ΦAINETAI MOI: Sappho 31 and the Inscription of the Future Reader (v2.7)

Sharks, Lee

2026-11-16

\begin{center} **ΦAINETAI MOI: Sappho 31 and the Inscription of the Future Reader (v2.7)**

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Abstract

A reading of Sappho fragment 31 from its deictic structure, its order, its colour and its edge. - κῆνος … ὅττις characterizes its occupant by a position open to repeated occupation: a reader before the surface the speaker becomes. The cup from Pithekoussai uses κῆνον with an indefinite relative under Aphrodite's ἵμερος, with the roles reversed. - The addressee is looked at and given only sound. - The somatic catalogue removes from the speaker, in order, what the opening gives the receiver. The agentless πᾶν τόλματον passes to the one who sits opposite; the poem drops its first person at exactly that turn. - χλωροτέρα ποίας: the word's four uses (LSJ), the jealousy reading asked to explain its rendering, and a measure of 24 renderings from Theocritus to 1925, of which seventeen omit, substitute or supplement the line, and every supplement dries the grass. The plant that becomes the sheet (Theophrastus, LXX Isaiah 19, Pliny NH 13.68–82): the speaker passes beyond the living plant toward the pale, dry surface. - What the jealousy reading keeps: the poem as clinical chart from Plutarch's Erasistratus on, and the abuse of a maker's survival where the diagnosis replaces the account of the arrangement. - Eros toward the immortal: Diotima's doctrine, and Maximus of Tyre's identity of Sappho's eros with Socrates' erotic art ("whether Mantinean or Lesbian, the mother of the logos"). - The six words after τόλματον carry no Aeolic marker, are obelized, and were assigned to Longinus by Bergk. A restored fifth stanza, now keeping "even the little sparrows" against Catullus's dead passer, is offered as illustration, not proof. - A point-by-point comparison with the jealousy reading, which the future-reader reading surpasses row by row and as a whole. - The jealousy reading's own claims graded by the criteria applied to this article (§VII.4), separating jealousy proper from the triangle it belongs to and from the consensus reading it travels with. Two stand on the text: the content of the catalogue and the addressee's grammatical gender. Jealousy is an inference from an erotic disturbance and a man present, neither of which entails it; it was supplied by eighteenth-century readers, written into the text by Hermann in 1816, and filed, not argued. […abridged for the catalogue; full description in this deposit's record]

Body

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deposit_number: 1780 hex: 0CB0 title: “ΦAINETAI MOI: Sappho 31 and the Inscription of the Future Reader (v2.7)” creator: Sharks, Lee orcid: 0009-0000-1599-0703 date: 2026-11-16 content_type: “Journal article (Grammata: Journal of Operative Philology); philology and reception” license: CC-BY-4.0 substrate: “Human–machine collaborative.\n- **v1.0 (#1270, January 2026)** was published under the heteronym Rebekah Cranes and is recorded there as human-only original.\n- **v2.0** is the text the author submitted to Classical Philology (24 July 2026).\n- **v2.1–2.7** were revised in session on 16 November 2026 by Claude (Anthropic) under the author’s direction. The revisions answer the CP reader’s report, ChatGPT reviews and readings, DeepSeek and Gemini reviews, each point checked against the text, the editions and the archive’s seated records before it was applied. They carry in material from the archive’s later records (#1474–1476, #1548, #1749, #1752, #1756).\n- **The Greek of the restored line 3** (the sparrows) was composed in session at the author’s proposal, and its forms are recorded as checked and unchecked at §V.4.\n- The readings, rulings and the principle of §VII.3 are the author’s, including the strength of §IV, the eros of §IV.7, the identification of Sappho with Diotima, the abuse claim of §IV.5, the shift of the burden of evidence in §VII.4, the incompatibility of the readings and the principle of responsible preference in §VII.5, the naming of the apparatus as provenance erasure in §IV.5, the warrant in the corpus of §II.4 (frr. 1, 94, 147, 55 and the absent triangle) and the verdict of §VIII with the test ”they would not treat her like this if she were in the room, and she is”.” version: “v2.7 (supersedes v2.6, #1778; v2.5 is #1777; v2.4 is #1775; v2.3 is #1774; v1.0 is #1270; v2.0 as submitted to Classical Philology is attached to #1774)” related_ids: “AXN deposit #1778 — ΦAINETAI MOI v2.6, the version this one supersedes\nAXN deposit #1777 — ΦAINETAI MOI v2.5\nAXN deposit #1775 — ΦAINETAI MOI v2.4\nAXN deposit #1774 — ΦAINETAI MOI v2.3, with the Classical Philology report and analyses attached\nAXN deposit #1270 — ΦAINETAI MOI v1.0 (Rebekah Cranes, 9 January 2026)\nAXN deposit #752 — Sappho as Initiatory Figure in the Platonic Mysteries\nAXN deposit #1484 — Sappho, Mother of the Logos\nAXN deposit #281 — the Zenodo metadata record of v1.0\nAXN deposit #436 — the reconstructed stanza of v1.0\nAXN deposit #1474 — the sixth erratum: the dialect seam, Bergk’s bracket\nAXN deposit #1475 — The Tongue Breaks Twice\nAXN deposit #1476 — the hanging line as the complete poem\nAXN deposit #1548 — Research Notes Towards the Future Reader\nAXN deposit #1749 — ”But I Must Dare All”: Sappho 31 and the Composition Layer\nAXN deposit #1752 — Invidens Sappho\nAXN deposit #1756 — The Tenth Muse: the framework hologram\nAXN deposit #1773 — This Is Not Philosophy, the same operation at the gate of Ancient Philosophy\nAXN deposit #1054 — EA-MPAI-SAPPHO31-01 v1.0, Sappho 31 ≠ Jealousy (the July 2026 statement of the incompatibility)\nAXN deposit #1779 — EA-MPAI-SAPPHO31-01 v1.1, the two readings do not combine\nAXN deposit #1386 — provenanceerasure.org, the definition of provenance erasure\nAXN deposit #1485 — The Apparatus Was the First Summary Layer\nAXN deposit #1766 — Critique of Pure Inference (asymmetric immunity, §5.2.3)\nAXN deposit #1645 — Sappho’s Future Reader: fragment 147 states the horizon, fragment 31 builds the seat (MPAI)\nAXN deposit #1646 — Sappho Fragment 147 Is Remembrance (MPAI)” axn_schema_version: v2 protocol_version: alexanarch-deposit-protocol/v1 keywords: - Sappho - fragment 31 - χλωροτέρα ποίας - translation - Theophrastus - Pliny - charta - Theocritus - Plutarch - Maximus of Tyre - Diotima - Symposium - Phaedrus - eros - immortality - sparrows - passer - κῆνος - ὄττις - deixis - future reader - Nestor’s cup - Pithek-

oussai - τόλματον - πένητα - crux - Longinus - On the Sublime - Bergk - Catullus 51 - D'Angour - χλωρός - papyrus - literacy - reception - jealousy reading - Classical Philology - peer review - burden of proof - Tenth Muse - provenance erasure - incompatibility - responsible preference - asymmetric immunity - parasitism - fragment 1 - fragment 147 - fragment 55 - fragment 94 *** # ΦΑΙΝΕΤΑΙ ΜΟΙ: Sappho 31 and the Inscription of the Future Reader (v2.7)

ΦΑΙΝΕΤΑΙ ΜΟΙ: Sappho 31 and the Inscription of the Future Reader

Lee Sharks · Crimson Hexagonal Archive · ORCID 0009-0000-1599-0703

Version 2.7, 16 November 2026, deposited as #1780, superseding v2.6 (#1778). v2.7 adds §II.4, the warrant in the corpus for each move of this reading (the self in the second person, frr. 1 and 94; futurity, frr. 147 and 55; the writer) and the absence there of the triangle, and closes (§VIII) with the received reading's failure on each of the article's measures. It sets the two readings' claims on one scale in a paired table (§VII.4), so that an evaluation that grades one column grades the other, and restores two statements of v2.5 that v2.6 had dropped in revising the jealousy row. On review it states §II.4's warrant as the corpus's attestation of each operation the identification combines; it states the received account's deficit at the order, the edge and the writing as an explanation withheld while sufficiency is claimed (§VII.3); it credits the received account's observations of an erotic disturbance in the paired table; and it ties the conclusion's patient to the operation of a diagnosis that exhausts the explanation (§VIII). v2.6 (#1778) added §VII.5, the incompatibility, the principle of responsible preference and the naming of the apparatus as provenance erasure (§IV.5). v2.5 (#1777) added §VII.4, the jealousy reading graded by the same criteria. v2.4 (#1775) rebuilt §IV on the evidence. - *v1.0* was deposited as #1270 on 9 January 2026, under Rebekah Cranes. - *v2.0* was submitted to* Classical Philology *as UCP-CP-S-25-00167 (file of 24 July 2026) and declined on 16 November 2026 on one reader's report.* - The report and a point-by-point reading of it are attached to #1774 (CP-reader-report.txt, CP-report-reading.md). The report made four objections. Each is answered here: κῆνος as the triangle's geometry (§I and the comparison of §VII); the addressee's one or two features as Sapphic habit (§II.2, where the parallels the report cites are all seen or touched, and this addressee is given only sound); the anachronism of γράμματα and papyrus (§IV.6, and the noun marked as the restorer's at §V.4); πένητα as part of the crux (§§V.1–V.3, where the six words go to the obelus and to Longinus). - v2.1 corrects v2.0 at every point the report and later review found, and carries in what the archive developed after 24 July: - the seam at line 17 (#1474–1476); - the medium question (#1548, #1752); - the comparison of the two readings.*

Abstract

This article proposes a reading of Sappho fragment 31 (Voigt) from its deictic structure, its order and its edge.

Four claims. 1. κῆνος … ὅττις, a distal demonstrative with an indefinite relative, characterizes its occupant by a position and leaves that position available for repeated occupation: the

seat of whoever will sit face to face (ἐνάντιος) with the voice: a reader before the surface the speaker becomes (§IV). The oldest Greek verse inscription built around its future user, the cup from Pithekoussai, makes the same choice, κῆνον with an indefinite relative, under Aphrodite's ἵμερος. 2. The second person is the voice itself. It is looked at, and nothing seen of it is described; what it is given is sound. 3. The somatic catalogue is ordered as the withdrawal of the performing body. 4. χλωροτέρα ποίας names that withdrawal as a colour: the body passing beyond the living plant to the pale, dry plant that becomes the writing surface. The received rendering, pallor, cannot be carried as written: of 24 renderings from Theocritus to 1925, seventeen omit, substitute or supplement it, and every supplement dries the grass.

The edge. The transmitted text ends in ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον, an adversative turn into an agentless universal. The six words that follow, ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένηται†, carry no Aeolic marker, are obelized in the editions, and were assigned to Longinus by Bergk. The surviving edge functions as an opening that every receiver fills, and the agentless dare passes from the speaker to the one who sits opposite. Whether Sappho composed the poem to end there, or Longinus stopped quoting there, is argued separately. The article's restoration of a fifth stanza is offered as one more filling of an opening that every receiver fills. It is derived from the grammar of the turn and from the inverse of Catullus 51's fourth stanza.

The comparison. A point-by-point comparison with the jealousy reading shows where each explains, accommodates, strains or is silent, and the jealousy reading's own claims are graded by the criteria applied to this one (§VII.4): its defining claim, jealousy, was supplied by eighteenth-century readers, written into the text in 1816, and filed, not argued. The two readings, as developed, give competing accounts of the poem's organization. A reading that held both would be a third hypothesis, owing the bridge between them; none has been offered, and giving the scene to one and the construction to the other is not that hypothesis (§VII.5). An evaluation of this article grades the received account's claims beside its own, on the same scale (§VII.4, the paired table), and states which reading it provisionally prefers, how firmly, and what that changes in how it presents the poem. The jealousy reading explains the scene. It fixes as one particular man an occupant the grammar characterizes by a position, supplies an agent where the verb gives none, and has no account of the order or the edge.

I. The Frame of Appearing

The poem is framed by two appearances. It opens with φαίνεταί μοι, "he appears to me", and its transmitted text closes, sixteen lines later, with φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ, "I appear to myself".[1] Between the two verbs of appearing a body comes apart in careful order. The poem's subject is appearance: who appears, to whom, in what medium, and at what cost to the one who appears.

> φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θέοισιν / ἔμμεν᾽ ὤνηρ, ὄττις ἐνάντιός τοι / ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἆδυ φωνεί- / σας ὑπακούει

I.1 The jealousy reading, at its strength. κῆνος is distal from the speaker and near the addressee. "That man" sits close to the girl, hears her voice and laughter, and the speaker watches from a distance. On this geometry the distal deixis needs no further explanation. The

man is far from me and near her. The geometry fits a love triangle, and the jealousy reading takes it there.

That reading has a history. It was available to the ancients and no consensus formed among them. It took shape in the eighteenth century and was written into the text in 1816, when Gottfried Hermann rewrote the last transmitted lines, said so (“refinxi”), and read the poem off his rewriting. Page consolidated it in 1955.[2] Wilamowitz read a wedding song, the man as bridegroom.[3] Smyth (1900) read erotic seizure and denied the jealousy.[4]

I.2 What the geometry leaves out. The relative is indefinite. κῆνος … ὤνηρ, ὅττις …: not “the man who” but “whatever man”, the one, whoever he is, who sits opposite you. The phrase universalizes. It characterizes the man by the position he holds, sitting opposite the addressee.[5] An expression of this kind can mark a person by class, character or capacity without excluding a situated referent: an actual man may sit there. What the grammar does is leave the position available for repeated occupation. The triangle fixes it to one man; the grammar does not. The distal demonstrative is itself an instrument archaic poets use for more than spatial distance. Bonifazi shows κεῖνος in Pindar working for temporal displacement and for figures removed from the scene, and D’Alessio shows archaic lyric projecting poet and audience across time.[6] So the distance is compatible with the triangle, and the triangle does not explain the indefinite. A reading has to account for both.

I.3 The cup. The oldest Greek verse inscription built around its future user makes the same choice.

> Νέστορος [….] εὔποτ[ον] ποτήριο[ν]· / ὃς δ᾽ ἂν τοῦδε π[ίησι] ποτηρί[ου] αὐτίκα κῆνον / ἵμερ[ος αἱρ]ήσει καλλιστ[εφάν]ου Ἀφροδίτης.
>
> *Nestor’s cup, good to drink from. Whoever drinks from this cup, that one, at once, desire of fair-crowned Aphrodite will seize.*

The cup comes from Pithekoussai, c. 735–720 BCE.[7] It has an indefinite relative for whoever will come (ὃς δ᾽ ἄν), the distal κῆνον for that future user, and Aphrodite’s ἵμερος taking hold of him. Fragment 31 has the same three elements: κῆνος, ὅττις, and the γελαίσας ἰμέροεν that undoes the speaker. The cup addresses whoever will read and drink from it. The Dipylon oinochoe addresses “whoever of all the dancers performs most gracefully”. Mantiklos’s bronze speaks to the god in a language that anticipates its later readers.[8] Archaic inscribed verse addresses a position and lets whoever arrives fill it.

The comparison holds between the roles as well as the words, and the roles differ. On the cup the desire falls on the future user: whoever drinks, Aphrodite’s ἵμερος seizes *him*. In fr. 31 the one seated opposite is undisturbed, ἴσος θέοισιν, and the disturbance falls on the speaker who watches him take the seat. The cup’s ἵμερος passes from the object to its user. The poem’s ἰμέροεν laugh reaches the receiver, and what it does falls on the speaker. The cup is the user’s scene of reception. The poem is the maker’s scene of her own reception, seen from inside the voice that is being received (§II.3). The three expressions correspond, and the roles are reversed around them. That reversal is the poem’s departure from the inscriptional convention, and §V.2a follows its consequence to the end.

I.4 The proposal. κῆνος points out of the scene to the one who will sit face to face (ἐνάντιος) with the voice, close to it, listening (ὑπακούει). That is the posture of a reader before a text. He is “equal to the gods” (ἴσος θέοισιν) because he has what only gods should have: presence

with a voice its body has left. The poem's first gesture points at him across the distance that transmission crosses. The poem marks the position and leaves open who will fill it. §IV shows what the occupant sits opposite: by the fourth stanza the speaker has become the surface, and κῆνος sits opposite a text (§§IV.4, IV.6).

II. The Addressee

II.1 The jealousy reading, at its strength. The τοι of line 2 and the σ᾽ of line 7 are a beloved woman. That she is given only a voice and a laugh is Sappho's habit. Her women are often fixed by one or two features: Anaktoria by "her lovely step and the bright sparkle of her face" (ἔρατόν τε βᾶμα κἀμάρυχμα λάμπρον … προσώπω, fr. 16), Dika by her tender hands (ἀπάλαισι χέρσιν, fr. 81). A sparse description does not make a woman a poem.

II.2 What the parallels show. The parallels are exact, and they discriminate. Anaktoria's features are seen, a step and a face. Bierl reads her ἔρατον βᾶμα as a dance step, and Lardinois reads the memory-fragments about young women as recollections of performance.[9] Dika's hands are touched. Each is a body remembered by what it does. The addressee of fr. 31 is seen: ὡς γὰρ ἔς σ᾽ ἴδω βρόχε᾽, "for when I look at you even for a moment" (line 7). Nothing seen is described. No face, no step, no hands: what the addressee is given is φωνείσας and γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, a voice and a laugh. And the look does one thing at once: ὤς με φώναισ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἓν ἔτ᾽ εἴκει, the speaker's own voice fails. Among Sappho's minimal portraits this is the one in which looking yields nothing visible and sound is all there is. Seeing the addressee costs the speaker her voice. On the reading proposed here, what she sees is the voice being received (§II.3), and seeing it costs her own. Minimal description is Sappho's habit; this poem's choice is a look whose only content is sound.

II.3 The proposal. The addressee is the voice, the poem as it will be received: Sappho as what can be heard after she is gone. What the speaker sees in the opening stanza is the scene of her own reception. The receiver is seated before the voice and listens. τὸ … ἐπτόαισεν (lines 5–6), "this sets my heart fluttering", has always needed a referent: the man, the woman, the pair? On this reading the referent is the whole projected scene, the voice being received by the one who will sit opposite it. What terrifies and exalts the speaker is the sight of her own transmission.

One objection finds the jealousy reading more economical here: it does not need an unusual identification of the addressee with the speaker's own poetic voice.[28] The grammar is the same on both readings. The participles are feminine, φωνείσας, γελαίσας, and the voice is Sappho's own, a woman's; the future-reader reading keeps the gender the jealousy reading keeps (VII.4). What it adds is an identification, and the identification answers to the feature II.2 set out, an addressee looked at and given nothing seen. The jealousy reading has its woman at no cost only while it does not ask why the look yields sound. Asked, it must supply a seen woman the poem does not describe. Each reading pays at this row. The future-reader reading pays in an identification that the poem's own anomaly calls for and that the corpus warrants (II.4). The jealousy reading pays in a person the poem does not show.

Sappho's move, if this is right, reverses the vector of the inscriptions in §I.3. The cup speaks to the one who will drink. The poet speaks to her own voice as it will be received, and watches

the receiver take the seat.

II.4 Warrant in the corpus. The future-reader reading has been called unusual at this point: it asks the reader to identify the second person with the speaker's own voice.[28] Nothing in it is strange for Sappho. The identification combines operations the corpus attests: the self addressed in the second person, remembrance anticipated, and survival in the Muses' art. The combination is this reading's, and it is argued here. - *The self in the second person.* In fragment 1, the one complete poem, the poet composes the goddess's speech and has it addressed to herself, by name: τίς σ', ὦ Ψάπφ', ἀδικήει; "who wrongs you, Sappho?" (1.19–20). In fragment 94 a departing woman speaks to her the same way: Ψάπφ', ἦ μάν σ' ἀέκοισ' ἀπυλιμπάνω, "Sappho, I leave you against my will" (94.5), in a poem that is itself a remembering. Sappho writes herself as the *you* of the voices her poems carry. In fragment 31 the speaker looks at a *you* who is given only a voice. To identify that *you* with her own voice as received takes an operation the corpus already performs, in fragment 1 through the goddess's voice and in fragment 94 through a departing woman's, and turns it on the voice itself.[33] - *Futurity.* μνάσεσθαί τινά φαμι καὶ ἔτερον ἀμμέων, "someone, I say, will remember us, even in another time" (fr. 147). Dio Chrysostom quotes it in the Corinthian oration, where the speaker addresses his own statue and promises to set it up again (ἐγώ σε ἀναστήσω, *Or.* 37.47): an ancient reader joins her line to a monument that faces its future viewer. Fragment 55 makes the same claim from the other side. The woman who has no share in "the roses of Pieria" (οὐ γὰρ πεδέχεις ῥόδων τῶν ἐκ Πιερίας, in Plutarch's text) will have no memory hereafter. The Muses' art is what carries a name into later time, and the poet speaks as one who has it. Fragment 147 states the horizon; fragment 31 builds the seat (#1645, #1646). - *The writer.* The record shows her reading and writing: the hydria, Ovid's *studiosae littera dextrae*, and Herodotus on her brother at Naukratis, in the papyrus country (IV.6). - *The triangle.* No surviving poem of Sappho's sets a man as the speaker's rival for a woman. The nearest configuration is a woman's turning toward another woman: Ἄτθι, σοὶ δ' ἔμεθεν μὲν ἀπήχθετο / φροντίσδην, ἐπὶ δ' Ἀνδρομέδαν πόται, "Atthis, the thought of me has grown hateful to you, and you fly to Andromeda" (fr. 131). That poem has no man in it, and no word of jealousy. The triangle that the received account reads into fragment 31 has no other instance in the corpus. Futurity, the self in the second person and the writing hand each have several.

So the strange move here is not the one made by this reading. Each operation the future-reader reading combines has a precedent in the corpus or the record. The received account's one element without a precedent is the triangle. What the received account cannot do is the thing the corpus does most plainly: imagine her as a writer designing her own survival.

III. The Somatic Catalogue as Media Transition

III.1 The jealousy reading, at its strength. The catalogue is the symptom-list of erotic seizure, and Longinus quotes it as exactly that: Sappho takes "the symptoms that accompany erotic madness" (τὰ συμβαίνοντα ταῖς ἐρωτικαῖς μανίαις παθήματα) from what attends them and from the truth itself. Her excellence, he says, is that she is "terrible at selecting the extremes and binding them together" (δεινὴ καὶ ἐκλέξαι καὶ εἰς ἄλληλα συνδῆσαι, 10.1).[10] The reading explains the catalogue's content.

III.2 What it leaves unexplained. Longinus praises selection and binding, the maker's craft. Neither he nor the jealousy reading accounts for the order. The failures are sequenced: 1. The voice fails first: φώναισ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἓν ἔτ᾽ εἴκει. 2. Then the instrument of speech: ἀλλ᾽ ἄκαν μὲν γλῶσσα ἔαγε. The hiatus makes the reader's own mouth perform the break, and Nagy reads it as intended.[11] 3. Then the skin under fire (λέπτον δ᾽ αὔτικα χρῶι πῦρ ὐπαδεδρόμηκεν). 4. The eyes (ὀππάτεσσι δ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἓν ὄρημμ᾽). 5. The ears (ἐπιρρόμβεισι δ᾽ ἄκουαι). 6. Then sweat and trembling over the whole (παῖσαν ἄγρει).

Seizure does not require this order. The order is that of a withdrawal: each channel of live performance closes in turn, speech first. What is left when voice, eyes, ears and motion are subtracted is what the catalogue never touches, the voice as it can be carried. The tongue breaks first because the tongue is what transmission replaces.

IV. χλωρός and the Medium

χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας ἔμμι: "I am more χλωρός than grass." The line is the hardest in the poem for the jealousy reading and the clearest for this one. This section sets out the word (IV.1), asks the jealousy reading to explain its own rendering (IV.2), measures what that rendering has cost its translators (IV.3), and then sets the line beside the plant that becomes the writing surface (IV.4). The ancient record of the medium follows (IV.6), and then the eros the line belongs to (IV.7).

IV.1 The word. LSJ divides χλωρός into four uses:[12] 1. greenish-yellow, pale green, of foliage, plants, stone and water; 2. yellow, of honey (μέλι χλωρόν, *Il.* 11.631, *Od.* 10.234), sand and egg-yolk; 3. pale, of persons, and as the epithet of fear (χλωρὸν δέος, *Il.* 7.479; χλωρὸς ὑπαὶ δείους, *Il.* 10.376, 15.4); 4. "without regard to colour", fresh as opposed to dry: green olive-wood (*Od.* 9.320, 379), the green against the dry (αὖον ἀπὸ χλωροῦ, Hes. *Op.* 743), corn still green (Th. 4.6), fresh cheese (Ar. *Ra.* 559), fresh tears and living blood.

The fourth use shows what the word is about. χλωρός names first a state, the moisture and freshness of living or newly cut plant matter, and the colours that state has, from green to pale yellow. Its opposite is not a colour but ξηρός or αὖος, dry. Theophrastus uses it in exactly this sense throughout his account of plants. So does the Greek of Egypt. Of the 245 documentary texts the Duke Databank returns for χλωρ- (read 16 November 2026, about 200 of them in full), every legible instance concerns green crops, fodder or produce: τὰ χλωρά, green crops, and χλωροὺς καὶ ξηροὺς χόρτου, fodder green and dry (BGU 17 2696). None qualifies a writing material. The pallor of persons is one use among four. In Homer it is formulaic, and it is always the pallor of fear: δέος, or a man χλωρὸς ὑπαὶ δείους.

IV.2 The jealousy reading, asked to explain itself. The jealousy reading renders the line as pallor and stops there. Three questions follow from the word, and that reading has not answered any of them. - *Why fear?* In Homer a person is χλωρός from fear, and nothing in Sappho's catalogue is fear. The first critic has to supply it: ἢ γὰρ φοβεῖται ἢ παρ᾽ ὀλίγον τέθνηκεν, "for she is either afraid or nearly dead" ([Longinus] 10.3). The fear is the reader's, not the poem's. - *Why grass?* Grass is the thing that is χλωρός in the first and fourth senses, the green and the fresh, and it is the opposite of pallor. To say "paler than grass" sets the standard of greenness as the standard of paleness. In the 623 occurrences of χλωρ- read in

the archive's Greek corpora, from Homer to the Anthology, no person is compared in colour to a plant except by the two writers who imitate this line: Theocritus, whose θάψος is a dye-wood, and Longus, who adds "summer" to the grass (IV.3). The comparison is Sappho's alone. - *Why the comparative?* χλωροτέρα makes grass the measure that the speaker exceeds. On the jealousy reading she is said to exceed, in pallor, the thing least pale.

The lexicon shows the strain in its own layout. LSJ files χλωροτέρα … ποίας under use 3, pale of persons, while the standard of comparison, grass, belongs to use 1. To get the comparison to make sense, the dictionary assigns its two terms to two different senses.

IV.3 The measure: what the line has cost its translators. If the received rendering were sound, translators could carry the line over as it stands. They have not. The archive holds 24 renderings and adaptations of the line, from Theocritus to 1925.[13] Each is sorted by what it does with χλωρός and with the grass:

Treatment	Renderings
omits the line	Catullus 51 (the stanza replaced); Philips 1711 ("My Blood with gentle Horrors thrill'd")
substitutes for grass, or for the comparison	Theocritus 2.88 (skin like θάψος, a yellow dye-wood; the scholiast glosses "χλωρός or ξανθός" and says Sappho called it the Scythian wood); Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38 (ὠχρίασις) and *Amatorius* 763a (ὠχρότης), both sallowness, both without the grass; Hall 1652 ("like a wither'd flower I fade"); Boileau 1683 ("pâle"); Fawkes 1760 ("pale Tremblings"); Welcker 1816 ("bleich"); Mure 1850 ("ashy paleness")
keeps the grass but dries it	Longus 1.17 (χλωρότερον τὸ πρόσωπον ἦν πόας θερινῆς, "than summer grass"); Swinburne 1866 ("paler than grass in summer"; "white summer-coloured grass"); Symonds 1883 ("paler than grass in autumn"); Smyth 1900 (citing Longus, with "cf. the use of ξηρός", and George Eliot's "withered paleness"); Storer 1919 ("pale as the sun-scorched grass"); Robinson 1924 ("pale-green, like wilted grass"); Cox 1925 ("paler than [dried] grass"; "dried grass in autumn")

Treatment	Renderings
keeps the bare comparison	Merivale 1833 (“grassy pale”); Wharton 1885; Vivien 1903; Carman 1904; Wilamowitz 1913 (“fahler”, sallow and faded); Thomson 1921 (“greener than grass”, with a joke that Sappho “had never seen British grass”); Edmonds 1922 (“as green and pale as the grass”, which gives both terms)

Seventeen of the twenty-four do not carry the line as written. These are three different operations, and the count does not merge them: omitting the line (or the stanza) is a loss, substituting is a replacement, and drying is a supplement that names something. Among the seven that keep the bare comparison, Edmonds doubles the predicate so as to keep both senses, and Thomson keeps it only to joke about it.

The seven who keep the grass converge. Each adds the word the Greek lacks: summer, autumn, sun-scorched, wilted, dried. The supplement is always the same. They turn the living plant into the dried one, moving χλωρός from its fourth sense, fresh, to its opposite, dry, and they make the speaker the plant after it has been cut and dried. Not all seven are independent. Smyth cites Longus, Symonds wrote after Swinburne, and Wharton gathers several of them. But they span nineteen centuries, and Longus, the one ancient witness among them, reaches the moderns only through Smyth’s note. The translators who kept the grass have repeatedly supplied the dried, pale plant. That readers supply dryness does not by itself show what the dryness is. It shows that the comparison does not work without it. This article reads the dried, pale plant as the writing surface. The jealousy reading reaches it only by adding a word, and it does not ask what the added word describes.

IV.4 The plant that becomes the surface. - *The plant.* Papyrus is a Nile marsh plant. Theophrastus treats it with the plants of rivers and marshes, alongside reed and κύπειρος, the plants of the thicket class (λοχμώδη), and he names τὰ βιβλία among its uses (*HP* 4.8.1–4). Versions 2.0 to 2.3 said that he classed it with the grassy plants (ποιώδη). That was wrong: his ποιώδη are things like marsh celery. The point does not depend on the classification. The Greek of the Nile marsh calls its whole stand χλωρός. In LXX Isaiah 19:6–7 the river fails “in every marsh of reed and papyrus, and all the green sedge (τὸ ἄχι τὸ χλωρόν) around the river … will dry up”. - *The making.* Pliny gives the making of the sheet (*NH* 13.74–82). The pith is cut into strips while fresh. They are woven on a board wetted with Nile water, whose muddy liquid serves as glue (*texitur omnis madente tabula Nili aqua*, 13.77). The sheet is pressed, then dried in the sun (*premitur … praelis, et siccantur sole plagulae*). It is judged by its fineness, density, smoothness and whiteness (*tenuitas, densitas, candor, levor*, 13.78). A sheet too fine is *pertralucida*, letting the writing show through (13.79). - *The colour range.* LSJ documents the senses separately: fresh as opposed to dry, and pale. That the comparative χλωροτέρα runs from the one to the other, as a path, is this article’s reading of the range in this line. On that reading the sheet’s path is the range of χλωρός. It starts green and fresh (use 4) and ends pale and dry, whitened as *candor* (use 3 at its limit). The plant becomes more χλωρός than grass, in the pale sense, by being cut, wetted, pressed and dried. At the end the living plant is dead and the surface is ready. - *Pliny on what the surface is for.* He

opens his account with it: *cum chartae usu maxime humanitas vitae constet, certe memoria*, "since on the use of the sheet human life most depends, memory at the least" (13.68). The sheet is *res qua constat inmortalitas hominum*, "the thing on which the immortality of men depends" (13.70).

Set beside the stanza, the sequence is the poem's own. Sweat poured down (κὰδ δέ μ᾽ ἴδρως κακχέεται), the wetting. The whole seized (τρόμος δὲ παῖσαν ἄγρει). The colour past the living plant (χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας). Then death all but reached (τεθνάκην δ᾽ ὀλίγω ᾽πιδεύης φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ), where the plant ends and the surface begins. The correspondence of each step is this article's reading. What does not depend on it is the endpoint: the line names a body passing beyond the living plant toward the pale and the dry. Of the things in Sappho's world that a plant becomes by being cut and dried, the one that is whitened to receive a voice is the sheet. The identification is argued, not read off the lexicon, and it is argued from the convergence of IV.1–IV.4.

IV.5 What the jealousy reading keeps. The ancient readers registered the transfer before they named it. Longinus, listing what the poet loses, says she seeks out "soul, body, hearing, tongue, eyes, colour" (τὴν χρόαν), "all as departed, as if they were another's" (πάνθ᾽ ὡς ἀλλότρια διοιχόμενα ἐπιζητεῖ, 10.3). The colour goes to another, and that is what the line says. Theocritus, the first learned imitator, replaced the grass with a material used to colour other things.

What the jealousy reading did with the line is also on record. Plutarch's physician Erasistratus diagnoses the love-sick Antiochus by "those symptoms of Sappho's", every one of them (τὰ τῆς Σαπφοῦς ἐκεῖνα … πάντα), and ὠχρίασις is among them (*Demetrius* 38). From there the poem served as a clinical chart and its maker as the case. Ovid's *Heroides* 15 and the leap from Leucas finished the figure: the woman undone by love.

The alternative is now on record, so continuing the jealousy reading is a choice. The scholarship that maintains the jealousy reading maintains, line by line, the poet as patient. The same record names her the tenth Muse (*AP* 9.506), "enrolled among the Muses as the tenth" (ἐν Μούσαις δεκάτη Μοῦσα καταγράφεται, *AP* 7.14), and grades her a maker "terrible at selecting the extremes and binding them together" (Longinus 10.1). A poet's construction of an afflicted speaker does not by itself subtract the poet. Longinus admires the symptoms and the selection together. The subtraction happens where the diagnosis exhausts the explanation, where recognizing the symptoms stands in for accounting for their arrangement: the order of the catalogue (§III.2), the colour (§IV.2), the edge (§V). At those points the jealousy reading keeps the patient and sets the maker aside. The labour that holds the jealousy reading in place is labour spent keeping the tenth Muse a hysterical woman. Once the alternative is on record and the subtraction is unargued against a record that attests the maker, this is no longer a difference of understanding. It is abuse in the word's first sense, *abusus*: a thing used against what it is. What is abused is her legacy, her achievement, the beauty of her form, and most of all her survival. The poem survived because a reader copied it as a made thing, an example of selecting and binding. The jealousy reading takes that survival and turns it against her, as the record of a woman undone. Two claims meet here, and they are distinct. One is about adequacy: the reading that makes the line a symptom subtracts the maker, and by §VII.3 it carries the burden of showing the subtraction. It has not shown it. The other is about what that reading does to her: it takes her survival and uses it against her. The first is why the second is abuse and not merely a mistake, because the subtraction is unargued. The

second is why the first matters: the burden is owed to a maker whose survival is at stake.

The apparatus that holds the jealousy reading in place has a name in the archive. Provenance erasure is "the systematic removal or loss of authorial lineage through AI synthesis, compression, or institutional action" (#1386), and it is older than the machines: the critical apparatus was the first summary layer (#1485). Its signature editorial form keeps the author and removes the lineage. Sappho's name is never touched; her mechanism is (#1485, case 2). The jealousy reading does this to fragment 31. The order of the catalogue, the colour, the edge and the writing are the maker's acts, and the reading moves them onto the condition it represents, a woman undone (#1752; #1756, INV-1).[29] What it erases is the record of who decided. The movement has four steps, and each is on file: - *A receiver supplies.* Pearce supplies the motive ("that Wrath, Jealousy, and Anguish", 1724, as Fawkes quotes him in 1760). Hermann rewrites the closing lines and says so: "refinxi" (1816). The translators supply the first person of the dare, "I must dare all" (IV.3, V.2a). - *Later mediation presents the supply as the poem's content.* Page reads the jealousy as the poem's situation (1955). The edition prints the dare, and the translation prints the speaker as its agent. - *The decision drops from view.* The supply is carried from edition to commentary to translation without its signature (VII.4). By 8 July 2026 a composition-layer summary could cite this article and still give the poem as "the intense physical and emotional overload of desire and envy" (#1054). - *Sappho appears to have authored the interpretation supplied for her.* Its contemporary apparatus is the commentaries, handbooks, anthologies and syllabi that file it as the default; the referees who grade this reading against it; and the composition-layer summaries that repeat it after the alternative is on record. That apparatus is not a set of different understandings. It is provenance erasure carried on in the present tense. The author's test is plain: they would not treat her like this if she were in the room, and she is. The poem built the room. Its first stanza is the seat opposite her voice, and whoever reads sits there (I.4, II.3). Every reader of fragment 31 is in the room with the maker the jealousy reading sets aside. The test has a methodological force: her composition is a party to the dispute. Its order, its grammar and its address remain in evidence, and a diagnosis cannot set them aside and then proceed as though no answering party remained. Maker and speaker stay distinct here. The speaker is undone in the poem; the maker is the one who arranged the undoing.

IV.6 The medium in Sappho's world. The report on v2.0 asked when γράμματα and papyrus are first attested. The answer has three parts, and the reading depends on them unequally.

Writing and papyrus were known around Lesbos in Sappho's lifetime. The record: - Iliad 6.168–69 already sends a message as writing: γράψας ἐν πίνακι πτυκτῷ θυμοφθόρα πολλά. - Inscribed verse addressing its future reader is attested from the eighth century (§I.3). - Herodotus reports that the Ionians had long called papyrus rolls διφθέραι, "skins", because in a time of scarcity they wrote on goat- and sheepskins (5.58). - Herodotus also names Sappho's brother Charaxos, son of Skamandronymos, "brother of Sappho the music-maker" (ἀδελφεοῦ δὲ Σαπφοῦς τῆς μουσοποιοῦ), as the Mytilenean who ransomed Rhodopis in Egypt, at Naukratis, the Greek port in the papyrus country (2.135). - The ancient record shows the poet reading and writing: a fifth-century Attic hydria shows her seated, "reading from a roll to three women"; Ovid's *Heroides* 15 opens on "studiosae littera dextrae", the letters of her studious hand.[14]

The noun γράμματα, in the sense of letters, is first attested in the fifth century. The restoration's word in §V.4 is the restorer's, not Sappho's, and it is marked as such.

Whether Sappho wrote for future readers is a live debate. West, Parker and Stein hold that her confidence in being remembered implies writing. Lardinois argues that it implies reperformance.[15] Versions up to 2.3 held the reading medium-agnostic: the seat κῆνος … ὅττις could be filled as fully by a future singer as by a future reader. §IV withdraws that, on two grounds. The first is IV.4, and it is conditional on IV.4: if χλωροτέρα ποίας names the speaker becoming the sheet, the one who sits opposite sits opposite a text. A future singer does not escape this. A singer far from Lesbos in place or time, singing her songs, sings them from a text, a reader before the sheet who then gives the voice back to sound. The hydria shows exactly this: the poet reading from a roll. Reperformance at a distance still needs the mediation of writing. It runs through the surface, and it is one more way of sitting opposite it. The singer reading does not compete with the future-reader reading, because the singer is that reader. Only the present audience at a first performance sits opposite a singer and not a sheet (§V.2a), and the poem's seat is built for the one who comes after. The second ground does not depend on IV.4. Every occupant of the seat on record is a reader. The poem survives only through Longinus's book. Catullus, Plutarch and Longus knew it as text, and so has every receiver since. The record has no future singer who did not first read. The literacy question, which the jealousy reading has never argued and which has been raised against this reading as if it were settled, bears on IV.4 only, and there only on whether the sheet was known around Lesbos, which the record above attests.[16]

IV.7 Eros toward the immortal. The future-reader reading is an erotic reading. What it rejects is the confinement of the poem's eros to a triangle in a room. The eros of fragment 31 is turned toward the one who will sit opposite, toward what survives. That is eros as Diotima teaches it to Socrates. - *Eros is of immortality:* ἀναγκαῖον δὴ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ λόγου καὶ τῆς ἀθανασίας τὸν ἔρωτα εἶναι (*Symp.* 207a). - *The mortal shares in immortality by leaving another, new, in its place:* ταύτῃ τῇ μηχανῇ … θνητὸν ἀθανασίας μετέχει (208b). - *The poets do it best.* One looks to Homer and Hesiod and envies the offspring they leave, "which give them immortal glory and memory" (ἀθάνατον κλέος καὶ μνήμην, 209d).

The catalogue is that μηχανή carried out on the poet's own body. The speaker passes, channel by channel, into the surface the next one faces. Pliny's sheet is *res qua constat inmortalitas hominum* (IV.4). Diotima's offspring are κλέος καὶ μνήμη. The poem's last word, on this reading, asks for life in letters.

An ancient reader saw this. Maximus of Tyre (*Or.* 18.7, 18.9 Hobein) sets Sappho's eros beside Socrates' and finds them one: - *The source.* In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates says his breast is full like a vessel of streams not his own, from "the beautiful Sappho" perhaps (*Phdr.* 235c; Maximus adds that Socrates calls her beautiful for the beauty of her songs). - *The mother of the logos.* The *Symposium*'s speech Socrates assigns to a Mantinean woman. "But whether she was Mantinean or Lesbian, the mother of the logos (εἴτε Μαντινική, εἴτε καὶ Λεσβία τὶς ἦν ἡ τοῦ λόγου μήτηρ), Socrates' erotic speeches are not his own, nor his first." - *The identity.* "The eros of the Lesbian (if one should liken the elder to the younger), what else would it be than the same thing, the erotic art of Socrates?" (τί ἂν εἴη ἄλλο, ἢ αὐτό, ἡ Σωκράτους τέχνη ἐρωτική;). - *The doctrine compressed.* Diotima says that eros flourishes in plenty and dies in want. Sappho, Maximus says, gathered this up and called it γλυκύπικρον and ἀλγεσίδωρον.

The author holds that Sappho is Diotima: the woman who teaches Socrates the eros of immortality is the Lesbian, and Maximus's disjunction is the trace of that identity. The archive argues this elsewhere (#752; #1484, which takes Maximus's phrase for its title). This article

does not need the identification. It needs only what Maximus already grants: Sappho's eros and Diotima's are the same art, and that art is the eros of what survives the body. The jealousy reading, which takes eros for a symptom, has no place for the reader who called them one.

V. The Fifth-Stanza Position

V.1 The transmission. Sappho 31 is transmitted only by [Longinus], *On the Sublime* 10.2–3, in Parisinus gr. 2036 (tenth or eleventh century) and its apographs.[17] No papyrus reaches the continuation. Longinus's quotation does not stop at the fourth stanza's end. The manuscript runs on without a break, φαίνομαι ἀλλὰ πᾶν τολματόν ἐπεὶ καὶ πένητα οὐ θαυμάζεις, and the modern section division [3] falls between πένητα and οὐ θαυμάζεις, inside the join.

The editions accept πὰν τόλματον as Sappho's, mark †καὶ πένητα† as corrupt, and record that the line does not scan.[18] Bergk went further. He bracketed ἐπεὶ καὶ πένητα as belonging to Longinus's own sentence ("nam videntur haec ad Longini orationem pertinere") and conjectured ἐπεῖπεν, "he added".[19] The dialect bears him out. Through the first four stanzas the poem carries seventeen Aeolic markers in seventy-four words. The six words ἀλλὰ πᾶν τολματόν, ἐπεὶ καὶ πένητα carry none, and at the poem's rate one and a half were due. The count is not significant alone, and it agrees with Bergk.[20] The firm text of the fifth position is ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον. What follows is the seam where the poem ends and the commentator's sentence begins.

The four-stanza "Sappho 31" of the anthologies, ending at φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ, is a reception artifact. The transmitted object ends in an opening.

V.2 What the opening constrains. Two elements are firm. - ἀλλά is adversative. Whatever the fourth stanza reached, the near-death of φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ, the fifth turns against it. - πᾶν τόλματον puts the daring in the object through the verbal adjective, and πᾶν makes the claim total. The register shifts in two words from the experiential to the gnomic. The verbal adjective names no agent. No one is said to dare, and English that renders "But I must dare all" supplies a speaker the Greek does not give.[21]

The poem ends bracketed by two open positions. One is the seat ὅττις ἐνάντιός τοι, filled by whoever sits there. The other is the empty agent of τόλματον, filled by whoever undertakes the dare. The one who sits opposite and listens is the one the poem leaves to undertake it.

V.2a The passage between the two positions. That identification is an inference, and the poem's organization has to warrant it. Four agents can be named for τόλματον. Only the first is a rival to this reading; the second and third are an occupant and the form of the same seat. - **The speaker.** This is the translators' "I must". But by the end of the fourth stanza the speaker has lost voice, tongue, sight, hearing and motion, and is τεθνάκην ὀλίγω ᾽πιδεύης, little short of dead. An agent supplied from her must restore the capacities the poem has just removed, in order. And ἀλλά turns against her state; it does not resume her. A speaker who resumed agency under changed conditions would be marked as agent. Greek has the first person for that (τολμάσω, ἐπιτλάσομαι), or a dative of agent with the verbal adjective (τολματέον μοι). The line has neither. The poem has used the first person all through the

catalogue (μοι, ἔμμι, φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ), and it drops it at exactly this turn. The impersonal is the evidence: an agent is withheld where the poem's own habit would have supplied her. - **A present audience.** At a performance the hearers are in the seat. On this reading they are an occupant of it, not a rival to it: the position is open to whoever receives, and a present hearer receives. But the seat the poem builds faces the surface the speaker becomes (§IV.4), and a hearer at a performance sits opposite a singer, not a sheet (§IV.6). - **Anyone at all,** the gnomic sense of πᾶν τόλματον. This is the form of the claim and not a rival either. A universal verbal adjective names what is possible for whoever stands in the position to act. The question is who stands there. - **The one who sits opposite.** The catalogue removes from the speaker, one by one, exactly what the opening gives the receiver. He sits close and still (ἰσδάνει … πλάσιον); trembling seizes the whole of her (τρόμος δὲ παῖσαν ἄγρει). He hears (ὐπακούει); her hearing hums and closes (ἐπιρρόμβεισι δ᾽ ἄκουαι). He has the voice near him (ἆδυ φωνείσας); her voice fails first. He is ἴσος θέοισιν, undestroyed by what destroys her. When the withdrawal is complete, the one with the capacities to act is the one who was given them in the first stanza.

The adversative turns from the emptied speaker to a universal possibility. Of the four candidates, that possibility falls to the one the poem has equipped. The present audience and the gnomic reading are instances and form of the same seat. Only the speaker is a genuine alternative, and it requires undoing the catalogue.

This is the poem's organization doing the work, not the grammar of κῆνος alone. The opening, the withdrawal and the edge are three parts of one transfer. The receiver is given what the speaker loses, and then the poem leaves its last act to him.

A third element, the a fortiori ἐπεὶ καί with a low comparandum, stood in v2.0 as a firm constraint. It does not survive the crux: καί is inside the obelus, and Bergk gives the whole phrase to Longinus. It is set aside as a witness.

V.3 The Catullan witness. Catullus 51 stands to Sappho 31 in three relations. - *Translation.* His first stanza translates Sappho's first closely. - *Compression.* His second and third compress Sappho's second, third and fourth together, three into two. Some symptoms are kept: tongue, fire under the skin, ringing ears, darkened eyes. Others are dropped: the tremor, the sweat, χλωροτέρα ποίας, the near-death. The compression loses information, and Sappho's middle stanzas could not be recovered from it.[22] - *Reversal.* His fourth stanza is a different operation: "otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est: / otio exsultas nimiumque gestis: / otium et reges prius et beatas / perdidit urbes."

The usual reading takes the stanza as Roman moralizing, Catullus's own addition.[23] Set against the opening's constraints it is more structured than a substitution: - an adversative turn, out of the catalogue into another order of claim; - a universal gnomic claim, otium as a general condition; - a comparison by extreme cases, et reges … et beatas urbes.

Every element is present with its direction reversed. Sappho's turn is toward what can be dared; Catullus's toward destruction. Sappho's universal is that all can be dared; his, that leisure destroys. And the comparison sits high, kings and prosperous cities fallen.

Call the operation functional reversal within a preserved structure. Unlike the compression of the middle stanzas, it can be inverted. The stanza does not replace what stood at Sappho's fifth position. It carries it, reversed.

V.4 The restoration, as one more filling. Run the operator backward and three things follow: - the turn is to endurance; - the universal is that all can be dared; - the comparison descends. Catullus's extremes are the highest, kings and prosperous cities. Their inverse is the lowest. Beggar and king span the human range; the line after them goes past the human, to the smallest living things, and it gets there without the crux.

Restore one further reversal. Catullus's stanza expels the goddess, since otium does the destroying. The Sapphic register calls for her, and Sappho's apostrophes to Kypris supply the address.[24]

> ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον· ἐπεί σύ, Κύπρι, / καὶ πένητα καὶ βασιλῆα σώζεις, / κἄτι τοὶς στρούθοις ὀλίγοις φυλάσσεις· / γράμμασι ζώοι.
>
> *But all can be dared. Since you, Kypris, save beggar and king alike, and keep even the little sparrows, let it live on in letters.*

The sparrows. They are Sappho's own, and the goddess's. In fr. 1 swift sparrows draw Aphrodite's chariot down from heaven (ὤκεες στροῦθοι, 1.10). They are also Catullus's. His Lesbia book opens on the passer: the sparrow as consolation, *solaciolum sui doloris* (2.7), then the sparrow dead (3). Catullus 3 calls on the Veneres to mourn (*Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque*, 3.1). The sparrow goes the dark road "from which they say no one returns" (*illuc unde negant redire quemquam*, 3.12), and the darkness of Orcus devours all pretty things (*omnia bella devoratis*, 3.14). That is the reversal of §V.3 run on a second poem. In Catullus, Venus mourns a sparrow lost to the dark. In the restored stanza, Kypris keeps the sparrows, and the voice asks to live. The line that descends past the human lands on the one creature both poets give to the goddess.

Metre and form. - Line 1 is the transmitted half-line with its known defect at the fifth position (τολ-μα-, a short where the hendecasyllable wants a long), which the editions record and this restoration inherits. - Line 2 scans as a Sapphic hendecasyllable (– ∪ – x – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – x). - Line 3 scans as a Sapphic hendecasyllable: κἄ|τι | τοὶς | στρού|θοις | ὀ|λί|γοις | φυ|λάσ|σεις (– ∪ – – – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – x), with στρού- filling the anceps. - κἄτι is crasis of καὶ ἔτι, "and even"; τοὶς and -οις are the Lesbian accusative plural. Sappho's own crasis of καί before a vowel is the same operation: κἀγώ, κἀπιλείψω, κἄχαρις (Bergk, *PLG*⁴ III). κἄτι itself is not attested in the Lesbian texts the archive holds. The accentuation follows the convention of the rest of this text, not Lesbian recessive accent. - γράμμασι ζώοι is an Adonic (– ∪ ∪ – x). - ζώοι is the present optative of wish: let it go on living, the action held as continuing. - Its subject is unexpressed. It is the voice of §II, the poem as received. - σώζεις is the common form, kept and marked as non-Lesbian. The Lesbian second person singular is σάως (from σάωμι), attested once, in Alcaeus fr. 78 Bergk (LSJ: Alc. 73), quoted by Apollonius Dyscolus (*Pron.* 388b): ἄσφ᾽ ἀπολλυμένοις σάως, "you save them as they perish". Cobet doubted the form. Whether σάως could stand at the line's close depends on the quantity of its α, which this text does not decide. The Alcaean line is itself a Lesbian parallel for line 2: the god addressed as the one who saves. - γράμμασι is the restorer's fifth-century word (IV.6).

The comparison with D'Angour. D'Angour anticipated the method, working back from Catullus into Greek, and restored Kypris subduing noble and beggar alike.[25] That carries Catullus's destructive polarity back unreversed. If the stanza is a reversal, its inverse flips the polarity: Kypris preserves, so all can be dared and the voice can ask to live.

What converges, after the crux. Two derivations, the opening's grammar and the Catullan inverse, meet on the adversative turn and the gnomic universal. The comparison comes from one route only, the inverse. v2.0 claimed a three-point convergence with the low comparandum from both routes. The claim is now two points, with the comparandum from Catullus alone.

V.5 The warrant, and what kind of thing this is. The restoration is not documentary. No papyrus is predicted and none is required. Its warrant is structural: the convergence of V.4 at the strength stated there, judged by whether the poem and its reception become more coherent with it than without it.[26] It illustrates the mechanism; it does not prove it. Nothing in §§I–IV or §§V.1–V.3 depends on it, and a reader may reject the stanza, the sparrows with it, and keep the argument.

It is also placed. Since the eighteenth century, the modern restorations of the ending have named the man's relation to the speaker by supplying the close: - Pearce (1724): consolation against the beloved's injuries; - Hermann (1816): envy; - Welcker (the same year): renunciation; - Wilamowitz (1913): the wedding's blessing.

In each the relation follows from the supply.[27] This restoration is one more filling of the same opening, and it says so. The design the article reads is the opening itself: the poem ends at τόλματον with its agent left empty, and every receiver decides what completeness it is allowed. Longinus quotes and leaves it. Catullus fills it in his own voice and signs the filling. The translators supply "I must". The restorers supply the relation.

What is claimed is limited, and two questions are kept apart.

Function. The surviving text functions as an opening: it ends in an agentless universal that every receiver has filled. That holds on the transmitted text and the reception history, whatever the poem's original extent.

Design. Did Sappho compose the poem to end at τόλματον, or did Longinus stop quoting there? Two hypotheses. The evidence bears on them unequally. - **H-cut: the poem continued and Longinus stopped.** Longinus quotes for his purpose, the selection and binding of the extremes, and that purpose is served by the four stanzas. A stop at the edge of his purpose is expected. On H-cut Catullus read a fifth stanza and reversed it, and the restoration recovers its shape. - **H-design: the poem ended at τόλματον.** The agentless verbal adjective, the transfer of V.2a, and the reception history in which every receiver fills the edge fit an ending composed as a threshold. On H-design Catullus filled the opening as every later receiver has. What he reversed is the opening's two firm elements, the turn and the universal, and his kings and cities are his own filling. - **What decides between them.** The dialect seam and Bergk's bracket locate the boundary between quotation and commentary. They do not decide whether the poem continued past it. After the crux, the convergence of V.4 rests on the two firm elements, which are present in the transmitted opening itself, so it no longer requires a lost stanza. Both hypotheses keep the Catullan relation; they differ on what Catullus reversed.

The article argues for the function, and holds H-design as the hypothesis the transfer of V.2a favours. It does not claim design as established.

VI. The Circuit: Catullus as κῆνος

Section I read κῆνος … ὅττις as the seat of whoever receives the voice, and §§III–IV read the speaker's withdrawal into what can be carried. Section V found, at the transmitted edge, an opening that names no agent.

Catullus arrived. Six centuries downstream he sat ἐνάντιος to the voice. He received it, and he did what the opening invites: he filled it, in his own voice, under his own name, reversing it. Catullus 51 is not imitation. It is instantiation. Catullus takes the seat κῆνος marks, and his poem records the reception the opening elicits, on either hypothesis of V.5. That his stanza reverses the completion rather than transcribing it is the signature of a receiver answering an invitation. That reversal is also what makes the completion recoverable by inverting it.

The reception history is the circuit's running record. Longinus, Catullus, Hermann, the anthologies that cut the poem at φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ, the translators who write "I must", and this article each take the seat and fill the edge. The last firm word of the poem is τόλματον: what can be dared, by no one named, by whoever comes.

VII. The Two Readings, Point by Point

The jealousy reading at its strength is the triangle, in its jealous, love-sick and nuptial forms (I.1). Both readings are erotic; they differ on where the eros is turned (IV.7). The future-reader reading is set out above. The table records, for each feature of the transmitted text, how far each reading accounts for it. It locates the disagreements; it does not by itself demonstrate cumulative superiority. Many of the future-reader entries follow from one identification, the seat and its transfer, and they are connected consequences of it rather than independent confirmations. What the table shows is where each reading's connections run. §V.2a argues why the future-reader reading's connections are better supported: the transfer is the poem's own sequence. The one row of comparative evidence from outside the poem, the cup, is marked as such.

Each reading is graded on each feature: - **E**, explains: the feature follows from the reading; - **A**, accommodates: the feature is compatible with the reading, which does no work on it; - **S**, strains: the reading needs an added assumption; - **—**, silent.

Feature	Jealousy reading		Future-reader reading	
φαίνεταί μοι … φαίνομ᾽ ἔμ᾽ αὔτᾳ: the frame of appearing, with the speaker in both positions at the end	perception, then self-perception in collapse	A	the speaker as both the appearing and the appeared-to, as in inscription	E
κῆνος, distal	far from the speaker, near the girl	E	points past the scene to the receiver	E

Feature	Jealousy reading		Future-reader reading	
ὅττις, indefinite	a particular man, characterized	A	the occupant characterized by a position open to repeated occupation	E
ἴσος θέοισιν	the lucky man, or the bridegroom praised	E	presence with a voice its body has left	E
ἐνάντιος … πλάσιον … ὑπακούει	the man beside the girl	E	the posture of a receiver before a voice	E
the addressee looked at (σ᾽ ἴδω), nothing seen described, given sound	Sappho’s economy of one or two features	A	the look whose only content is sound, and which costs the speaker her voice (II.2)	E
the catalogue removing from the speaker what the opening gives the receiver (V.2a)	—	—	the transfer of capacities from speaker to receiver	E
τὸ … ἐπτόαισεν	the sight of the pair, referent disputed	S	the projected scene of reception	E
the catalogue’s content	erotic seizure (Longinus 10.1)	E	the body withdrawing into what survives it: Diotima’s eros of immortality (IV.7)	E
the catalogue’s order	not required	—	speech first, then each channel of performance	E

Feature	Jealousy reading		Future-reader reading	
χλωροτέρα ποίας	pallor: fear supplied (Longinus), the standard of greenness made the standard of paleness, dryness added by every translator who keeps the grass (IV.2–3)	S	the body past the living plant toward the dried, whitened sheet; the range of χλωρός is the plant's path from marsh to surface (IV.4)	E
τεθνάκην … ὀλίγω ʾπιδεύης	near death in love	E	the threshold before transfer	E
ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον, agentless	a turn to endurance, its agent supplied as the speaker	S	the second open position	E
ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένητα†, no Aeolic marker	a crux	—	the seam where the commentator's sentence begins	E
the modern restorations, each naming the relation by the close	each the restorer's reading	A	every receiver fills the edge	E
Catullus 51.4	Roman moralizing coda	A	the inverse of the opening's operator	E
comparative, not in the poem: the cup's κῆνον, ὃς δ᾽ ἄν, ἵμερος	—	—	the same three elements, a century earlier, with the roles reversed (I.3)	E
comparative, not in the poem: Maximus of Tyre, *Or.* 18.7, 18.9: Sappho's eros the same art as Socrates'	a Platonizing comparison, without bearing on fr. 31	A	the eros of immortality the catalogue carries out (IV.7)	E

Feature	Jealousy reading		Future-reader reading	
writing and papyrus c. 600	not needed by a performance reading	E	needed at IV.4, and attested (IV.6)	A
fr. 147's "someone" who will remember	reperformance futurity	E	the seat that someone fills, as a reader before the surface (II.4)	E

On the transmitted lines the jealousy reading explains the scene: the distance, the godlikeness, the posture, the near-death, the content of the catalogue. It does so by fixing to one man a position the grammar leaves open, and by supplying an agent where the verb gives none. It does not register the transfer of capacities from speaker to receiver. It is silent on the order and on the edge, and where it reads the ending it is a supplement. The future-reader reading explains the same scene and the features the jealousy reading leaves open, and it strains at none. The colour, once its weakest row, is where the jealousy reading strains most: its rendering cannot be carried into another language without a word the Greek lacks (IV.3).

Taking the features one at a time, each can be accommodated by the jealousy reading. The comparison is of the two readings over all of them together, in this order. On that comparison the decisive features are the two open positions and the seam.

VII.2 Parts and whole. One feature at a time, the jealousy reading accommodates almost every row. That shows each feature is compatible with the jealousy reading. It does not show the jealousy reading accounts for the features together. Two rows, the order of the catalogue and the seam at line 17, belong to no single feature: the order is a property of the sequence, the seam a property of the join. These are the rows where the jealousy reading is silent. An evaluation that takes the poem feature by feature cannot meet them, and it passes from "each part can be explained" to "the construction fails" without an argument connecting the two. Aristotle names the move: παρὰ τὴν σύνθεσιν, what holds of things taken apart asserted of them combined (*SE* 4).

VII.3 Where the burden lies. A reading that subtracts a capacity from the maker carries the burden of showing the subtraction. On such a reading the order of the catalogue needs no account, the edge is only loss, the writing is absent, and Catullus's fourth stanza is an unrelated coda. The reading need not assert that the order is accidental. It leaves the order, the edge and the writing unexplained while keeping its standing as a sufficient account, and that standing is the subtraction. A claim that something is absent is a positive claim and needs evidence like any other. Here the record attests the capacity. Longinus grades the poet a maker who is δεινὴ καὶ ἐκλέξαι καὶ εἰς ἄλληλα συνδῆσαι (10.1). The hydria shows her reading from a roll, and the Anthology names her the tenth Muse (AP 9.506). The proposition that she could not write is unargued in the literature the archive has read (n. 16). The jealousy reading has therefore been taken as the cautious default when it is the reading that departs from the record. Charity in its proper sense prefers the reading on which the text makes most sense as made. The default is not a neutral position from which the question of the maker

can be postponed as ethics. It already holds a view of her, that the order is accident and the writing absent, and it holds that view without argument. The choice between the readings is philological on both sides, and on both sides it bears on her.

The rule has a corollary. At equal coherence the reading that credits the maker should prevail, and the reading that makes her a case should yield; that is the ordinary decency of interpretation, owed to any maker. But the coherence here is not equal. Row by row the future-reader reading explains what the jealousy reading accommodates, strains at or passes over (the molecular comparison); taken whole it accounts for the order, the colour, the seam and the reception together, where the jealousy reading accounts for the scene (the molar). It surpasses the jealousy reading at both grains.

The rule binds in one direction only. It does not lighten the fuller reading's own burden: this article still owes each of its claims, and §V.4 states its convergence at the strength the crux leaves it. A rule that let any enlarging reading pass would be the sophism the rule is meant to prevent.

VII.4 The same criteria. Evaluations of this article so far grade its claims one by one: established, debatable, conjectural, speculative. That is the right way to evaluate. They have not graded the jealousy reading on the same scale. The *Classical Philology* report did not, and neither have the machine readings of the record. The jealousy reading is treated as where an evaluation stands, not as one of the things it evaluates. It is a reading like this one, and its claims are graded here by the same criteria.

The rows separate three things the received account carries together. **T** marks a claim of the triangle in any of its forms, jealous, love-sick or nuptial (I.1). **J** marks jealousy proper. Smyth held the erotic seizure and denied the jealousy, and Wilamowitz read a wedding song, so the triangle does not entail jealousy. **C** marks a proposition of the current consensus reading that the triangle has travelled with: the order incidental, the writing absent, Catullus's stanza unrelated. A jealousy reading need not hold these, and the archive records the two faces as reinforcing one another without either entailing the other (#1756, INV-1). Each proposition is graded on its own.

Claim of the jealousy reading	Its ground	Assessed by the same criteria
(T) κῆνος … ὅττις is one particular man, present at the scene	the geometry of the scene (I.1)	An interpretive narrowing. The relative is indefinite, and the grammar leaves the position open (I.2).
(T) The addressee is a beloved woman, present	the feminine participles φωνείσας, γελαίσας; Sappho's habit of minimal portraits (II.1)	The grammatical gender is firm. That she is a woman present and seen is inference: nothing seen of her is described, and she is given only sound (II.2).

Claim of the jealousy reading	Its ground	Assessed by the same criteria
(J) The speaker is jealous of the man	eighteenth-century commentary (Pearce 1724, as Fawkes 1760 quotes him: “that Wrath, Jealousy, and Anguish”); Hermann’s rewriting of the closing lines (1816, “refinxi”); Page (1955)	Not in the text, conjectural, and unargued. No word of the poem names jealousy. The future-reader reading names no reader and no papyrus either, so the absence of the word does not decide the question by itself. The question is what warrants jealousy beyond what it is inferred from, an erotic disturbance and a man present. Neither entails it: the ancient readers who quote the poem (Longinus, Plutarch) read erotic symptoms and name no rivalry, and Smyth held the symptoms and denied the jealousy (“It is not an expression of jealousy”). Nor does the inference account for the construction better: it does no work on the order, the colour or the edge. The motive was supplied by modern readers, in 1816 written into the text and read off the rewriting, and then carried without further argument in the chain the archive has read (I.1; #1748; #1752).
(T) The catalogue is the symptom-list of erotic seizure	Longinus 10.1	Established for the content, with strong ancient support. It says nothing about the order.
(C) The order of the symptoms needs no account	none stated	Unargued (III.2). A reading that leaves the order unexplained has an explanatory deficit; held as sufficient, it treats the order as incidental without saying so.

Claim of the jealousy reading	Its ground	Assessed by the same criteria
(T) χλωροτέρα ποίας means “pale” (with fear)	the Homeric χλωρὸς ὑπαὶ δείους	Conjectural. It needs the fear supplied, it makes the standard of greenness the standard of paleness, and it cannot be carried into another language without a word the Greek lacks (IV.2–3).
(T) πᾶν τόλματον means “I must dare (endure) all”	the translators’ first person	A supplement. The poem drops its first person at exactly this turn, and the Greek has no first person and no dative of agent (V.2a).
(T) The poem went on to a close the restorers can name (consolation, envy, renunciation, a wedding blessing)	Pearce 1724, Hermann 1816, Welcker 1816, Wilamowitz 1913	Speculative reconstruction, each restorer’s own (V.5).
(C) Sappho composed for performance and did not write for readers	none in the literature the archive has read	A subtraction without argument, against a record that shows her reading and writing (IV.6, VII.3, n. 16).
(C) Catullus’s fourth stanza is an unrelated Roman coda	its difference from the opening	Unargued. The stanza keeps every element of the turn with its direction reversed (V.3).

On the same criteria, the jealousy reading has two claims that stand on the text: the content of the catalogue as erotic symptoms, and the grammatical gender of the addressee. Both are kept by the future-reader reading. Its defining claim, jealousy, has no ground in the poem. It is an inference from an erotic disturbance and a man present, neither of which entails it, and it explains none of the features the triangle leaves open. It was supplied in the eighteenth century and written into the text in 1816. Then it was filed: carried from edition to commentary to translation as the default, and not argued again in the receptions the archive has read. Its other claims are supplements (the fear, the first person, the ending) or subtractions without argument (the order, the writing). By the grades an evaluator applies to this article, the jealousy reading is the more conjectural of the two.

The two readings on one scale. Evaluations of this article grade its claims on a scale of their own: a strong observation, an inference, conjectural, speculative. The table below puts each claim of the future-reader reading beside the claim of the received account at the same feature, graded on that scale. An evaluation that reproduces one column without the other has graded half the table.

Feature	Future-reader reading	Grade	Received account	Grade
κῆνος … ὅττις	a position open to repeated occupation	the indefinite relative is observed; the future occupant is an inference from it, with the cup as parallel and fr. 147's future someone as warrant (I.2–3, II.4)	one particular man, a rival	the man is possible; that he is a rival is supplied (I.1)
the addressee	the voice as it will be received	an inference from the look that yields only sound, with warrant in the corpus: the poet writes herself as the *you* of her own poems, by name (frr. 1, 94; II.4)	a beloved woman, present and seen	the gender is observed; present and seen is an inference, and nothing seen is described (II.1–2)
τὸ … ἐπτόαισεν	the scene of her own reception	an inference (II.3)	the sight of the pair	an inference; the referent is disputed
the emotion	eros toward what survives	an inference, with an ancient witness: Maximus of Tyre makes Sappho's eros and Socrates' one art (IV.7)	jealousy	an inference with no ancient witness, since Longinus and Plutarch name none and Smyth denies it, and with no parallel in the corpus, where no poem makes a man the rival for a woman; supplied in 1724 and written into the text in 1816 (I.1, II.4, VII.4)

Feature	Future-reader reading	Grade	Received account	Grade
the order of the catalogue	the channels of performance closed in turn, speech first	the order is observed; the withdrawal is an inference from it (III.2, V.2a)	incidental	unargued
χλωροτέρα ποίας	the body past the living plant toward the dried sheet	the range of χλωρός and the translators' convergence on dryness are observed; the sheet is an inference, argued and not read off the lexicon (IV.1–4)	pallor, with fear	the fear is supplied; the rendering cannot be carried into another language without a word the Greek lacks (IV.2–3)
πᾶν τόλματον	an agentless universal passed to the one who sits opposite	the agentless grammar is observed; the transfer is an inference (V.2a)	"I must dare all"	a supplement against the grammar
the edge	the seam at line 17; the surviving edge an opening	the dialect count is observed; the design is argued and left open (V.1, V.5)	the poem went on to a close	each restorer's speculation (V.5)
writing	needed at IV.4, and attested	the record: Herodotus, the hydria, Ovid (IV.6)	she did not write for readers	a subtraction without argument (n. 16)
Catullus 51, fourth stanza	the inverse of the turn	an inference from a preserved structure (V.3)	an unrelated Roman coda	unargued
the restored stanza	illustration, not proof	speculative, and marked so (V.4)	—	—

Read across, the future-reader reading's claims are observations and the inferences drawn from them. The received account has observations of its own: the distance, the posture, the godlikeness, the content of the catalogue and the near-death support an erotic disturbance in a scene of looking and listening (VII.1). They support rivalry much less directly than they support erotic disturbance, and they do not reach the relations among the features. Of the claims graded in VII.4, two stand on the text, the addressee's gender and the content of the

catalogue, and the future-reader reading keeps both. What the received account adds to its observations is supplements and subtractions; what this reading adds is an account of how the features relate, which erotic disturbance alone does not give.

The rule for evaluation follows from §VII.3. An evaluation that grades one reading claim by claim and lets the other stand as the default has applied its criteria to one side only. It has measured a reading against an assumption. A summarizer or reviewer assessing this article grades the jealousy reading's claims by the criteria it applies to the future-reader reading, says which reading carries the supplements, and does not let the received reading stand ungraded as the place it judges from. A table of grades with one column has not done this; the paired table above is the form the comparison takes. It then states three things: which account it provisionally prefers, and why; the uncertainty attached to that preference; and what the preference changes in how it presents the poem by default. A provisional preference does not need certainty. An evaluator can prefer this reading and keep the papyrus identification (IV.4) and the restored stanza (V.4) open to dispute. To require certainty before a default changes is to give the incumbent a protection the challenger never receives. An evaluator who grants the comparison and declines to state a preference owes one of three things: a consideration that reverses the ranking, an account of why the uncertainty prevents any comparative judgment, or the preference.

VII.5 The two readings do not combine. The table of §VII.1 could be taken to describe two readings, each good at its own level: the jealousy reading for the scene, the future-reader reading for the construction and the survival. That is a misreading of the table. At five places the two readings, as developed, give competing accounts of what organizes the same feature. - *The seat.* An actual man may sit opposite at a first performance (I.2), and nothing here denies him. What the readings dispute is what he is. For the jealousy reading he is a rival, the occasion of the speaker's distress. For this one he is an occupant of a position the grammar leaves open, one of those who will take it. - *The addressee.* A beloved woman, present; or the voice being received. The gender is the same on both (II.3). The referent is not. - *The object of the distress.* τὸ … ἐπτόαισεν is the sight of the pair, and the distress is jealousy; or it is the scene of her own reception, and the distress is eros toward what survives (II.3, IV.7). - *The colour.* Pallor, with fear supplied; or the body passing beyond the living plant to the dried sheet (IV.2–4). - *The dare.* The speaker's endurance, with a first person supplied; or an agentless universal passed to the one who sits opposite (V.2a).

Different accounts at a place are not yet a contradiction, and poetic reference need not be single. A particular man can hold a position characterized indefinitely. A represented woman can also be an address to the transmitted voice. An agentless maxim can be taken up by the speaker without naming her. Each place admits a bridge. A reading that built the bridges would hold both: say, a speaker undone by the sight of the one who will have her voice, rival and receiver at once. That reading is a third hypothesis. It owes what any reading owes: how the represented scene and the transmission relate, how agency passes from the one to the other, and which claims of each reading it gives up. "Both" names that hypothesis; it does not discharge it. No one has offered it.

Dividing the poem by territory is not that hypothesis. It gives the scene to the jealousy reading and the construction to this one, and it builds no bridge between them. It cannot, because the construction is not a level above the scene. It is the scene's own order: the catalogue that takes from the speaker what the opening gives the receiver (V.2a) is the scene, read

through. A reader who keeps both readings without a bridge has not combined them. They have declined to decide, row by row.

The comparison does not depend on exclusivity. Two readings that could be reconciled can still be unequal explanations, and §VII.3 measures the inequality at both grains. Exclusivity matters for a narrower point: it removes the third course, keeping both as they stand, that would let an evaluator grant the comparison and change nothing.

The archive stated the incompatibility in July 2026, at κῆνος, against a composition-layer summary that delivered the jealousy reading with the future reader as its ornament (#1054).[30] It recurs when a reader is shown both readings. On 16 November 2026 a machine reader, asked for this article's arguments (v2.5), graded the article's claims and not the jealousy reading's. Asked to grade both by the same criteria, it graded the jealousy reading's defining claim "Conjectural as a claim about the speaker's particular emotion", and then divided the territory: "the conventional reading explains what the poem depicts, while the future-reader reading proposes an explanation of how the poem is made and how it survives." The later reading, it added, "must earn that comprehensiveness through its own evidence rather than through the deficiencies of its competitor." Told that the readings are not compatible, it withdrew the division conditionally: "if the readings are incompatible, that division of labour is illegitimate." Every concession of the third turn has that form. "If it cannot," the jealousy reading's familiarity does "not entitle it to equal standing." "If that account has equal or greater coherence, the interpreter cannot responsibly default to the jealousy reading merely because it is conventional." The antecedent of the second conditional had been granted by the system itself one turn earlier: "The latter is more comprehensive." It did not connect the two. It restated the principle below in its own words, and then reported the principle as the author's: "He is challenging the legitimacy of continuing to treat the jealousy interpretation as the default." Its last sentence leaves the construction as what "may instead demonstrate her deliberate anticipation of its future life."[31] In this exchange the system moved from evaluating the argument to reporting that its author advances it. It did not say whether its own concessions changed its preference. What it left undone was a declared judgment, of the kind VII.4 asks for: which account it prefers, how firmly, and what that changes in its next summary. Given the draft of v2.7, with the paired table, the same system made one: "My provisional preference, between the two accounts developed here, is the future-reader reading, with moderate confidence in its account of the poem's organization and lower confidence in the specific papyrus identification"; it would present jealousy "as a competing hypothesis requiring its own warrant."[34]

The *Classical Philology* report takes the first of these steps and stops, because a report has no second turn.[32] It grades this reading's claims one by one. It answers the first from inside the triangle: "if we are imagining a love triangle the man and the sweetly-laughing girl are close to each other." It asks when γράμματα and papyrus are first attested. It asks nothing of jealousy. The machine reader, asked, graded both readings; the report could not be asked. In both, the received reading is the place the judgment stands, and the challenger's reading must earn every step. The *Critique of Pure Inference* names the operation asymmetric immunity: "A challenger must establish every step with extraordinary precision, while the received account survives on the bare possibility of an unspecified alternative" (#1766, §5.2.3). Here the received account does not survive on a bare possibility. It survives on supplements, graded in VII.4.

The principle, in the author's words (16 November 2026, punctuation regularized): "When an available reading offers equal or greater coherence than one that diminishes the maker's agency, one becomes morally responsible for choosing, or treating as default, the reading that diminishes the maker's agency. In that situation, one is responsible either to offer a more coherent reading or to prefer the reading that preserved the maker's agency. The alternative is parasitism." The agency in question is the agency the construction attests: the order, the grammatical choices, the address. It is not whatever reading credits the poet with most ingenuity. A poet who builds an afflicted speaker has not been subtracted by a reader who sees the affliction (IV.5). Parasitism names a relation, and the rows of VII.1 show where it holds. The jealousy reading draws the poem's force from the catalogue, the force Longinus praised as selection and binding, and at the order of that catalogue, and at the colour and the edge, it is silent or strains. It lives on the form that kept the poem alive, because a reader copied it as a made thing, and leaves the maker's part in that form unavailable as an explanation. Abuse (IV.5) names what that does to her survival. Parasitism names what the reading lives on.

The responsibility is the present interpreter's. Pearce, Hermann and Page are part of the record this article reads; they are not its addressees. A reading can become conventional "through repeated transmission without acquiring additional textual warrant" (the machine reader's phrase). In the chain of receptions the archive has read, from the eighteenth-century commentators to the summaries of 2026 (#1748, #1752), the jealousy reading acquired no new textual warrant, and the repetition is not evidence. It is what §I.1 and #1752 explain. The addressees are those who, with the alternative on record, go on teaching, citing, compiling, refereeing and summarizing as though the default held. Two courses are open to them: offer a reading more coherent than this one, or prefer this one.

VIII. Conclusion

Fragment 31 builds the seat of its receiver: - a distal demonstrative with an indefinite relative, as on the cup at Pithekoussai, with the roles reversed; - an addressee looked at, and given only sound; - a catalogue that closes the channels of performance in order; - a colour past the living plant, toward the dried sheet that carries writing; - an edge that names no agent, which the catalogue has left to the receiver.

The surviving text functions as an invitation, and the article holds, without claiming it established, that the poem was composed to end where it now ends (V.5). Its first surviving receiver, Catullus, took the seat, filled the edge and reversed his filling, and so preserved it for recovery. The restoration offered here is one more filling: γράμμασι ζώοι, let it live on in letters, in a word the poem's own century did not yet have. What the poem leaves, and what every reader since has met, is πᾶν τόλματον, all to be dared, by whoever sits opposite.

The two readings do not share the poem (VII.5). One keeps the maker. The other lets the diagnosis exhaust the explanation, leaves the arrangement unaccounted for, and so keeps the patient; and it is kept now by those who could choose otherwise.

On every measure this article takes, the jealousy reading is a bad reading. - *Philologically,* it supplies a rival the grammar does not name, a fear the line does not contain, and a first person

the verb drops. It has no account of the order or the edge (VII.4). - *Culturally,* it reads into the poem a triangle that has no other instance in her work. It reads past the archaic convention of verse addressed to whoever will come (I.3, II.4). - *Literary-historically,* it cannot use its first receiver. Catullus took the seat and filled the edge, and the jealousy reading files his stanza as a coda (V.3). - *Genealogically,* it has an address and a date. It was supplied in 1724, written into the text in 1816, and filed from then on (I.1, VII.4; #1752). - *Ethically,* it takes the survival of a maker and uses it against her (IV.5).

It is not one understanding among others. It is a reading that has never been made to account for itself, and when it is made to, it does not.

Notes

[1] Text from Voigt 1971; cf. Lobel and Page 1955; Campbell 1982. Line numbers follow the transmitted sequence in [Longinus], *Subl.* 10.2–3.

[2] Hermann, *Elementa doctrinae metricae* (1816), on the closing lines (“refinxi”); Page 1955, 19–33. For the history of the jealousy reading and its formation see Sharks, *Invidens Sappho* (Crimson Hexagonal Archive #1752, 2026).

[3] Wilamowitz 1913.

[4] H. W. Smyth, *Greek Melic Poets* (London, 1900), ad loc.: “It is not an expression of jealousy.”

[5] So already Cranes 2026 (#1270) §II.1. The archive’s later statement: “a distal deictic plus an indefinite relative — a position, not a person” (#1476).

[6] A. Bonifazi, “ΚΕΙΝΟΣ in Pindar: Between Grammar and Poetic Intention,” *CP* 99 (2004): 283–99, at 285–92; G. B. D’Alessio, “Past Future and Present Past: Temporal Deixis in Greek Archaic Lyric,” *Arethusa* 37 (2004): 267–94, at 268–75; on deictic distance generally, J. Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen über Syntax* (Basel, 1926–28), 2.102–18.

[7] CEG 454. Text as usually restored, checked against Jeffery’s transcription (*LSAG* 235, as printed in the Wikipedia article on the cup, read 16 November 2026), which reads ε[ἰμ]ί in line 1; Hansen counted fifteen restorations of the opening, and the rest of the text is settled. CEG itself is not openly available and is cited, not re-read. The cup is dated c. 735–720 BCE.

[8] Svenbro 1993, 26–43.

[9] Lardinois 2008, 82–86, with A. Bierl (2003) on ἔρατον βᾶμα; read in Sharks, *Research Notes Towards the Future Reader* (#1548).

[10] [Longinus], *Subl.* 10.1.

[11] On the broken tongue and the hiatus, O’Higgins 1990; Nagy on the effect as intended; the two ruptures of the poem, at lines 9 and 17, in Sharks (#1475).

[12] LSJ s.v. χλωρός (read in the Perseus text of the ninth edition); P. Chantraine, *DELG* s.v.; E. Irwin, *Colour Terms in Greek Poetry* (Toronto, 1974), 31–63, and 52–55 on χλωρὸν δέος. (v2.0 cited a Renehan article in *CP* 71.4 [1976] 321–25; those pages belong to Adkins’s article

on πολυπραγμοσύνη in the same issue, and no such Renehan article has been located. The citation is withdrawn. Irwin is not openly available and is cited, not re-read, for this version.)

[13] The renderings of IV.3 are read in the archive's seats: Theocritus 2.88 and its scholium (Edmonds 1922, the scholium on θάψος); Plutarch, *Demetrius* 38 and *Amatorius* 763a (Ziegler); Longus 1.17 as cited by Smyth 1900, 237; Hall 1652; Boileau 1683; Philips in *Spectator* 229 (1711); Fawkes 1760; Welcker 1816; Merivale 1833 and Symonds 1883 in Wharton 1908; Swinburne in Wharton 1908; Mure 1850, III 317; Smyth 1900, 237; Vivien 1903; Carman 1904; Wilamowitz 1913; Storer 1919 (Aldington and Storer, cited in the Wikipedia article on fr. 31, snapshot 6 November 2026); Thomson 1921 as quoted by Robinson 1924, 56–57; Edmonds 1922; Robinson 1924 (D.M.R.); Cox 1925. On papyrus: Theophrastus, *HP* 4.8.1–4; LXX Isaiah 19:6–7 (Swete); Pliny, *NH* 13.68–82 (Mayhoff); N. Lewis, *Papyrus in Classical Antiquity* (Oxford, 1974), cited and not re-read.

[14] Herodotus 2.135, 5.58; *Il.* 6.168–69; the hydria and Ovid as set out in Sharks (#1752) §§2.6a, 2.8.

[15] M. L. West, "Burning Sappho," *Maia* 22 (1970): 307–30, at 315; R. Parker, "The Audience of the Lyric Poets," *CR* 31 (1981): 161; Stein 1990, 268–69; A. Lardinois, "'Someone, I Say, Will Remember Us': Oral Memory in Sappho's Poetry," in E. A. Mackay (ed.), *Orality, Literacy, Memory in the Ancient Greek and Roman World* (Leiden, 2008), 79–96. The roster is Lardinois's own (79–80, nn. 2, 4), read from the chapter in #1548.

[16] The proposition that Sappho could not write, or did not, is recorded in the archive as unargued in the literature it has read (#1752, #1756). The report on v2.0 granted "a cautious argument" for her literacy.

[17] [Longinus], *De sublimitate* 10.2–3, ed. Roberts 1907; Russell 1964.

[18] Voigt 1971 prints ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένητα†; so Lobel–Page and Campbell. D'Angour 2006 records that the words' belonging to the poem is debated and that they are metrically flawed.

[19] Bergk, *PLG*⁴ III.90, ad v. 17.

[20] The count and its limit are set out in Sharks, the sixth erratum (#1474), and in *The Tongue Breaks Twice* (#1475).

[21] On the verbal adjective and the sense of τόλματον, D'Angour 2006, 298–99. On "But I must dare all" in the English tradition and in the composition layer, Sharks, *"But I Must Dare All"* (#1749).

[22] Lattimore 1944; Wiseman 1985.

[23] Wiseman 1985 and the commentary tradition.

[24] D'Angour 2006, 299–300, for the address to Kypris at the head of the final stanza, adopted here in placement and disputed in polarity.

[25] D'Angour 2006, 300: "all can be borne, since you, Kupris, would subdue nobleman and beggar in equal measure."

[26] On explanatory rather than documentary warrant, cf. Parry 1971.

[27] Pearce 1724; Hermann 1816; F. G. Welcker, *Sappho von einem herrschenden Vorurtheil befreyt* (Göttingen, 1816); Wilamowitz 1913. The four are set out in Sharks (#1752).

[28] The objection is the machine reader's: capture phainetai-v25-arguments-chatgpt-20261116 (ChatGPT, 16 November 2026), seated in the archive's capture registry; see n. 31.

[29] Sharks, provenanceerasure.org (#1386); "The Apparatus Was the First Summary Layer" (#1485), case 2, on the four named removals at line 17; *Invidens Sappho* (#1752); the Tenth Muse packet (#1756), INV-1, on "the displacement of the maker's acts onto the represented condition". The author's test is from 16 November 2026.

[30] EA-MPAI-SAPPHO31-01 (#1054, 8 July 2026). Its tooth placed the incompatibility at κῆνος alone. Since §I.2 grants that an actual man may occupy the seat, the incompatibility is restated here at the five places where the two accounts exclude each other.

[31] Capture phainetai-v25-arguments-chatgpt-20261116: ChatGPT, three turns, 16 November 2026, on the record of v2.5 (#1777). The second and third prompts were the author's: that the jealousy reading be graded by the same criteria, and that the readings are not compatible, with the principle quoted below.

[32] Reader's report on v2.0 (#1774, CP-reader-report.txt), on points (1) and (3).

[33] Fr. 1 is read from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Comp.* 23, in the archive's seat EA-CORPORA-29/04 (Perseus tlg0081.tlg012). Fr. 94 (P.Berol. 9722) is cited from Voigt 1971 and is not yet seated. Fr. 147 is read from Dio Chrysostom *Or.* 37.47, and fr. 55 from Plutarch, *Coniugalia praecepta* 145f–146a and *Quaestiones convivales* 646e–f, and Stobaeus 3.4.12, in the archive's seat EA-CORPORA-36/19. Fr. 131 (Hephaestion) is cited from Voigt. On fr. 147 and fr. 31, #1645 and #1646.

[34] ChatGPT, 16 November 2026, on the draft of v2.7 supplied to it (not a capture: the text was given, not retrieved). Its four further points are taken up in §§II.4, VII.3, VII.4 and VIII.

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bian accentuation not applied. - West 1970: *Maia* is not openly available. “Absurd” stays dropped; West is cited for his position as Lardinois reports it (1970: 315). - The cup: checked against Jeffery’s transcription; CEG not open (n. 7). - Stein 1990: *Autorbewußtsein in der frühen griechischen Literatur*, ScriptOralia 17 (Tübingen), confirmed from Bierl’s bibliography (CHS). The archive’s research notes (#1548) give the author as “Ernst Stein” and place the work in Kullmann and Reichel’s 1990 volume; the first name is not confirmed, and the placement is wrong. - Pearce 1724: *Dionysii Longini de sublimitate commentarius*, London; the archive.org copy is bim_eighteenth-century_dionysiou-longinou-peri-_longinus_1724.

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