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**Theocritean Hermaphroditus:
Ovid's Protean Allusions in *Met.* 4.285-388**

1. 'vulgatos taceo' dixit 'pastoris amores
Daphnidis Idaei, quem nympe paelicis ira
contulit in saxum: tantus dolor urit amantes;
Ov. Met. 4.276-78.¹

'I will stay silent,' she said, 'on the well-known love
of Daphnis the Idaeian shepherd boy, whom a nymph,
in anger at her rival, turned to stone: so great a pain
burns lovers...'²

2. ...videt hic stagnum lucentis ad imum
usque solum lymphae; non illic canna palustris
nec **steriles ulvae** nec **acuta cuspid**e iunci;
perspicuus liquor est; stagni tamen ultima vivo
caespite cinguntur semperque **virentibus herbis**.
Ov. Met. 4.297-301.

Here he saw a pool of water gleaming to the very
bottom; not there did marshy reeds grow, nor sterile
sedges, nor rushes with sharp spike; crystal clear is
the water; the banks of the pool however are surrounded
by fresh grass and evergreen grasses

3. ...μέγα στιβάδεσσιν ὄνειαρ,
ἔνθεν **βούτομον** ὄξυ **βαθύν** τ' ἐτάμοντο κύπειρον.³
Theoc. Id. 13.34-35.

...for [there was] a meadow, great for bedding,
from which they cut sharp sedge and thick galingale.

...non illic canna palustris
nec steriles **ulvae** nec **acuta** cuspid e iunci;
Ov. Met. 4.300-301.

...not there did marshy reeds grow, nor sterile
sedges, nor rushes with sharp spike.

4. ...τάχα δὲ κράναν ἐνόησεν
ἡμένω ἐν χώρῳ· περὶ δὲ **θρύα** πολλὰ πεφύκει,
κυάνεόν τε **χελιδόνιον** χλωρόν τ' **ἀδιάντον**
καὶ θάλλοντα **σέλιν**α καὶ εἰλιτενῆς **ἄγρωστις**.
Theoc. Id. 13.39-42.

Soon he noticed a spring in a low-seated place; around
it many reeds grew and dark-blue celandine and green-
yellow maidenhair and thriving celery and sprawling
dog's-tooth grass.

5. Hermaphroditos' first contact with the Nymph would have been babyhood...the inscription speaks of Salmakis receiving Hermaphroditos (here a culture hero, for he is said to have invented marriage) in her delightful hands and of her breeding him... this indicates a kourotrophic [ie: "**bringing up boys**," from **κόρος/κοῦρος**, "boy, male infant" + **τροφός**, "feeder, rearer") relationship, on the model of other such kourotrophic relationships between Nymphs and gods and heroes.
Sourvinou-Inwood 2005, 110.

6. **sive es mortalis, qui te genuere, beati,**
et frater felix, et **fortunata profecto,**
si qua tibi soror est, **et quae dedit ubera nutrix.**
Ov. Met. 4.322-24.

...or if you are mortal, those who brought you forth are
blessed, and lucky is your brother, and truly fortunate, if
there is any sister of yours, and the wet nurse who gave you
her breast.

¹ All Latin text from Miller 1984 (*LCL* 42).

² All English translations my own.

³ All Greek translations from Hopkinson 2015 (*LCL* 28).

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7. Νύμφαι μὲν σφετέροις ἐπὶ γούνασι κοῦρον ἔχοισαι
δακρυόεντ' ἀγανοῖσι παρεψύχοντ' ἐπέεσσιν.
Theoc. Id. 13.53-54.

The Nymphs, holding the boy down in their laps,
kept trying to console him weeping with gentle
words.

Νύμφαι | μὲν σφετέ | ροις ἐπὶ | γούνασι | κοῦρον ἔ | χοισαι
δακρυό | εντ' ἀγα | νοῖσι πα | ρεψύ | χοντ' ἐπέ | εσσιν

8. **pugnantemque tenet**, luctantiaque oscula carpit,
subiectaque manus, **invitaque pectora tangit**,
et nunc hac iuveni, nunc **circumfunditur** illac.
Ov. Met. 4.358-59.

she holds him down although he's fighting her and
tears away kisses wrested from him and drags her
hands all over him and gropes his chest against his
will, and now she is wound around him on this side
and that

pugnan | temque te | net, luc | tantia | que oscula | carpit,
subiec | tatque ma | nus, in | vitaque | pectora | tangit,
et nunc | hac iuve | ni, nunc | circum | funditur | illac

9. ...cum puerum vidit visumque optavit habere.
Ov. Met. 4.316

...when she saw the boy and wanted to possess
what she saw.

πασάων γὰρ ἔρωσ ἀπαλὰς φρένας ἐξεφόβησεν
Ἀργεῖω ἐπὶ παιδί.
Theoc. Id. 13.48-49.

But ἔρωσ for the Argive boy distressed the soft
hearts of all the Nymphs.

10. τρὶς δ' ἄρ' ὁ παῖς ὑπάκουσεν, ἀραιὰ δ' ἴκετο φωνά
ἐξ ὕδατος, παρεῶν δὲ μάλα σχεδὸν εἶδετο πόρρω.
Theoc. Id. 13.59-60.

Three times the boy answered back, but his voice
came out thin from the water, and although very
close he seemed far away.

11. **Ergo ubi se liquidas, quo vir descenderat, undas
semimarem fecisse** videt mollitaque in illis
membra, manus tendens, **sed iam non voce virili
Hermaphroditus ait**:
Ov. Met. 4.380-83.

Then when they saw that the clear waters into
which they had sunk had made them half-man and
made their limbs soft, holding out their hands
Hermaphroditus cried out, though no longer with
masculine tone.

12. denique nitentem contra elabique volentem
implicat ut serpens, quam regia sustinet ales
sublimemque rapit: pendens caput illa pedesque
adligat et cauda spatiantes implicat alas;
utve solent hederæ longos intexere truncos,
utque sub aequoribus deprensus polypus hostem
continet **ex omni dimissis parte flagellis**.
Ov. Met. 4.361-67.

Then she winds around him struggling against her
and trying to slip free, just like a serpent, which the
king of birds has caught and carries aloft: hanging
from his talons, the serpent binds his head and
winds around its flapping wings with her tail; or as
ivy is accustomed to weave itself onto great tree
trunks, or as a sea polyp, with its tentacles.
Wrapped around every side, holds its enemy caught
beneath the sea.

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13. ...“Υλας μακάρων ἀριθμεῖται.
Theoc. Id. 13.72

...Hylas is counted among the blessed ones.

... ita, di, iubeatis, et is **istum**
nulla dies a me nec me deducatur ab isto.
Ov. Met. 4.371-72.

Thus, gods, let you grant me this, and may no day ever
remove him from me, nor me from him.

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***Sage and Rock*, 2018**

Oil on canvas

On loan courtesy of the artist

In Montana, or anywhere vast, we tend to look at the enormity of what expands beyond us and we forget about looking closely at what creates the expansive wonder of the landscape. Sagebrush can be gray, crunchy, and dull, but in the spring when rain has been plentiful, the sagebrush becomes full in the richness of its unique color, and the vibrant yellow blossoms bloom toward the sun. Normally abundant in dry land, the dirt and brown grass frame out the lushness of the sage and create a perfect color harmony.

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