

In stately grandeur, conscious of the flame  
 Immortal beauty in a mortal wakes  
 She plied her subtle arts, while silence fanned  
 The heat of passion surging through his veins.  
 Then in soft tones, sweet in each whispered word  
 She claimed his gift, and thus addressed the youth:  
 "Behold, in me alone, the mystic power,  
 To crown with triumph feats of arms in war;  
 Give me the prize, and I will bind for thee  
 The laurel wreath which decks the victor's brow."  
 But Paris, mindful of the task imposed,  
 Withdrew in silence, for within his breast  
 The tumult of his passions waged fierce war.  
 And Aphrodite, as in sadness stood,  
 With tear stained face, more eloquent than words  
 And smiling through her tears looked on the youth,  
 Who rose, and called her to his side, and said—  
 "To you, the Queen of Love, whom I embrace  
 The golden fruit is given. For evermore  
 The crown of beauty crowns the brow of love."  
 So Paris filled with ecstasy divine  
 With Aphrodite wandered through the woods  
 As in a dream, lost to all thought, but love.

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The moon had vanished, and a single star  
 In loneliness watched in the vault of heaven  
 (For love needs not the light of sun or moon  
 Too full the measure of its depth for light)  
 When Paris, mindful of the promise made  
 By Aphrodite, yet three suns gone by,  
 Arose, and crossed to Lacedæmon's shore,  
 Where Helen, worshipped as a queen, abode  
 With Menelaus and Hermione.