ODE FOR ANA HEALEY

Stephen Instone

"Εστι μὲν κἄλλιστον Ολυμπιονίκα
ἀεύλογον ἀνθρώποις· μετὰ δὲ ἁσυχία
μαλαικός Παῖς μέλεσιν
ἐρχεται μάλις· ἐν πόλιν κεκαμάκκυσιν· εἰ δὲ τις ἦτορ
ἐλθέται λυπούμενον
παιδός ἢ νόον ἀμφεπειν· τι δει παρὰ βιβλίον ἔχειν:

ὅν σὺ δαρὸν τάδ’ ἐνι μετροπόλει,
ὁ Άνα, προύστας ἀρετά μεγίλα,
οὐχ ἀπάντων ἀλλ’ ὅσπερ
οὐ μὲν Ἑλλάδος σοφοί Ῥωμαίοι τ’ ἀπὸ ποικιλομυθοῦ·
γράψαν· ἢ κεῖτος ἔτι
ἀγίων φεγγος δέδορκε σὺς ἐνεκεν μελέτας.

νῦς δὲ καὶ ἀείλιον λαμπρόν καλύπτεις·
γὰ δὲ μελαίνα ποτ’· ὁ Ζεῦ,
βρότεα πόλον σομίστα δέξετ’ ἡμῶς·
οὐ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἑαυτοῖς σῶροι τοίον μικρὸν
οἰκείοι· φασίς δὲ μᾶν ἐν ὀλβίοις
ἐνυδάτ’ Ἡρακλεᾶ δόμαις
αἰέν ἔχειν χρυσάειν· μόχθον ἄποιην· Ἡβαν.
τα μὲν ἰμανὶν ἐν πτυχαίσιν
Πίνδαρος σύμπλεξεν· ἐμίν ἔν νῦν φανέουσι βιβλιοι.

Best of all to be at Olympia victor,
Fairest prize for men; then a peaceful repose
Comes a healing god to the limbs
Much fatigued from toil and the contest. But if someone hopes to
Tend a heart struck down with grief,
Or to nurture children’s minds, of what is there need beside books?

Which for long in this capital city you,
Ana, were in charge of with maximum skill,
Not of all but those written by
Ancient Greece’s poets and wise men and rhetorical Romans.
Still today there shines on them
Glory and bright light because of your ever-dutyful care.

Even the light of the sun is hidden by night;
Blackness of earth will accept, Zeus,
Bodies of all us mortals alike in the end,
Since a man may not inhabit peaks of high
Heaven. But there is a story told that there
Herakles in blessed halls
Always possesses, reward for labours, fair Hebe.
This is what in folds of odes wove
Pindar; nowadays the voice we receive is given by books.