

Carmina Popularia 848

ἦλθ' ἦλθε χελιδῶν
καλὰς ὥρας ἄγουσα,
καλοὺς ἐνιαυτούς,
ἐπὶ γαστέρα λευκά,
ἐπὶ νῶτα μέλαινα.
παλάθαν σὺ προκύκλει
ἐκ πίονος οἴκου
οἴνου τε δέπαστρον
τυροῦ τε κάνυστρον·

5

VOCABULARY

ἄγω: bring
γαστήρ, -τέρος, ἦ: belly
δέπαστρον, τό = δέπας, -αος, τό: beaker, cup
ἐνιαυτός, ὁ: year, time of the year
κάνυστρον, το = κάνεον, τό: basket
λευκός, -ή, -όν: white
μέλας, μέλαινα, μέλαν: black, dark
νῶτον, τό: back (of the body)

οἴνος, -ου, ὁ: wine
παλάθα = παλάθη, ἦ: cake
πίων, -ον: rich, wealthy
προκύκλειω: roll out (*i.e.*, 'bring out')
τυρός, οὔ, ὁ: cheese
χελιδῶν, ἦ: swallow (the European swallow, a
seasonally migratory bird)
ῶρα, ἦ: season

COMMENTARY

TEXT: follows *PMG* 848 but incorporates Page's suggestion of an anapaestic dimeter in v. 17, with the necessary reversal of the word order of the transmitted φέρης τι.

METRE:

vv. 1-10: × | - ∪ ∪ - | - (Reizianum)
v. 11: - ∪ ∪ - | - (Adonean)
v. 12: - ∪ - × | - ∪ - × | - ∪ - × | - ∪ - (trochaic tetrameter catalectic)
vv. 13-16, 18-19: × - ∪ - | × - ∪ - | × - ∪ - (iambic

trimeter)

v. 17: anapaestic dimeter (∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ - | ∪ ∪ - ∪ ∪ -) with a spondaic first foot (- -).

1. ἦλθ' (*elision*) < ἦλθε (2 *aor.* 3rd *sg. indic.* < ἔρχομαι)
4. ἐπὶ γαστέρα: 'on its belly'
- λευκά = λευκή (*f.*) in apposition to χελιδῶν (v. 1)
5. ἐπὶ νῶτα: 'on its back' (*pl.* νῶτα is often used in place of *sg.* νῶτον without change of sense)
6. προκύκλει: 2nd *sg. imperat.*

LT

καὶ πύρνα χελιδῶν
καὶ λεκιθίταν
οὐκ ἀπωθεῖται· πότερ' ἀπίωμες ἢ λαβόμεθα;
εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐκ ἐάσομες·
ἢ τὰν θύραν φέρωμες ἢ τὸ ὑπέρθυρον
ἢ τὰν γυναῖκα τὰν ἔσω καθήμεναν·
μικρὰ μὲν ἐστι, ῥαδίως νιν οἴσομες.
ἄν δὴ τι φέρης, μέγα δὴ τι φέροις·
ἄνοιγ' ἄνοιγε τὰν θύραν χελιδόνι·
οὐ γὰρ γέροντές ἐσμεν, ἀλλὰ παιδιά.

10

15

VOCABULARY

ἀνοίγνυμι: open
ἄπειμι: to go away
ἀπωθέω: to push away; (*mid.*) push away from oneself; refuse, reject
γέρων, γέροντος, ὄ: old man
δῆ: *particle adding emphasis to the word preceding it.*
ἐάω (*fut.* ἐάσω): allow; let be; leave alone
ἔσω: inside

θύρα, -ας, ἡ: door
λαμβάνω: get; receive; take
λεκιθίτας = λεκιθίτης, ὄ: pulse bread
οἴσομες (*fut.*) < φέρω: carry
ῥαδίως: easily
παιδίον, τό (*pl.* παιδιά): a young child
πύρνον, -ου, τό: wheat bread
ὑπέρθυρον, ου, τό: lintel (of a door)

COMMENTARY

12. πότερ'... ἢ: frames an interrogative offering two possible alternatives (*i.e.*, 'either... or...?').
πότερ' ἀπίωμες ἢ λαβόμεθα: deliberative subjunctives (*i.e.* 'Should we go away [having been given something] or should we take [something]?')
ἀπίωμες: Doric dialect (1st *pl.* ending in -μες instead of -μεν)
13. εἰ μὲν τι δώσεις: supply ἀπίωμες (*i.e.* 'if you're going to give something, let's be off!').
ἐάσομες: the object is implied (*i.e.*, σε: 'you'); for the Doric ending -μες, see *n.* 12.
14. φέρωμες: (*subj.*) 'let's take'; for the Doric ending -μες, see *n.* 12.

15. τὰν ἔσω καθήμεναν: attributive with τὰν γυναῖκα (*i.e.*, 'your wife *who* is sitting inside').
16. μικρὰ (*f. nom. sg.*): the antecedent is the wife in the previous verse.
οἴσομες: (*fut.*) 'we'll carry'; for the ending -μες, see *n.* 12.
νιν: 3rd *sg. acc. pron.* (enclitic) = αὐτόν, αὐτήν, αὐτό (*i.e.* 'him / her / it'); here, it means 'her', referring to the wife mentioned in *v.* 15.
17. ἄν = ἐάν (+ *subj.* φέρης): *i.e.*, 'If you actually do bring something...'
φέροις: optative of wish (without ἄν): *i.e.*, 'we hope you bring something really big!'
18. ἄνοιγ' (*elision*) = ἄνοιγε (2nd *sg. imperat.*)