

ODE FOR ANA HEALEY

Stephen Instone

Ἔστι μὲν κάλλιστον Ὀλυμπιονίκῃ
ἄεθλον ἀνθρώποις· μετὰ δ' ἄσυχία
μαλθακὸς Παιῶν μέλεσιν
ἔρχεται μάλ' ἐν πόνῳ κεκμακόσιν· εἰ δέ τις ἦτορ
ἔλδεται λυπούμενον
παιδὸς ἢ νόον ἀμφέπειν, τί δεῖ παρὰ βιβλί' ἔχειν;

ὣν σὺ δαρὸν τῶδ' ἐνὶ ματροπόλει,
ὦ Ἄνα, προὔστας ἀρετῶ μεγάλα,
οὐχ ἀπάντων ἀλλ' ὅσα περ
οἱ μὲν Ἑλλάδος σοφοὶ Ῥώμας τ' ἀπὸ ποικιλομύθου
γράψαν. ἢ κείνοις ἔτι
ἀγλαὸν φέγγος δέδορκε σᾶς ἔνεκεν μελέτας.

νύξ δὲ καὶ ἀέλιον λαμπρὸν καλύπτει·
γὰρ δὲ μελαινά ποτ', ὦ Ζεῦ,
βρότεια πάντων σώματα δέξεται ὁμῶς.
οὐ γὰρ ἂν τις θνατὸς οὐρανὸν μακρὸν
οἰκέοι· φαμά γε μὰν ἐν ὀλβίοις
ἐνθάδ' Ἑρακλέα δόμοις
αἰὲν ἔχειν χρυσεῖαν, μόχθων ἄποιν', Ἥβαν.
τὰ μὲν ὕμνων ἐν πτυχαῖσιν
Πίνδαρος σύμπλεξεν· ἄμμιν δὲ νῦν φωνέουσι βίβλοι.

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-dutiful 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.