

Oenone Key Facts

Writer: Alfred Lord Tennyson | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Key Facts:

- **Writer:** Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892)
- **Title of the Author:**
 - Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom (1850–1892)
 - One of the most prominent Victorian poets
 - Representative poet of the Victorian Age
- **Original Title:** Oenone (Ænone- Classical Greek Form)
- **Written Time:** Around 1829
- **Published Date:** First published in 1832, and revised in later editions of Tennyson's collections in 1842.
- **Total Lines:** 268
- **Stanza:** 25 stanzas
- **Genre:** Dramatic monologue
- **Tone:** Melancholic & Reflective
- **Point of View or Position:** First-person narrative (Oenone speaks the entire poem)
- **Technical Excellence of the Poem:**
 - Masterful use of classical allusions
 - Rich and musical blank verse
- **Source of the Idea of the Poem:** Tennyson takes inspiration from Greek mythology, particularly the myth of Oenone, the mountain nymph of Mount Ida and the forsaken lover of Paris (the prince of Troy).
- **Setting:**
 - **Time Setting:** Mythological past, during, and after Paris's decision to leave Oenone for Helen

- **Place Setting:** Slopes of Mount Ida in ancient Phrygia (near Troy), a place of natural beauty and symbolic of lost love

Key Notes

- **Mount Ida:** In the poem Oenone, Mount Ida is a very important place. It is a real mountain in ancient Phrygia (now in Turkey) and also a famous place in Greek mythology. Oenone, the speaker of the poem, lives on this mountain. She once lived happily here with Paris, the prince of Troy. But now, she is alone because Paris has left her for Helen. So, Mount Ida becomes a symbol of both love and loneliness.
- **Nymph (Nimph):** Oenone is a nymph, which means a spirit or goddess of nature in Greek mythology. She is not a human, but she has deep human emotions like love, pain, and jealousy. Nymphs are often connected to rivers, trees, or mountains. Oenone is a mountain nymph, and that's why she is deeply tied to the natural world around her.

Alfred Lord Tennyson had a deep interest in Greek mythology and nature from his student life. He composed the poem Oenone in 1829 at the young age of just 20. At that time, he was a student at Cambridge University, and his literary talent was beginning to gain recognition. The main inspiration behind this poem came from the themes of love, betrayal, and war found in Greek mythology, particularly the love story of Paris and Oenone and the event known as the Judgement of Paris.

Paris, the prince of Troy, had initially fallen in love with Oenone. However, later, being enchanted by the promise of Aphrodite, he abandoned Oenone and returned to Troy with Helen. Tennyson places this tale of betrayal at the center of his poem. By blending myth and nature, Tennyson created a deeply personal voice in this poem, which would later become a hallmark of his poetic style. The poem was first published in Tennyson's 1832 collection, though he revised it slightly for inclusion in the final 1842 edition.