

Slowly was the beast advancing,
While his capturers kept lancing
His dark fell with sportive malice.
When they reached Cythera's palace
Thus spake Aphrodite to him:
"Hateful beast, is't thou that slew him?
Him will life no longer quicken,
My Adonis hast thou stricken!
His white thigh so softly rounded
Have thy wicked weapons wounded."
But he answered, "Aphrodite,
By myself, and these my mighty
Hunters, and thy beauteous lover,
I the reason will discover.
Know, I did not wish to kill him,
Pained am I that death should chill him;
But I gazed infatuated
On his peerless charms ill-fated.
I was mad to kiss his naked
Thighs, and I my passion slakèd.
Thus the lover thou didst cherish
Slain was—but my teeth let perish;
Wrench them from my jaws, and should not