

Here I Lie on the Narrow Beach: Listening to Subaltern Voices in the Epitaphs of Anyte¹

Part One: Mourning Animals

1. Epitaph for a Puppy (Anyte 10)

ᾠλεο δὴ ποτε καὶ σὺ πολύρριζον παρὰ θάμνον,
Λόκρι, φιλοφθόγγων ᾠκυτάτη σκυλάκων,
τοῖον ἐλαφρίζοντι τεῶ ἐγκάτθετο κῶλω
ιον ἀμείλικτον ποικιλόδειρος ἔχις.

You perished when, among the many-rooted hedge,
Locris, the swiftest of the noise-loving puppies, the
many-colored viper put cruel venom into your
nimble leg.

2. Epitaph for a War Horse (Anyte 9)

Μνᾶμα τόδε φθιμένου μενεδαΐου εἴσατο Δᾶμις
ἵππου, ἐπεὶ στέρνον τοῦδε δαφεινὸς Ἄρης
τύψε· μέλαν δέ οἱ αἶμα ταλαυρίνου διὰ χρωτὸς
ζέσσε, ἐπὶ δ' ἀργαλέα βῶλον ἔδευσε φονῆ.

Damis built this memorial of his steadfast horse,
slain when tawny Ares struck his breast; black blood
boiled through his thick hide, and drenched the earth
with his painful death.

3. Epitaph for a Rooster? (Anyte 11)

οὐκέτι μ' ὡς τὸ πάρος πυκιναῖς περυγεσσιν ἐρέσσω
ὄρσεις ἐξ εὐνᾶς ὄρθριος ἐγρόμενος·
ἦ γάρ σ' ὑπνώνοντα σίνις λαθηρδὸν ἐπελθὼν
ἔκτεινεν λαιμῷ ῥίμφα καθεὶς ὄνουχα.

No longer as before will you, flapping with fast-
beating wings, rouse me out of bed, waking at dawn;
for while you were sleeping, a thief killed you,
coming upon you stealthily and sending down his
swift claws into your throat.

4. Epitaph for Myro's Insects (Anyte 20)

ἀκρίδι τᾶ κατ' ἄρουραν ἀηδόني καὶ δρυοκοίτα
τέττιγι ξυνὸν τύμβον ἔτευξε Μυρώ,
παρθένιον στάξασα κόρα δάκρυ· δισσὰ γὰρ αὐτᾶς
παίγνι ὁ δυσπειθῆς ᾠχετ' ἔχων Αἴδας.

For her locust, the nightingale in the field, and for
her oak-dwelling cicada, Myro raised a common
tomb, the girl shedding girlish tears; for Hades, who
is difficult to persuade, has carried off her two pets.

¹ This paper follows Page's 1975 Oxford edition of the text including the numbering of the epigrams, most of which are contained in Book 7 of the Palatine Anthology. Unless otherwise noted, translations of Greek are my own.

5. Epitaph for a Dolphin (Anyte 12)

οὐκέτι δὴ πλωτοῖσιν ἀγαλλόμενος πελάγεσσιν
αὐχέν' ἀναρρίψω βυσσόθεν ὀρνύμενος,
οὐδὲ περὶ σκαλμοῖσι νεῶς περικαλλέα χεῖλη
ποιφύξω τὰμᾶ τερπόμενος προτομᾶ·
ἀλλὰ με πορφυρέα πόντου νοτίς ὥσ' ἐπὶ χέρσον,
κεῖμαι δὲ ῥαδινὰν τάνδε παρ' αἰόνα.

No longer delighting in floating waves will I toss up
my neck, rushing up from the bottom. Nor around
the gunwales of a ship, beautiful in their pins,² will I
snort, enjoying my own image on a figurehead. But
the purple water of the sea banished me to dry land,
and here I lie on the narrow beach.

Part Two: Mourning Girls

6. Epitaph for Erato (Anyte 7)

λοῖσθια δὴ τάδε πατρὶ φίλω περὶ χεῖρε βαλοῦσα
εἶπ' Ἐρατῶ χλωροῖς δάκρυσι λειβομένα,
ἽΩ πάτερ, οὐ τοι ἔτ' εἰμί, μέλας δ' ἔμὸν ὄμμα καλύπτει
ἤδη ἀποφθιμένας κυάνεος θάνατος.

Throwing her arms around her dear father, Erato
spoke these final things, weeping pale tears: "Father,
I am no more, and already the dark blackness of
death covers my eyes as I die."

7. Epitaph for Philaenis (Anyte 5)

πολλάκι τῷδ' ὀλοφθδνὰ κόρας ἐπὶ σάματι Κλεῖνα
μάτηρ ὠκύμορον παῖδ' ἐβόασε φίλαν,
ψυχὰν ἀγκαλέουσα Φιλαινίδος, ἅ πρὸ γάμοιο
χλωρὸν ὑπὲρ ποταμοῦ χεῦμ' Ἀχέρωντος ἔβα.

Many times upon this tomb of her daughter, does
Kleina, a mother, shout for her dear child, who died
early, calling upon the soul of Philaenis, who before
marriage stepped across the pale stream of
Acheron's river.

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² This translation follows the suggestions of Geoghagen and Gutzwiller.