

# The foundation of a happy life according to sappho

Literature



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English essay Sappho's Poetry Sappho was a Greek lyric poet born in the island of Lesbos. Her poetry describes love and passion for various people including love between people of same sex. Even though she died ages ago, her reputation has survived times and it is still being felt through her writings. The term lesbians were derived from the name of the island where she was born, and it has been used to describe females who are intimately in love with fellow women. In Sappho's poem number 4, she is parting with her friend. Her friend is marrying. The persona is depressed and has teary eyes. She does not want to leave her friend but she has to. Sappho too is unhappy because they had become so attached with her friend since their youthful days. In their society, they view marriage to be full of hardship and suffering. In this poem, Sappho's characteristics can be labeled as sociable, sophisticated and affectionate. These characteristics can be drawn from the way she portrays herself in the poem, talking about her friend, and reminiscing moments. Sappho is sociable because she had made close ties with the persona to an extent that parting caused them pain. The two believed that the ties between women-friends was more valuable as compared to that between a woman and her husband. Most of these marriages had been planned, and so the girls had little choice on who they wedded. This is seen when the persona tells her " it is not by choice, I don't want to leave you". She did not want to be parted from her childhood friend because she did not want to lose their companionship.

Sappho is also loving. In the poem, she tells her friend that she should not forget her and that she should always remember the good time they shared together. She also reminds her friend of how well she took care of her. In Sappho; the persona had not only found a friend but a mentor and a

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confidant. They spent most time laying side by side and she mentions a soft bed where her and her friend could satisfy their desires. She describes the person's shoulders as soft showing how much admiration and love she had for her. Sappho can also be said to be sophisticated. In her poem, she reminds her friend about the wreaths of violet and roses that she wore, the necklaces and perfumes. She describes the perfume as precious and fit for royalty. She describes the braids her friend had plaited as woven for flowers, showing how much she admires the fact that they were beautiful. This shows that she is classy and sophisticated.

#### Personal relation to character

This characteristic will relate to me personally as I learn that good friendship is the foundation of a happy life. Meeting friends who will always be there for you and will always view your imperfections perfectly is totally priceless and irreplaceable. Marriage at times comes in between longtime friends and you will miss the waters of friendship. Marriages may come with challenges and if we still keep our friends, they will always provide a shoulder for us to lean on because a friend in need is a friend indeed. The fact that Sappho is sophisticated, is an admirable quality, as a lady, one should have a sense of taste and love for beauty and jewellery. The fact that she adores them and has class is an admirable quality in her.

#### Citation

Daumiers "The Death of Sappho," taken from the mythology gallery at the Kantonsschule Zürcher Unterland