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The TLS June 24, 2005

## A new Sappho poem

### Sappho

### A new translation by Martin West:

(You for) the fragrant-bosomed (Muses') lovely gifts

(be zealous,) girls, (and the) clear melodious lyre:

(but my once tender) body old age now

(has seized;) my hair's turned (white) instead of dark;

my heart's grown heavy, my knees will not support me,

that once on a time were fleet for the dance as fawns.

This state I oft bemoan; but what's to do?

Not to grow old, being human, there's no way.

Tithonus once, the tale was, rose-armed Dawn,

love-smitten, carried off to the world's end,

handsome and young then, yet in time grey age

o'ertook him, husband of immortal wife.

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