

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00608-8 - Troilus and Cressida, Volume 36

William Shakespeare

Excerpt

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TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

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The scene: Troy, and the Greek camp

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

PRIAM, *king of Troy*

HECTOR

TROIUS

PARIS

DEIPHOBUS

HELENUS

} *his sons*MARGARELON, *a bastard son of Priam*

ÆNEAS

ANTENOR

} *Trojan commanders*CALCHAS, *a Trojan priest, taking part with the Greeks*PANDARUS, *uncle to Cressida*AGAMEMNON, *the Greek general*MENELAUS, *his brother*

ACHILLES

AJAX

ULYSSES

NESTOR

DIOMEDES

PATROCLUS

} *Greek commanders*THERSITES, *a deformed and scurrilous Greek*ALEXANDER, *servant to Cressida**Servant to Troilus**Servant to Paris**Servant to Diomedes**The Prologue*HELEN, *wife to Menelaus*ANDROMACHE, *wife to Hector*CASSANDRA, *daughter to Priam; a prophetess*CRESSIDA, *daughter to Calchas**Trojan and Greek Soldiers, and Attendants*

TROIUS AND CRESSIDA

Enter the Prologue in armour

Prologue. In Troy there lies the scene. From isles
of Greece

The princes orgulous, their high blood chafed,
Have to the port of Athens sent their ships,
Fraught with the ministers and instruments
Of cruel war; sixty and nine, that wore
Their crownets regal, from th'Athenian bay
Put forth toward Phrygia, and their vow is made
To ransack Troy, within whose strong immures
The ravished Helen, Menelaus' queen,
With wanton Paris sleeps—and that's the quarrel.
To Tenedos they come,
And the deep-drawing barks do there disgorge
Their warlike fraughtage; now on Dardan plains
The fresh and yet unbruised Greeks do pitch
Their brave pavilions: Priam's six-gated city,
Dardan, and Timbria, Helias, Chetas, Troien,
And Antenorides, with massy staples
And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts,
Sperr up the sons of Troy.
Now expectation, tickling skittish spirits
On one and other side, Trojan and Greek,
Sets all on hazard—and hither am I come
A Prologue armed, but not in confidence
Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited
In like condition as our argument,
To tell you, fair beholders, that our play
Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,

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4 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA Prol. 28

Beginning in the middle; starting thence away

To what may be digested in a play.

30 Like or find fault; do as your pleasures are:

Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war. [goes]

[I. I.] *Troy. Before Priam's palace**Enter PANDARUS and TROILUS in armour**Troilus.* Call here my varlet; I'll unarm again:

Why should I war without the walls of Troy

That find such cruel battle here within?

Each Trojan that is master of his heart,

Let him to field; Troilus, alas, hath none!

Pandarus. Will this gear ne'er be mended?*Troilus.* The Greeks are strong, and skilful to
their strength,

Fierce to their skill, and to their fierceness valiant,

But I am weaker than a woman's tear,

10 Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,

Less valiant than the virgin in the night,

And skillless as unpractised infancy.

Pandarus. Well, I have told you enough of this; for
my part, I'll not meddle nor make no farther. He that
will have a cake out of the wheat must tarry the
grinding.*Troilus.* Have I not tarried?*Pandarus.* Ay, the grinding; but you must tarry the
bolting.20 *Troilus.* Have I not tarried?*Pandarus.* Ay, the bolting; but you must tarry the
leavening.*Troilus.* Still have I tarried.

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I. I. 24 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA 5

Pandarus. Ay, to the leavening; but there's yet in the word hereafter, the kneading, the making of the cake, the heating of the oven, and the baking; nay, you must stay the cooling too, or you may chance to burn your lips.

Troilus. Patience herself, what goddess e'er she be,
Doth lesser blench at sufferance than I do; 30

At Priam's royal table do I sit,
And when fair Cressid comes into my thoughts—
So, traitor! 'When she comes!'—When is she thence?

Pandarus. Well, she looked yesternight fairer than ever I saw her look, or any woman else.

Troilus. I was about to tell thee—when my heart,
As wedgéd with a sigh, would rive in twain,
Lest Hector or my father should perceive me,
I have, as when the sun doth light a storm,
Buried this sigh in wrinkle of a smile: 40

But sorrow that is couched in seeming gladness
Is like that mirth fate turns to sudden sadness.

Pandarus. An her hair were not somewhat darker than Helen's—well, go to—there were no more comparison between the women. But, for my part, she is my kinswoman; I would not, as they term it, praise her, but I would somebody had heard her talk yesterday, as I did. I will not dispraise your sister Cassandra's wit, but—

Troilus. O Pandarus! I tell thee, Pandarus— 50

When I do tell thee there my hopes lie drowned,
Reply not in how many fathoms deep

They lie indrenched. I tell thee I am mad
In Cressid's love. Thou answer'st she is fair;

Pour'st in the open ulcer of my heart

Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice;

Handlest in thy discourse—O, that her hand,

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6 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA 1.1.58

In whose comparison all whites are ink
Writing their own reproach, to whose soft seizure

60 The cygnet's down is harsh, and spirit of sense
Hard as the palm of ploughman! this thou tell'st me,
As true thou tell'st me, when I say I love her;
But saying thus, instead of oil and balm,
Thou lay'st in every gash that love hath given me
The knife that made it.

Pandarus. I speak no more than truth.

Troilus. Thou dost not speak so much.

Pandarus. Faith, I'll not meddle in 't. Let her be as
she is. If she be fair, 'tis the better for her; an she be
70 not, she has the mends in her own hands.

Troilus. Good Pandarus, how now, Pandarus!

Pandarus. I have had my labour for my travail:
ill thought on of her, and ill thought on of you; gone
between and between, but small thanks for my labour.

Troilus. What, art thou angry, Pandarus? what,
with me?

Pandarus. Because she's kin to me, therefore she's not
so fair as Helen; an she were not kin to me, she would
be as fair o' Friday as Helen is o' Sunday. But what
care I? I care not an she were a blackamoor; 'tis all
80 one to me.

Troilus. Say I she is not fair?

Pandarus. I do not care whether you do or no.
She's a fool to stay behind her father. Let her to the
Greeks, and so I'll tell her the next time I see her. For
my part, I'll meddle nor make no more i'th' matter.

Troilus. Pandarus—

Pandarus. Not I.

Troilus. Sweet Pandarus—

Pandarus. Pray you, speak no more to me: I will
90 leave all as I found it, and there an end. [*goes; alarum*

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1.1.91 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA 7

Troilus. Peace, you ungracious clamours! peace,
rude sounds!

Fools on both sides! Helen must needs be fair,
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.

I cannot fight upon this argument;

It is too starved a subject for my sword.

But Pandarus—O gods, how do you plague me!

I cannot come to Cressid but by Pandar,

And he's as tetchy to be wooed to woo

As she is stubborn-chaste against all suit.

Tell me, Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,

100

What Cressid is, what Pandar, and what we?

Her bed is India; there she lies, a pearl;

Between our Ilium and where she resides

Let it be called the wild and wandering flood;

Ourselves the merchant, and this sailing Pandar,

Our doubtful hope, our convoy and our bark.

Alarum. Enter ÆNEAS

Æneas. How now, Prince Troilus! Wherefore
not afield?

Troilus. Because not there; this woman's answer sorts,
For womanish it is to be from thence.

What news, Æneas, from the field today?

110

Æneas. That Paris is returnéd home, and hurt.

Troilus. By whom, Æneas?

Æneas. Troilus, by Menelaus.

Troilus. Let Paris bleed: 'tis but a scar to scorn;
Paris is gored with Menelaus' horn. [*alarum*]

Æneas. Hark what good sport is out of town today!

Troilus. Better at home, if 'would I might' were 'may'.
But to the sport abroad: are you bound thither?

Æneas. In all swift haste.

Troilus. Come, go we then together. [*they go*]

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8 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA 1.2.1

[1. 2.] *The same. A street**Enter CRESSIDA and ALEXANDER, her man**Cressida.* Who were those went by?*Alexander.* Queen Hecuba and Helen.*Cressida.* And whither go they?*Alexander.* Up to the eastern tower,

Whose height commands as subject all the vale,

To see the battle. Hector, whose patience

Is as a virtue fixed, today was moved:

He chid Andromache and struck his armourer;

And, like as there were husbandry in war,

Before the sun rose he was harnessed light,

And to the field goes he; where every flower

10 Did, as a prophet, weep what it foresaw

In Hector's wrath.

Cressida. What was his cause of anger?*Alexander.* The noise goes this: there is among
the Greeks

A lord of Trojan blood, nephew to Hector;

They call him Ajax.

Cressida. Good; and what of him?*Alexander.* They say he is a very man per se,
And stands alone.*Cressida.* So do all men, unless they are drunk, sick,
or have no legs.20 *Alexander.* This man, lady, hath robbed many beasts
of their particular additions: he is as valiant as the lion,
churlish as the bear, slow as the elephant—a man into
whom nature hath so crowded humours that his valour
is crushed into folly, his folly forced with discretion.
There is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse
of, nor any man an attaint but he carries some stain of

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I. 2. 26 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA 9

it; he is melancholy without cause and merry against the hair; he hath the joints of everything, but everything so out of joint that he is a gouty Briareus, many hands and no use, or a purblind Argus, all eyes and no sight.

30

Cressida. But how should this man, that makes me smile, make Hector angry?

Alexander. They say he yesterday coped Hector in the battle and struck him down, the disdain and shame whereof hath ever since kept Hector fasting and waking.

Cressida. Who comes here?

Alexander. Madam, your uncle Pandarus.

Enter PANDARUS

Cressida. Hector's a gallant man.

Alexander. As may be in the world, lady.

Pandarus. What's that? what's that?

40

Cressida. Good morrow, uncle Pandarus.

Pandarus. Good morrow, cousin Cressid. What do you talk of? Good morrow, Alexander. How do you, cousin? When were you at Ilium?

Cressida. This morning, uncle.

Pandarus. What were you talking of when I came? Was Hector armed and gone ere you came to Ilium? Helen was not up, was she?

Cressida. Hector was gone; but Helen was not up.

Pandarus. E'en so: Hector was stirring early.

50

Cressida. That were we talking of, and of his anger.

Pandarus. Was he angry?

Cressida. So he says here.

Pandarus. True, he was so; I know the cause too; he'll lay about him today, I can tell them that. And there's Troilus will not come far behind him; let them take heed of Troilus, I can tell them that too.

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10 TROILUS AND CRESSIDA 1.2.58

Cressida. What, is he angry too?*Pandarus.* Who, Troilus? Troilus is the better man
60 of the two.*Cressida.* O Jupiter! there's no comparison.*Pandarus.* What, not between Troilus and Hector?
Do you know a man if you see him?*Cressida.* Ay, if I ever saw him before and knew him.*Pandarus.* Well, I say Troilus is Troilus.*Cressida.* Then you say as I say; for I am sure he is
not Hector.*Pandarus.* No, nor Hector is not Troilus in some
degrees.70 *Cressida.* 'Tis just to each of them; he is himself.*Pandarus.* Himself! Alas, poor Troilus! I would he
were—*Cressida.* So he is.*Pandarus.* Condition I had gone barefoot to India.*Cressida.* He is not Hector.*Pandarus.* Himself! no, he's not himself. Would
'a were himself! Well, the gods are above; time must
friend or end. Well, Troilus, well, I would my heart
were in her body! No, Hector is not a better man than
80 Troilus.*Cressida.* Excuse me.*Pandarus.* He is elder.*Cressida.* Pardon me, pardon me.*Pandarus.* Th'other's not come to't. You shall tell me
another tale when th'other's come to't. Hector shall
not have his wit this year.*Cressida.* He shall not need it, if he have his own.*Pandarus.* Nor his qualities.*Cressida.* No matter.90 *Pandarus.* Nor his beauty.*Cressida.* 'Twould not become him; his own's better.