

The New "Brothers Poem" by Sappho

Translated by Rachel Hadas

Chatter, rumors: *Ooh, Charaxos has come
safe, ship laden—he is back at home!*
If you ask me, that is the gods' concern.
Don't think about it.

Better send me to pour out a stream
of supplications; tell me to pray to Queen
Hera: *May Charaxos steer safely home.
And may he find us*

safe and well. And let us please leave all
the rest to heaven. Out of a stormy squall
a divine calm suddenly can prevail,
if that is how

the king of heaven wills it. Some power may
from rough waters steer us skillfully
toward blessings and prosperity.
As for our family,

if Larichos would only lift his head,
leave his childhood, grow to a man instead,
then we from this weight of depression would
finally be free.

RACHEL HADAS, a Fellow of the American Academy since 1995, is Board of Governors Professor of English at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey–Newark.

This translation, reprinted with permission of the *Times Literary Supplement*, was first published in the May 2, 2014, issue of the *Times Literary Supplement*.

For a brief discussion of the "Brothers Poem" by Sappho, see the introduction to this issue, page 17, endnote 13.

© 2016 by Rachel Hadas
doi:10.1162/DAED_a_00384