

Poem 51 of Catullus:

1 ille mi par esse deo videtur,
2 ille, si fas est, superare divos,
3–4 qui sedens adversus identidem te | spectat et audit
5 dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis
6 eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,
7–8 Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi | ...
9 lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
10 flamma demanat, sonitu suo pte
11–12 tintinant aures, gemina teguntur | lumina nocte
13 otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:
14 otio exsultas nimiumque gestis:
15–16 otium et reges prius et beatas | perdidit urbes.

Working translation of Poem 51 of Catullus:

- 1 That man appears to me to be equal to a god,
 2 That one—if it can be said this way—appears to be superior to the gods,
 3–4 the one who, sitting opposite you, again and again is looking at you and listening
 to you
 5 as you sweetly laugh. For poor me, all this
 6 tears away my senses. For as soon as you,
 7–8 Lesbia, have come into my view, there is nothing left for me to | ...
 9 but my tongue is numb. A delicate—right down through my limbs—
 10 flame flows down, down. And with their own sound
 11–12 my ears are ringing. My eyes are covered over | by a twin night.
 13 Luxuriance [*otium*], Catullus, is distressing to you:
 14 In luxuriance [*otium*] you exult and are elated to excess.
 15–16 It is luxuriance [*otium*] that in times past caused the ruin of kings and wealthy
 cities.

Song 31 of Sappho, [the first] sixteen lines:

|₁ φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴκος θέοισιν |₂ ἔμμεν' ὄνηρ, ὅττι ἐνάντιός τοι |₃ ἰσδάνει καὶ
 πλάσιον ἄδῃ φωνεῖ-|₄σας ὑπακούει |₅ καὶ γελαίσας ἡμέροεν, τό μ' ἦ μὰν |₆ καρδίαν ἐν
 κτήθεσιν ἐπτόαιεν, |₇ ὡς γὰρ ἔσ' ἴδω βρόχε' ὡς με φώναι-|₈σ' οὐδ' ἐν ἔτ' εἴκει, |₉ ἀλλὰ
 καμ μὲν γλῶσσαι ἔαγε λῆπτον |₁₀ δ' αὐτικά χρωῖ πῦρ ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν, |₁₁ ὀπάτεσσι δ' οὐδ'
 ἐν ὄρημι', ἐπιρρόμ-|₁₂βεισι δ' ἄκουαι, |₁₃ κάδ δέ μ' ἴδρωσ κακχέεται τρόμος δὲ |₁₄ παῖσαν
 ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας |₁₅ ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω 'πιδεύης |₁₆ φαίνομ' ἔμ' αὐται·

Working translation of Song 31 of Sappho, [the first] sixteen lines:

|₁ He appears [*phainetai*] to me, that one, equal to the gods [*īsos theoisin*], |₂ that man
 who, facing you |₃ is seated and, up close, that sweet voice of yours |₄ he listens to, |₅ and
 how you laugh a laugh that brings desire. Why, it just |₆ makes my heart flutter within my
 breast. |₇ You see, the moment I look at you, right then, for me |₈ to make any sound at all
 won't work anymore. |₉ My tongue has a breakdown and a delicate |₁₀ —all of a sudden—
 fire rushes under my skin. |₁₁ With my eyes I see not a thing, and there is a roar |₁₂ my
 ears make. |₁₃ Sweat pours down me and a trembling |₁₄ seizes all of me; paler than grass
 |₁₅ am I, and a little short of death |₁₆ do I appear [*phainomai*] to myself. [...]

Catullus Poem 50:

1 hesterno, Licini, die otiosi
2 multum lusimus in meis tabellis,
3 ut convenerat esse delicatos:
4 scribens versiculos uterque nostrum
5 ludebat numero modo hoc modo illoc,
6 reddens mutua per iocum atque vinum.
7 atque illinc abii tuo lepore
8 incensus, Licini, facetiisque,
9 ut nec me miserum cibus iuaret
10 nec somnus tegetet quiete ocellos,
11 sed toto indomitus furore lecto
12 versarer, cupiens videre lucem,
13 ut tecum loquerer simulque ut essem.
14 At defessa labore membra postquam
15 semimortua lectulo iacebant,
16 hoc, iucunde, tibi poema feci,
17 ex quo perspiceres meum dolorem.
18 nunc audax cave sis, precesque nostras,
19 oramus, cave despuas, ocelle,
20 ne poenas Nemesis reposcat a te.
21 est vemens dea: laedere hanc caveto.

Working translation of Catullus Poem 50:

1 Yesterday, Licinius, while we were luxuriant-in-leisure [*otiosi*],
2 we played [*ludere*], a lot, on my writing-tablets,
3 as it had been agreed, for us to be luxuriant [*delicati*].
4 Each one of us, writing our dear little lines of poetry,
5 was playing [*ludere*] now with this meter, now with that one,
6 trading lines with each other in merriment [*iocus*] attended by wine.
7 And after I left from there, by your charm
8 all inflamed, Licinius, and by your displays of wit,
9 no food could please poor me any more
10 nor could sleep shut down my dear little eyes with peace and quiet,
11 but, losing control in my total frenzy, all over the bed
12 I was tossing and turning, longing to see the light of day,
13 so that I could talk with you and just be with you.
14 But once my tired limbs, after all that agonizing,
15 were finally lying still, half-dead, on my dear little bed,
16 I made it, O my delightful one, I made this poem for you,
17 from which you might figure out my pain [*dolor*].
18 But now don't be too daring, and, when it comes to our prayers at my end,
19 we pray to you, don't spit on them, dear little eye of mine that you are,
20 because, if you're not careful, Nemesis might demand penalties from you.
21 She is an intense goddess, so don't you hurt her feelings.

Catullus Two (2 and 2b):

1. passer, deliciae meae puellae,
2. quicum ludere, quem in sinu tenere,
3. cui primum digitum dare appetenti,
4. et acris solet incitare morsus
5. cum desiderio meo nitenti,
6. carum nescio quid lubet iocari,
7. et solacium sui doloris,
8. credo, ut tum gravis acquiescat ardor,
9. tecum ludere sicut ipsa possem,
10. et tristis animi leuare curas
11. tam gratum est mihi quam ferunt puellae,
12. pernici aureolum fuisse malum,
13. quod zonam soluit diu ligitam.

Working translation of Catullus Two (2 and 2b):

1. You sparrow, delight for my girl...
2. to play with you, to hold you in her lap,
3. to offer for you the tip of her finger as you open wide for it
4. —and to tease out from you those sharp peckings—that is her habit, to do those things
5. whenever she, that glowing object of my desire,
6. feels like having fun with—I don't know— what is near-and-dear to her
7. and is a comfort for her pain—
8. I guess—so that, afterward, the heaviness of her burning passion can ease up.
9. (... You sparrow,), to be playful with you the same way she is, if I could only be able,
10. and to lighten the sad cares of my heart.
11. It is just as much a-thing-of-beauty-and-pleasure [*gratum*] for me as they say it had been for the girl,
12. for that swift one—I mean, the way the golden apple had been for her.
13. It undid her waistband, which had been cinched around her for far too long.