

SAPPHO 16

οἱ μὲν ἰππῶν στρότον οἱ δὲ πέσδων
οἱ δὲ νάων φαῖσ' ἐπ[ι] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν
ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὄτ-
τω τις ἔραται·

πά]γχυ δ' εὖμαρες σύνετον πόησαι
π]άντι τ[ο]ῦτ', ἃ γὰρ πόλυ περσκέθοισα
κάλλος [ἀνθ]ρώπων Ἑλένα [τὸ]ν ἄνδρα
τὸν [πανάρι]στον

καλλ[ίποι]σ' ἔβα 'ς Τροΐαν πλέοι[σα]
κωῦδ[ε] πα]ίδος οὐδὲ φίλων το[κ]ήων
πά[μπαν] ἐμνάσθη, ἀλλὰ παρὰγαγ' αὐτάνα
[]σαν

[]αμπτον γὰρ []
[]...κούφως τ[]ση[.]ν
..]με νῦν Ἄνακτορί[ας ὀ]νέμναι-
σ' οὐ] παρεοίσας,

τᾶ]ς κε βολλοίμαν ἔρατόν τε βᾶμα
κάμάρυγμα λάμπρον ἴδην προσώπω
ἢ τὰ Λύδων ἄρματα κανοπλοισι
[πεσδομ]άχεντας.

The most beautiful thing on the face of dark
earth? Some say it's a host of cavalry, others of
infantry, still others of ships. But as for me, I
say, it is whatever you love.

To make this comprehensible to one and all is
very easy: for she who far surpassed all
humankind in beauty, Helen, her husband, a
man exceptional in every way,

Deserted, and went sailing off to Troy, wholly
oblivious for her daughter and the parents who
loved her. ... led her astray...

... [Which] now has put me in mind of Anactoria
far away;

I would rather look upon the lovely way she
walks, and her flashing glances than Lydian
chariots and infantry in full array.