

## Peter Sparks

### Hermione

No school today. Miss cannot teach us Greek;  
No breath remains to show how we might speak  
Or write, approaching her in skill and elegance.  
New arts are needed now: can they enhance  
That fine-boned beauty, linen-wrapped and masked in paint?

How many years your kohl eyes must have stared  
Watching new generations play. Then dared  
A young voice call: 'who's that?' and no-one knew.  
You joined relations that they also threw  
Into the asp-bored sand to rest for two millennia.

Haloed by Hawara sun you saw him lean  
To read the writing, say that you had been  
A teacher and must be exemplar for  
The 'women's college' where the third years saw  
They had just funds enough to pay and brought you here.

Three X-rays and a CAT scan for an air-  
Conditioned corpse. A quality of care  
That might have saved you all those years ago.  
Conserved and published, now at last you know  
We hold you treasure, evermore to teach.