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Text, letter

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Callimachus (*Hymn to Artemis*) (Translated by Nisetich)

Which of the nymphs is closest to your heart, what heroines have been your friends? Tell me, Goddess, and I will sing of it to others. Of islands Doliche, of cities Perge, of mountains Teygeton, and the harbors of Euripos have been your favorites. And more than any other nymph, you loved Gortynian Britomartis, the sharp-eyed killer of fawns for whom Minos once scoured the mountains of Crete, overcome with desire. She hid from him now under shaggy oaks, now in the meadows. For nine months he haunted cliffs and crags and never quit the hunt until, one day, he almost had her in his grasp. Diving into the sea from a loft promontory, she lighted among fishing nets, which saved her. The Kydonians ever after have called her Diktyna, and the mountain from which she dived they call Diktaion, and they reared altars and offered sacrifices to her.

ἔξοχα δ᾽ ἀλλάων Γορτυνίδα φίλαο νύμφην, // ἐλλοφόνον Βριτόμαρτιν ἐύσκοπον: ἧς ποτε Μίνως // πτοιηθεὶς ὑπ᾽ ἔρωτι κατέδραμεν οὔρεα Κρήτης. // ἡ δ᾽ ὁτὲ μὲν λασίῃσιν ὑπὸ δρυσὶ κρύπτετο νύμφη, // ἄλλοτε δ᾽ εἱαμενῇσιν: ὁ δ᾽ ἐννέα μῆνας ἐφοίτα // παίπαλά τε κρημνούς τε καὶ οὐκ ἀνέπαυσε διωκτύν, // μέσφ᾽ ὅτε μαρπτομένη καὶ δὴ σχεδὸν ἥλατο πόντον // πρηόνος ἐξ ὑπάτοιο καὶ ἔνθορεν εἰς ἁλιήων // δίκτυα, τά σφ᾽ ἐσάωσαν: ὅθεν μετέπειτα Κύδωνες // νύμφην μὲν Δίκτυναν, ὄρος δ᾽ ὅθεν ἥλατο νύμφη // Δικταῖον καλέουσιν, ἀνεστήσαντο δὲ βωμοὺς // ἱερά τε ῥέζουσι:

Antoninus Liberalis (*Metamorphoses*, Book 40) (Translated by Francis Celoria)

When Minos saw her he lusted after her and pursued her. She took refuge among some fishermen who hid her in their nets. Because of this the Cretans called her Dictynna, She of the Nets, and offered sacrifices to her. Having escaped from Minos, Britomartis arrived at Aegina on a boat of the fisherman Andromedes. But he lusted for her and laid hands on her. Britomartis jumped off the boat and fled into a grove, the very spot where today there is a sanctuary of hers. She then disappeared from sight, and they called her Aphaia, the One Who Disappeared. The people of Aegina consecrated the spot in the sanctuary of Artemis, where Britomartis disappeared, naming her Aphaia and offering her sacrifices as to a god.

ἔπειτα ἔρχεται εἰς Κρήτην καὶ αὐτὴν ἰδὼν Μίνως καὶ ἐρασθεὶς ἐδίωκεν· ἡ δὲ κατέφυγε παρ' ἄνδρας ἁλιέας· οἱ δὲ αὐτὴν κατέδυσαν εἰς τὰ δίκτυα καὶ ὠνόμασαν ἐκ τούτου Κρῆτες Δίκτυνναν καὶ ἱερὰ προσήνεγκαν. ἐκφυγοῦσα δὲ Μίνωα ἐξίκετο ἡ Βριτόμαρτις εἰς Αἴγιναν ἐν πλοίῳ σὺν ἀνδρὶ ἁλιεῖ Ἀνδρομήδει. καὶ ὁ μὲν αὐτῇ ἐνεχείρησεν ὀρεγόμενος μιχθῆναι, ἡ δὲ Βριτόμαρτις ἀποβᾶσα ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου κατέφυγεν εἰς ἄλσος, ὅθιπέρ ἐστι νῦν αὐτῆς τὸ ἱερόν, κἀνταῦθα ἐγένετο ἀφανής, καὶ ὠνόμασαν αὐτὴν Ἀφαίαν· ἐν δὲ τῷ ἱερῷ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τόνδε τόπον, ἐν ᾧ ἀφανὴς ἐγένετο ἡ Βριτόμαρτις, ἀφιέρωσαν Αἰγινῆται· καὶ ὠνόμασαν Ἀφαίην καὶ ἱρὰ ἐπετέλεσαν ὡς θεῷ.

Pausanias (II.30.3) (Translated by W.H.S. Jones)

In Aegina, as you go towards the mountain of Zeus, God of all the Greeks, you reach a sanctuary of Aphaia, in whose honour Pindar composed an ode for the Aeginetans. The Cretans say (the story of Aphaea is Cretan) that Carmanor, who purified Apollo after he had killed Pytho, was the father of Eubulus, and that the daughter of Zeus and of Carme, the daughter of Eubulus, was Britomartis. She took delight, they say, in running and in the chase, and was very dear to Artemis. Fleeing from Minos, who had fallen in love with her, she threw herself into nets which had been cast for a draught of fishes. She was made a goddess by Artemis, and she is worshipped, not only by the Cretans, but also by the Aeginetans, who say that Britomartis shows herself in their island. Her surname among the Aeginetans is Aphaia in Crete it is Dictynna.

εν Αἰγίνῃ δὲ πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τοῦ Πανελληνίου Διὸς ἰοῦσιν, ἔστιν Ἀφαίας ἱερόν, ἐς ἣν καὶ Πίνδαρος ᾆσμα Αἰγινήταις ἐποίησε. φασὶ δὲ οἱ Κρῆτες-- τούτοις γάρ ἐστι τὰ ἐς αὐτὴν ἐπιχώρια--Καρμάνορος τοῦ καθήραντος Ἀπόλλωνα ἐπὶ φόνῳ τῶ Πύθωνος παῖδα Εὔβουλον εἶναι, Διὸς δὲ καὶ Κάρμης τῆς Εὐβούλου Βριτόμαρτιν γενέσθαι: χαίρειν δὲ αὐτὴν δρόμοις τε καὶ θήραις καὶ Ἀρτέμιδι μάλιστα φίλην εἶναι: Μίνω δὲ ἐρασθέντα φεύγουσα ἔῤῥιψεν ἑαυτὴν ἐς δίκτυα ἀφειμένα ἐπ' ἰχθύων θήρᾳ. ταύτην μὲν θεὸν ἐποίησεν Ἄρτεμις, σέβουσι δὲ οὐ Κρῆτες μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ Αἰγινῆται, λέγοντες φαίνεσθαί σφισιν ἐν τῇ νήσῳ τὴν Βριτόμαρτιν. ἐπίκλησις δέ οἱ παρά τε Αἰγινήταις ἐστὶν Ἀφαία καὶ Δίκτυννα ἐν Κρήτῃ.

Herodotus (*Histories*, 5.39) (Translated by A. D. Godley)

Then the Samians … they stayed and prospered for five years; indeed, the temples now at Cydonia and the shrine of Dictyna are the Samians' work; but in the sixth year Aeginetans and Cretans came and defeated them in a sea-fight and made slaves of them;

ἔμειναν δ᾽ ἐν ταύτῃ καὶ εὐδαιμόνησαν ἐπ᾽ ἔτεα πέντε, ὥστε τὰ ἱρὰ τὰ ἐν Κυδωνίῃ ἐόντα νῦν οὗτοι εἰσὶ οἱ ποιήσαντες καὶ τὸν τῆς Δικτύνης νηόν.1 [3] ἕκτῳ δὲ ἔτεϊ Αἰγινῆται αὐτοὺς ναυμαχίῃ νικήσαντες ἠνδραποδίσαντο μετὰ Κρητῶν,