

1. Babrius' First Prologue

Γενεὴ δικαίων ἦν τὸ πρῶτον ἀνθρώπων,
 ὃ Βράγχε τέκνον, ἦν καλοῦσι χρυσεῖην,
 μεθ' ἦν γενέσθαι φασὶν ἀργυρῆν ἄλλην·
 τρίτη δ' ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐσμὲν ἡ σιδηρεΐη.
 5 ἐπὶ τῆς δὲ χρυσεῖς καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ζώων
 φωνὴν ἔναρθρον εἶχε καὶ λόγους ἦδει
 οἷους περ ἡμεῖς μυθέομεν πρὸς ἀλλήλους,
 ἀγοραὶ δὲ τούτων ἦσαν ἐν μέσαις ὕλαις.
 ἐλάλει δὲ πεύκη καὶ τὰ φύλλα τῆς δάφνης,
 10 καὶ πρῶτος ἰχθύς συνελάλει φίλῳ ναύτῃ.
 στρουθοὶ δὲ συνετὰ πρὸς γεωργὸν ὠμίλου·
 ἐφύετ' ἐκ γῆς πάντα μηδὲν αἰτούσης,
 θνητῶν δ' ὑπῆρχε καὶ θεῶν ἑταιρεΐη.
 μαθὼν δ' ἄρ' οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔχοντα καὶ γνοίης
 15 ἐκ τοῦ σοφοῦ γέροντος ἦμιν Αἰσώπου
 μύθους φράσαντος τῆς ἐλευθέρης μούσης.
 ὦν νῦν ἕκαστον ἀνθίσας ἐμῇ μνήμῃ
 μελισταγῆς σοὶ ἴνου τὸ ἴ κηρίον θήσω,
 πικρῶν ἰάμβων σκληρὰ κῶλα θη<λύνας>.

At first, there was a race of just men, Branchus
 my boy, which they call golden. After them,
 they say, came another generation, of silver;
 after these, we are the third generation, the one
 of iron. But in the golden age also all the other
 living creatures had articulated speech and
 knew such logoi as we ourselves now tell each
 other [in the form of μῦθοι]. Their assemblies
 were in the middle of the forests. Even the pine
 tree and the leaves of the laurel chatted. Also, at
 first, the fish chatted with the friendly sailor.
 The sparrows conversed in an intelligible way
 with the farmer. Everything grew from the
 earth, which was asking for nothing in return,
 and a companionship existed between gods and
 mortals. Having learnt that these things were so,
 may you also learn them from wise old Aesop,
 who told us fables with a free muse. Having
 adorned each one of these with flowers by
 means of my own memory, I shall set before
 you a honeycomb [...] dripping with sweetness,
 having softened the hard parts of the bitter
iamboi.

10 ἐλάλει δὲ πεύκη καὶ τὰ φύλλα τῆς δάφνης *Π4* (4th c. papyrus): ἐλάλει δὲ πέτρα καὶ τὰ φύλλα τῆς πεύκης *A* (10th c. manuscript) *11* καὶ πρῶτος ἰχθύς συνελάλει φίλον αὐτῆς (φίλῳ ναύτῃ *Desrousseaux*) *Π4*: ἐλάλει δ...ἰχθύς *Βράγχε νηὶ καὶ ναύτῃ A 14* μαθὼν δ' ἄρ' οὕτω *A*: μάθοις δ' ἄν *Mynas*

2. Callimachus' *Iambi* 2 (fr. 192 Pf.)

Ἦν κείνος οὐνιαυτός, ᾧ τό τε πτηνόν
 καὶ τοὺν θαλάσση καὶ τὸ τετράπουν αὐτως
 ἐφθέγγεθ' ὡς ὁ πηλὸς ὁ Προμήθειος

 τὰπὶ Κρόνου τε καὶ ἔτι τὰ πρὸ τη[
 λ..ουσα καὶ κως [.]υ σ[.]νημεναις[
 5 δίκαιος ὁ [Ζε]ύς, οὐ δίκαι[α] δ' αἰσυμένεων
 τῶν ἐρπετῶν [μ]ὲν ἐξέκοψε τὸ φθέ[γμα,
 γένος δὲ τ.υτ.[.]ρον—ὡσπερ οὐ κάρτ[ος
 ἡμέων ἐχόντων χητέροις ἀπάρξασθαι—
 ...]ψ ἐς ἀνδρῶν· καὶ κυνὸς [μ]ὲ[ν] Εὐδημος,
 10 ὄνου δὲ Φίλτων, ψιττακοῦ δε[
 οὶ δὲ τραγωδοὶ τῶν θάλασσαν οἱ[κεύντων
 ἔχο[υ]σι φωνήν· οἱ δὲ πάντες [ἄ]νθρωποι
 καὶ πουλύμυθοι καὶ ἀλοὶ πεφ[ύ]κασιν
 15 ἐκεῖθεν, ὠνδρόνικε· ταῦτα δ' Αἴσωπος
 ὁ Σαρδιηνὸς εἶπεν, ὄντιν' οἱ Δελφοὶ
 ἄδοντα μῦθον οὐ καλῶς ἐδέξαντο.

It was in that time, when the winged | and that
 which dwells in the sea, and likewise the four-
 footed | used to give utterance as does the
 Promethean clay | ... | in the time of Cronus'
 rule, and still before [...] and [saying] how[.]υ
 σ[.]νημεναις[... | just is Zeus, but not justly
 5 ruling, | he cut off the voice of those which
 crawl, | yet the race τ.υτ.[.]ρον—as though we
 had | not enough power to give the first fruits
 even to others— [...]ψ [he turned] to [the race]
 10 of men. And Eudemus has | the voice of a dog,
 and Philton that of an ass, and of the parrot [...
 | and the tragedians have that of those | who
 dwell in the sea. And all men | are both wordy
 and babbling | from that time, Andronicus.
 These things Aesop | from Sardis said, whom
 the Delphians did not receive well as he sang his
 tale. (Transl. Acosta-Hughes)

3. *Diegesis to Iambi 2 (IV. 22-32)*

Ἦν κεῖν[ος] οἰϋ[ν]ιαυτός, ᾧ τό τε π[τ]ηγόν Τᾶλ 22
λ[α] ζῶα ὠμοφώνει ἀν[θ]ρώποις, μέχρι
κατά λύσιν γήρωσ ἐπ[ρ]έσβευσεν ὁ κύ- 25
κνος πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ ἀλώπηξ τὸν.
Δία ἐτόλμησεν μὴ δικαίως ἄρχειν φά-
ναι. ἔκτοτε δὲ εἰς ἀνθρώπους μετήνεγ-
κεν αὐτῶν τὴν φωνήν, καὶ λάλοι ἐγέ-
νοντο· Εὐδημος δέ, φησίν, τὴν κυνὸς 30
ἔσχε, Φίλτων δὲ ὄνου, παρεπικόπτων
τούτους, [ἴσως δὲ καὶ Σαρδιανὸν εἶπε
τὸν Αἴσωπον.]

“It was in that time, when the winged” The
other living creatures used to speak as do men,
until the swan went on an embassy to the gods
for the release from old age, and the fox dared
to say that Zeus did not rule justly. Thereupon
he transferred their voices to men, and men
became chatterboxes. Eudemus, he says, had
the voice of a dog, and Philton of a donkey,
making fun of them, and [equally he spoke of
Aesop of Sardis?].
(Transl. Acosta-Hughes with alterations)

4. *Babrius' Second prologue*

Μῦθος μὲν, ᾧ παῖ βασιλέως Ἀλεξάνδρου,
Σύρων παλαιῶν ἐστὶν εὖρεμ' ἀνθρώπων,
οἱ πρὶν ποτ' ἦσαν ἐπὶ Νίνου τε καὶ Βήλου.
πρῶτος δέ, φασίν, εἶπε παισὶν Ἑλλήνων 5
Αἴσωπος ὁ σοφός, εἶπε καὶ Λιβυστίνοις
λόγους Κυβίσσης. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ νέη μούση
δίδωμι, φαλάρω χρυσέω χαλινώσας
τὸν μυθιάμβον ὡσπερ ἵππον ὀπλίτην.
ὑπ' ἐμοῦ δὲ πρώτου τῆς θύρης ἀνοιχθείσης 10
εἰσηλθόν ἄλλοι, καὶ σοφωτέρας μούσης
γρίφοις ὁμοίαις ἐκφέρουσι ποιήσεις,
μαθόντες οὐδὲν πλεῖον ἢ 'μὲ γινώσκειν.
ἐγὼ δὲ λευκῆ μυθιάζομαι ῥήσει,
καὶ τῶν ἰάμβων τοὺς ὀδόντας οὐ θήγω, 15
ἀλλ' εὖ πυρώσας, εὖ δὲ κέντρα πρηύνας,
ἐκ δευτέρου σοι τήνδε βίβλον ἀεῖδω.

Fable (μῦθος), son of King Alexander, is the
invention of Syrian men of old, who lived once
upon a time in the days of Ninus and Belus. Aesop
the wise – they say – was the first to tell fables to
the sons of the Hellenes and Cybisses also told
fables (λόγους) to the Libyans. But I offer them
with a new muse, having bridled my *mythiambos*
with pure gold, like a war-horse. I was the first to
open the door. Once I did it, others entered and,
only having come to know who I am but having
learnt nothing else, they publish poems similar to
riddles of a more learned muse. But I tell iambic
fables in a clear style. Also, I do not sharpen the
teeth of the iambs; but, having tested them well by
fire and properly softened their sting, I sing this
book for you for the second time.

5. *Babrius' Mythiambi 1.1*

Ἄνθρωπος ἦλθεν εἰς ὄρος κυνηγῆσων,
τόξου βολῆς ἔμπειρος· ἦν δὲ τῶν ζῶων
φυγὴ τε πάντων καὶ φόβου δρόμος πλήρης
λέων δὲ μούνος προῦκαλεῖτο θαρσήςσας 5
αὐτῷ μάχεσθαι. “μεῖνον” εἶπε “μὴ σπεύσης”
ἄνθρωπος αὐτῷ, “μῆδ' ἐπελπίσης νίκη·
τῷ δ' ἀγγέλω μου πρῶτον ἐντυχῶν γνώση
τί σοι ποιητόν ἐστιν.” εἶτα τοξεύει
μικρὸν διαστάς. χῶ μὲν οἰστός ἐκρύφθη 10
λέοντος ὑγραῖς χολάσιν· ὁ δὲ λέων δείσας
ὤρμησε φεύγειν ἐς νάπας ἐρημαίας.
τούτου δ' ἀλώπηξ οὐκ ἄποθεν εἰστήκει.
ταύτης δὲ θαρσεῖν καὶ μένειν κελευούσης,
“οὐ με πλανήσεις” φησίν, “οὐδ' ἐνεδρεύσεις· 15
ὅπου γὰρ οὕτω πικρὸν ἄγγελον πέμπει,
πῶς αὐτὸς ἤδη φοβερός ἐστι γινώσκω.”

A man, expert in the use of the dart of the bow,
went to the mountain with the intent of hunting; the
animals fled, full of fear, but a lion alone was
courageous and challenged him to fight. The man
said to him: “Wait! Not so fast! Don’t anticipate
victory! Once you have met firstly with my
messenger, you will know what it is necessary for
you to do.” Then he shot an arrow standing at a
short distance. The arrow buried itself in the soft
stomach of the lion. In fear, the lion set out to flee
to desolate fields. A fox was standing not far away
from him. While she ordered him to stand his
ground and be courageous, he replied: “you will
not deceive me nor trap me; when he sends so bitter
a messenger, I already know how scary he is.”

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