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Self-Possession

This girl in heels walks by a mirror
And stops to sweep hair from her shoulder,
Then turns and goes, as if she were
Destined to be her own beholder
And that glass in the hall put there
For no one else, its frame growing older
Deprived and emptied of the face
Whose visitation was its grace.

With the firm setting of his jaw,
And straightened back, the young man steels
Himself against the threat of awe
To loose his flabby soul and peel
Away composure, lest some raw
Sensation rob him of what's real.
Thus armed and solid, he'd appear
To her whose beauty wanders near.

Others may call it all deceit:
The confident body, air of grace,
The mannered greeting, swift retreat
Of hands, the raised repose of face;
Those frail and viscous hearts that greet
The world lie hidden as in a case,
Losing what life they seek to gain
Immured from all such honest pain.

But, heart, who lies within such dark,
And strives to beat in measured tune,
You lend the decent form its spark
While it sustains you when you swoon,
And gives thought's flight its well-aimed arc,
Inscribes what from sense fades too soon,
So truth may not die in the ear
But, suitably disguised, appear.