

Sappho stung with love: poems and fragments

Literature



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Sappho stung with love - Poems and Fragments Poetry is the song of heart or as they say. The ment is extremely true for any poet who writes from the bottom of his heart merely to express his wishes, desires, hopes and love.

We see the same traits and trends of expression in the poetry written by Sappho the Greek poetess of ancient times.

Sappho was regarded highly during her times. She was the muse of the great thinker, Plato. Unfortunately her poetry is not available today except for a few fragments, but when we read through those fragments we get a glimpse of the person she was.

Today Sappho's poetry is translated in many languages. It is available in fragments and only one poem is available in its entirety. Sappho comes across as a very independent thinker in her poetry. Her poems reflect a strong individual mind. Her poems reflect a strong love for woman. It is said that Sappho was a brilliant musician. She composed her own songs and was highly praised for her musical talents. For a poet love comes in many forms to express. It could be the romance, yearning, longing, desire and off course the coming together in love. Every aspect of love comes in many colours for a poet. The expression of love has been a central idea of many poets and their poetry all over the world. Sappho's poetry also displays these characteristics of love very vividly. Her style of writing is very clear and direct. She does not really like to hide behind similes or metaphors.

Whatever she feels she says it directly. The love she expresses is of a woman. Sappho was deeply impressed by 'woman'. She has portrayed all the images of a woman in her poetry. From sensual and erotic to motherly love woman comes across as a very strong character in her poems.

Most commonly the target of her affections was female, often one of the
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many women sent to her for education in the arts. She nurtured these women, wrote poems of love and adoration to them, and when they eventually left the island to be married, she composed their wedding songs.

1(Isle of Lesbos)

It is claimed that Sappho had a daughter by the name Cleis, love for whom is displayed in a fragment where she claims that even if she gets the treasure of the world she won't trade for the happiness of being a mother. Contrary to this her yearning of love comes out very passionately and strongly when she longs and laments for Adonis. Saying that nothing can compensate for his loss in the life of the main character of the poem, Sappho indicates the colours of longing passion in the fragment. She requests Aphrodite the goddess of love to release her from the pain of passion and longing and at the same time does not want to be released from the same sweet pain. She blames Aphrodite for the magic Aphrodite has played on her in the next poem. She is unable to concentrate on her work because she is love-struck. This simple depiction of being in love hits the reader very powerfully. Sappho true to her style says it directly and in clear words. Although her poems when translated do not sound lyrical they certainly have a flow of language which one can imagine would be musical originally. As she herself was a musician words would definitely come to her in the flow of music and melody. Aaron Pochigian has translated Sappho's poem in his book, Sappho stung with love. He claims that he has written poetry all over again although recreating Sappho's poems. Most other writers have translated her poems without getting entangled in the form of lyrics and may come across as more endearing form since they convey the essence of her poetry. However Pochigian's attempt to make it lyrical does no harm to the original sensual <https://assignbuster.com/sappho-stung-with-lovepoems-and-fragments/>

poetry. In many places in fact it does justice to the original poem. For Ex:

Like a gale smiting an oak

on mountainous terrain,

Eros, with a stroke,

shattered my brain. 2

Sappho's poetry is highly sensual and filled with passion. The title of the book is justified when truly her poems talk all about love and only love.

Essence of a woman comes across very strongly in her poems and is often construed as her sexual orientation. What a reader of her poems is however experiences is passion, love and longing coming straight from the heart, in direct and clear words, irrespective of who the object of affection is.

References

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