

SAPPHO'S

SWEET VIOLETS

"Many crowns of violets, roses, and crocuses
together ...you put on by my side

and many scented wreaths woven from
blossoms around your delicate throat

And... with pure, sweet oil [for a queen]...
you annoyed..."

-Fragment 94, Sappho,
Translated by Anne Carson



Sappho was a poet in Ancient Greece who wrote love poems to other women that frequently mentioned violets and other purple flowers. Many of her poems were destroyed, and only small fragments remain. The word "lesbian" comes from Sappho's home, the island Lesbos, and the word "sapphic" described women who love other women. Today, violets are a symbol of sapphic love, and of quiet resilience.

In the 1920s the word "pansy" was used to insult feminine men. Around this time the banning of alcohol during Prohibition caused a huge underground nightlife scene to form. At the same time, "Pansy Performers" doing acts in drag became massively popular. This was called the...

PANSY CRAZZE!



Pansies are a cultivar made from crossbreeding members of the Viola family. Because of this they come in a wide range of colors and dazzling patterns!