

The Fifth Eclogue of Virgil

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Revision 1.1 (March 2003); Corr. 12 November 2009

I. Text

Menalcas

Cur non, Mopse, boni quoniam convenimus ambo,
tu calamos inflare levis, ego dicere versus,
hic corylis mixtas inter consedimus ulmos?

Mopsus

5 Tu maior; tibi me est aequum parere, Menalca,
sive sub incertas Zephyris motantibus umbras
sive antro potius succedimus. aspice ut antrum
silvestris raris sparsit labrusca racemis.

Menalcas

Montibus in nostris solus tibi certat Amyntas.

Mopsus

Quid si idem certet Phoebum superare canendo?

Menalcas

10 Incipe, Mopse, prior, si quos aut Phyllidos ignes
aut Alconos habes laudes aut iurgia Codri.
incipe; pascentis servabit Tityrus haedos.

Mopsus

15 Immo haec, in viridi nuper quae cortice fagi
carmina descripsi et modulans alterna notavi,
experiar. tu deinde iubeto certet Amyntas.

Menalcas

Lenta salix quantum pallenti cedit olivae,
puniceis humilis quantum saliunca rosetis,
iudicio nostro tantum tibi cedit Amyntas.
sed tu desine plura, puer; successimus antro.

Mopsus

20 Exstinctum Nymphae crudeli funere Daphnin
flebant - vos coryli testes et flumina Nymphis -
cum complexa sui corpus miserabile nati
atque deos atque astra vocat crudelia mater.
non ulli pastos illis egere diebus
25 frigida, Daphni, boves ad flumina, nulla neque amnem
libavit quadrupes nec graminis attigit herbam.
Daphni, tuum Poenos etiam ingemuisse leones

interitum montesque feri silvaeque loquuntur.
Daphnis et Armenias curru subiungere tigris
30 instituit, Daphnis thiasos inducere Bacchi
et foliis lentas intexere mollibus hastas.
vitis ut arboribus decori est, ut vitibus uvae,
ut gregibus tauri, segetes ut pinguibus arvis,
tu decus omne tuis. postquam te fata tulerunt,
35 ipsa Pales agros atque ipse reliquit Apollo.
grandia saepe quibus mandavimus hordea sulcis,
infelix lolium et steriles nascuntur avenae;
pro molli viola, pro purpureo narcisso
carduus et spinis surgit paliurus acutis.
40 spargite humum foliis, inducite fontibus umbras,
pastores - mandat fieri sibi talia Daphnis -
et tumulum facite et tumulo superaddite carmen:
“Daphnis ego in silvis, hinc usque ad sidera notus,
formosi pecoris custos, formosior ipse.”

Menalcas

45 Tale tuum carmen nobis, divine poeta,
quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per aestum
dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere rivo.
nec calamis solum aequiperas sed voce magistrum:
fortunate puer, tu nunc eris alter ab illo.
50 nos tamen haec quocumque modo tibi nostra vicissim
dicemus, Daphninque tuum tollemus ad astra;
Daphnin ad astra feremus: amavit nos quoque Daphnis.

Mopsus

An quicquam nobis tali sit munere maius?
et puer ipse fuit cantari dignus et ista
55 iam pridem Stimichon laudavit carmina nobis.

Menalcas

Candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi
sub pedibusque videt nubes et sidera Daphnis.
ergo alacris silvas et cetera rura voluptas
Panaque pastoresque tenet Dryadasque puellas.
60 nec lupus insidias pecori nec retia cervis
ulla dolum meditantur; amat bonus otia Daphnis.
ipsi laetitia voces ad sidera iactant
intonsi montes, ipsae iam carmina rupes,
ipsa sonant arbusta: “deus, deus ille, Menalca!”
65 sis bonus o felixque tuis. en quattuor aras;
ecce duas tibi, Daphni, duas altaria Phoebo.
pocula bina novo spumantia lacte quot annis
craterasque duo statuam tibi pinguis olivi
et multo in primis hilarans convivia Baccho
70 ante focum, si frigus erit, si messis, in umbra
vina novum fundam calathis Ariusia nectar.
cantabunt mihi Damoetas et Lyctius Aegon;
saltantis Satyros imitabitur Alphesiboeus.
haec tibi semper erunt, et cum sollemnia vota
75 reddemus Nymphis et cum lustrabimus agros.

dum iuga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit,
dumque thymo pascentur apes, dum rore cicadae,
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt.
80 ut Baccho Cererique, tibi sic vota quot annis
agricolae facient; damnabis tu quoque votis.

Mopsus

Quae tibi, quae tali reddam pro carmine dona?
nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus Austri
nec percussa iuvant fluctu tam litora nec quae
saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles.

Menalcas

85 Hac te nos fragili donabimus ante cicuta;
haec nos “formosum Corydon ardebat Alexin,”
haec eadem docuit “cuium pecus? an Meliboei?”

Mopsus

90 At tu sume pedum quod, me cum saepe rogaret,
non tulit Antigenes - et erat tunc dignus amari -
formosum paribus nodis atque aere, Menalca.

II. Literal Translation

Menalcas

Why, Mopsus, since we have convened, both of us skilled,
You at blowing the light pipes, I at speaking verses,
Have we not sat here among the elms mixed with hazels.

Mopsus

You are the elder; it is right that I obey you, Menalcas,
Whether under the shifting shadows—with the West wind moving—
Or instead into the cave we enter. Look how the wild
Vines has sprinkled the cave with scattered clusters of grapes.

Menalcas

Amyntas alone competes with you in our mountains.

Mopsus

What if the same man should compete to overcome Phoebus by singing?

Menalcas

Begin, Mopsus, first, if anything either of Phyllis'
Fires or Alcon's praises or Codrus' quarrels you have.
Begin. Tityrus will protect the grazing kids.

Mopsus

Nay, rather I will try these songs which recently on a green beech
I set down and putting them to music I noted the alterations.
Then you bid Amyntas compete.

Menalcas

As much as the supple willow yields to the pale green olive,
As much as the lowly nard yields to the red rose gardens,
Amyntas yields likewise to you by our judgment.
But stop speaking so much, boy; we have entered into the cave.

Mopsus

The Nymphs wept for dead Daphnis because of his cruel
Death. You, hazels and rivers, were witnesses for the Nymphs,
While embracing the wretched body of her own son,
His mother calls both the gods and stars cruel.
None did drive on those days his cows
After feeding time, Daphnis, to cold rivers, and no four-foot beast
Neither tasted a stream nor touched a blade of grass.
Daphnis, both the wild mountains and forests say that even African
Lions groaned over your passing.
Daphnis also taught men how to yoke Armenian
Tigers to the chariot, Daphnis taught men how to lead Bacchus'
Rites and how to intertwine the supple spears with soft leaves.
Just as vines are glory to the trees, just as grapes to the vines,
Just as bulls to the herd, just as crops to fertile fields,
Your entire self is glory to your people. After the fates stole off,
Pales herself and Apollo himself abandoned the fields.
Often from the furrows to which we have entrusted massive seeds of barley,
Unfruitful darnel and barren oats arise.
Instead of soft violet, instead of brilliant narcissus,
Thistle and shrub arise with sharp thorns.
Sprinkle the ground with leaves, draw shadows over fountains,
You Shepards—Daphnis commands that such things be done unto himself.
Make a tomb and add this song to the tomb:
“I was Daphnis in the woods, known from here to the stars,
Guardian of a lovely flock, myself lovelier.”

Menalcas

Your song is such to us, divine poet,
As sleep on the grass to the tired, as during heat
The quenching of thirst in a leaping creek of sweet water.
Not only do you equal the master in pipes but in voice:
Lucky boy, you now will be next to him.
Nevertheless we shall sing this of ours as best I can to you in turn,
We shall lift up your Daphnis to the stars;
We shall carry Daphnis to the stars: Daphnis also loved me.

Mopsus

What! Could anything be greater to us than such a gift?
Both the boy himself was worthy to be sung and these
Songs now long ago Stimichon praised to us.

Menalcas

Brilliant Daphnis marvels at Olympus' strange
Threshold and beneath his feet sees the clouds and stars.
Therefore eager joy seizes the forests and remaining
Territories and Pan and the shepards and the Dryad girls.
Neither the wolf plans an ambush against the flock nor any
Nets deceits against the deer; kindly Daphnis loves ease.
These very unshorn mountains with joy fling their voices
To the stars, now these very cliffs, these very
Orchards resound the songs: “God, that man is god, Menalcas!”
Be kind and propitious to your own. Look! four altars;
Behold! two to you, Daphnis, two high ones to Phoebus.

Cups two at a time frothing with fresh milk every year and two
Craters of rich olive oil shall I set up to you.
And especially with much wine making merry the banquets
Before the hearth, if it will be cool, if it will be harvest time in the shade
I shall pour from goblets the Ariusian wine—a freshly made nectar.
Damoetas and Lyctian Aegon will sing to me;
Alphesiboetus will imitate the dancing Satyrs.
These will always be yours, both when the ceremonial vows
We shall render to the Nymphs and when we shall purify the fields.
As long as the boar will love the mountain's height, as long as the fish the rivers,
And as long as bees graze on thyme, as long as the cicadas on dew,
Always your honor and name and praises will remain.
Just as to Bacchus and Ceres, so to you each year
Farmers will make vows; you also will bind men to their vows.

Mopsus

What, what gifts to you should I return for such a song?
For neither the whistling of a coming South Wind aids me
So much nor to such a degree the shores struck by the wave
Nor these rivers hurrying down amid rocky valleys.

Menalcas

First we shall present you with these brittle reed;
This taught us "Lovely Corydon blazes for Alexis."
This same "Whose flock? Is it Meliboeus?"

Mopsus

Yet you take this Shepard's crook, which often when he asked,
Antigenes did not carry—and he then was worthy to be loved—
Lovely with its evenly-spaced knots and bronze, Menalcas.

III. Bibliography of Works Consulted

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