida alioquin et dicacula puella, 'Discede,' inquit, 'miselle, quam procul a meo foculo, discede. Nam si te vel modice meus igniculus afflaverit, ureris intime nec ullus extinguet ardorem tuum nisi ego, quae dulce condiens et ollam et lectulum suave quaterere novi.'

Haec dicens in me respexit et risit.

1b. *Met.* 2.10: *Tum illa cervicem intorsit et ad me conversa limis et morsicantibus oculis, 'Heus tu, scolastice,' ait 'dulce et amarum gustulum carpis. Cave ne nimia mellis dulcedine diutinam bilis amaritudinem contrahas.'*

1c. *Met.* 2.10: *'Pereo,' inquam 'immo iam dudum perii, nisi tu propitiaris.'*

Ad haec illa rursum me deosculato, 'Bono animo esto' inquit. 'Nam ego tibi mutua voluntate mancipata sum, nec voluptas nostra differetur ulterius, sed prima face cubiculum tuum adero. Abi ergo ac te compara: tota enim nocte tecum fortiter et ex animo proeliabor.'

2. *Met.* 3.14-22, Metamorphosis and Enslavement

2a. *Met.* 3.15: *'Paveo' inquit 'et formido solide domus huius operta detegere et arcana dominae meae revelare secreta... Nam me, quae sola mortalium novi, vis amoris quo tibi teneor indicare compellit. Iam scies omnem domus nostrae statum, iam scies erae meae miranda secreta...'*

I said, "How beautifully and how merrily, my Photis, do you twist that little pot with your buttocks! What a honey-sweet relish you are preparing! Happy and thrice blessed is he whom you would permit to dip his finger in there."

Then she, a naturally charming and witty girl, said, "**Go away, poor little boy**, as far as possible from my little oven, **go away**. For if my little flame should blow upon you even a little, you will burn inside and no one will put out your fire except me - **I who know** how to season sweetly and shake delightfully both a pot and a bed."

While she was saying these things, **she looked back at me and laughed**.

Then she twisted her neck around and directed at me a sidelong glance with her biting eyes. "Hey there, **professor**," she said, "you're sampling a bittersweet appetizer. Take care that you don't contract a lengthy case of bitter bile on account of honey that is too sweet."

"I am dying!" I said, "No, in truth, I have died already, **unless you are propitious**."

She replied to these things while kissing me: "Be of good cheer," she said. "**For through reciprocal desire I have become your slave**, nor will our pleasure be put off much longer, but when the first torch is lit I will come to your bedroom. So go away and **muster yourself up**, for all night long **I will make war with you bravely and with all my heart**."

"I am afraid," she said, "I am very frightened to uncover the concealed affairs of this house and reveal my mistress's hidden mysteries... **For there are things that I alone of mortals know**, and the force of love through which I am possessed by you compels me to disclose them. **Now you will know** the entire condition of our house, **now you will know** the marvelous secrets of my lady..."

2b. Met. 3.19: ‘*Sum namque coram magiae noscendae ardentissimus cupitor, quamquam mihi nec ipsa tu videre talium rerum rudis vel expers. Scio istud et plane sentio, cum semper alioquin spreto rem matronalium amplexuum...in servilem modum addictum atque mancipatum teneas volentem. Iam denique nec larem requiro nec domuitionem paro et nocte ista nihil antepono.*’

“For I most ardently desire to learn about magic firsthand, **although you yourself seem to me neither inexperienced nor ignorant in such matters.** I know this, and I clearly feel it: although I have *always* been one who scorns womanly embraces...**you possess me, voluntarily bound and sold in the manner of a slave. Now, therefore, I neither miss my home, nor am I preparing a return,** and I set nothing above this night.”

2c. Met. 3.22: ‘...*impertire nobis unctulum indidem per istas tuas papillas, mea mellitula; tuumque mancipium inremunerabili beneficio sic tibi perpetuo pignera, ac iam perfice ut meae Veneri Cupido pinnatus adsistam tibi.*’

“Share with me a little of the ointment from that same place - by these breasts of yours, my honey -, and, **by a favor I can never repay, bind me to you forever as your slave,** and make me stand beside you now, **a winged Cupid to my Venus.**”

Part 2: Lucius and Isis

3. Met. 11.15, Mithras' Speech

‘*Nec tibi natales ac ne dignitas quidem, vel ipsa qua flores usquam doctrina profuit, sed lubrico virentis aetatae **ad serviles delapsus voluptates,** curiositatis inprosperae sinistrum praemium reportasti...*’

3a. Past:

“Neither your birth nor indeed your social status, or even the education through which you have always flourished been of use, but at the slippery stage of blooming youth **you sank towards servile pleasures** and gained the inauspicious reward of your unfortunate curiosity.”

‘*nam in eos quorum sibi vitas **in servitium** deae nostrae maiestas **vindicavit non habet locum casus infestus.***’

3b. Present:

“For hostile chance has no place among those whose lives the majesty of our goddess **has emancipated into her servitude.**”

‘*Quo tamen tutior sis atque munitior, da nomen sanctae huic militiae, cuius non olim sacramento etiam rogabar, teque iam nunc obsequio religionis nostrae dedica et **ministerii iugum subi voluntarium.** Nam cum coeperis deae servire, tunc magis senties fructum tuae libertatis.*’

3c. Future:

“Nevertheless, so that you may be safer and more protected, enlist in this sacred army, to whose oath of allegiance you were even called not long ago, and now at this moment dedicate yourself to obedience to our religion and **submit to the voluntary yoke of service. For when you begin to be a slave to the goddess, then you will experience all the more the fruit of your freedom.**”

4. *Met.* 11.24, Freedom Through Servitude

*Paucis dehinc ibidem commoratus diebus, inexplicabili voluptate simulacri divini perfruebar, **inremunerabili** quippe **beneficio pigneratus**. Sed tandem deae monitu, licet non plene, tamen pro meo modulo supplicue gratis persolutis, **tardam satis domuitionem comparo**, vix equidem **abruptis ardentissimi desiderii retinaculis**.*

After [my initiation] I lingered there for a few days, enjoying the ineffable pleasure of the divine image, **bound by a favor I can never repay**. But finally, at the goddess' admonition, with my thanks having been humbly rendered - if not in full, at least according to my means -, **I prepared a late enough return home**, in truth **with the bonds of my most ardent desire** scarcely broken.

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