

VIVIA PERPETUA

Now being on the eve of death, discharged
From every mortal hope and earthly care,
I questioned how my soul might best employ
This hand, and this still wakeful flame of mind,
In the brief hours yet left me for their use ;
Wherefore have I bethought me of my friend,
Of you, Philarchus, and your company,
Yet wavering in the faith and unconfirmed ;
Perchance that I may break into thine heart
Some sorrowful channel for the love divine,
I make this simple record of our proof
In diverse sufferings for the name of Christ,
Whereof the end already for the most
Is death this day with steadfast faith endured.

We were in prison many days, close-pent
In the black lower dungeon, housed with thieves