

SAPPHO

FRAGMENT 1

Immortal Aphrodite, progeny
Of Father Zeus, enchantress, hear my plea!
Don't crush my soul with anguish and dismay!
If you've once heard my voice from far away,
Come from your father's golden home and ride,
Brought by your winged creatures, to my side!
They soon arrived and you, blessed goddess,
Smiled brightly as you asked what new distress
Afflicted me and what my frenzied heart
Desired, who was she who lacked the dart 10
That Cupid sends. If she from you should flee
She soon shall seek your company; if she
Should spurn your gifts, she will nevertheless
Offer to you *her* gifts herself. Ah yes,
If she is ignorant of love, she soon
Shall feel it, though reluctantly. This boon
Grant me, surcease of misery, I pray!
O goddess, I beseech you, drive away
All care and sorrow! Give to me what I
Desire of you and be my staunch ally!

FRAGMENT 31

That man seems like a god who has a seat
Near you and hears your laughing voice. How sweet
It is! It makes me tremble! When I see

Your lovely face, though momentarily,
I'm rendered mute. My tongue is split asunder,
While there is my ears the sound of thunder.
My flesh must be on fire! I'm shivering
With cold sweat and there is a shuddering
Beneath my skin. Like dead grass, I surmise
That I am but a inch from my demise. 10