

# Troilus and Cressida

## 1.2

*Enter [above] Cressida and her servant Alexander*

**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.

5

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

Did as a prophet weep what it foresaw

10

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*,

15

And stands alone.

**CRESSIDA**

So do all men

Unless they are drunk, sick, or have no legs.

**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 20

whom nature hath so crowded humours that his valour

is crushed into folly, his folly farced 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 it. He is melancholy without cause and merry

25

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 purblind Argus, all eyes  
and no sight.

**CRESSIDA** But how should this man that makes me smile 30  
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? 35

**ALEXANDER** Madam, your uncle Pandarus.

*[Enter Pandarus above]*

**CRESSIDA** Hector's a gallant man.

**ALEXANDER** As may be in the world, lady.

**PANDARUS** What's that? What's that?

**CRESSIDA** Good morrow, uncle Pandarus. 40

**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 45  
Hector armed and gone ere ye 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.

**CRESSIDA**  
That were we talking of, and of his anger. 50

**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 55  
heed of Troilus, I can tell them that too.

**CRESSIDA** What, is he angry too?

**PANDARUS** Who, Troilus? Troilus is the better man of the  
two.

**CRESSIDA**  
O Jupiter! There's no comparison. 60

**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

65

He is not Hector.

**PANDARUS** No, nor Hector is not Troilus, in some degrees.

**CRESSIDA**

'Tis just to each of them: he is himself.

**PANDARUS** Himself? Alas, poor Troilus, I would he were.

**CRESSIDA** So he is. 70

**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 75 body. No, Hector is not a better man than 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 80 another tale when th'other's come to't. Hector shall not have his will this year.

**CRESSIDA**

He shall not need it if he have his own.

**PANDARUS** Nor his qualities.

**CRESSIDA** No matter. 85

**PANDARUS** Nor his beauty.

**CRESSIDA**

'Twould not become him; his own's better.

**PANDARUS** You have no judgement, niece. Helen herself swore th'other day that Troilus for a brown favour, for so 'tis, I must confess±±not brown neither±± 90

**CRESSIDA** No, but brown.

**PANDARUS** Faith, to say truth, brown and not brown.

**CRESSIDA** To say the truth, true and not true.

**PANDARUS** She praised his complexion above Paris'.

**CRESSIDA** Why, Paris hath colour enough. 95

**PANDARUS** So he has.

**CRESSIDA** Then Troilus should have too much. If she

praised him above, his complexion is higher than his;  
he having colour enough, and the other higher, is too  
flaming a praise for a good complexion. I had as lief 100  
Helen's golden tongue had commended Troilus for a  
copper nose.

**PANDARUS** I swear to you, I think Helen loves him better  
than Paris.

**CRESSIDA** Then she's a merry Greek indeed. 105

**PANDARUS** Nay, I am sure she does. She came to him  
th'other day into the compassed window, and you  
know he has not past three or four hairs on his chin±±

**CRESSIDA** Indeed, a tapster's arithmetic may soon bring  
his particulars therein to a total. 110

**PANDARUS** Why, he is very young±±and yet will he within  
three pound lift as much as his brother Hector.

**CRESSIDA** Is he so young a man and so old a lifter?

**PANDARUS** But to prove to you that Helen loves him: she  
came and puts me her white hand to his cloven chin. 115

**CRESSIDA** Juno have mercy! How came it cloven?

**PANDARUS** Why, you know, 'tis dimpled. I think his  
smiling becomes him better than any man in all  
Phrygia.

**CRESSIDA** O he smiles valiantly. 120

**PANDARUS** Does he not?

**CRESSIDA** O yes, an't were a cloud in autumn.

**PANDARUS** Why, go to then. But to prove to you that  
Helen loves Troilus±±

**CRESSIDA** Troilus will stand to the proof if you'll prove it 125  
so.

**PANDARUS** Troilus? Why, he esteems her no more than I  
esteem an addle egg.

**CRESSIDA** If you love an addle egg as well as you love an  
idle head you would eat chickens i'th' shell. 130

**PANDARUS** I cannot choose but laugh to think how she  
tickled his chin. Indeed, she has a marvellous white  
hand, I must needs confess±±

**CRESSIDA** Without the rack.

**PANDARUS** And she takes upon her to spy a white hair 135  
on his chin.

**CRESSIDA** Alas, poor chin! Many a wart is richer.

**PANDARUS** But there was such laughing! Queen Hecuba  
laughed that her eyes ran o'er.

**CRESSIDA** With millstones. 140

**PANDARUS** And Cassandra laughed.

**CRESSIDA** But there was a more temperate fire under the  
pot of her eyes±±or did her eyes run o'er too?

**PANDARUS** And Hector laughed.

**CRESSIDA** At what was all this laughing? 145

**PANDARUS** Marry, at the white hair that Helen spied on  
Troilus' chin.

**CRESSIDA** An't had been a green hair I should have  
laughed too.

**PANDARUS** They laughed not so much at the hair as at 150  
his pretty answer.

**CRESSIDA** What was his answer?

**PANDARUS** Quoth she, 'Here's but two-and-fifty hairs on  
your chin, and one of them is white.'

**CRESSIDA** This is her question. 155

**PANDARUS** That's true, make no question of that. 'Two-  
and-fifty hairs,' quoth he, 'and one white? That white  
hair is my father, and all the rest are his sons.' 'Jupiter!  
quoth she, 'which of these hairs is Paris my husband?'  
'The forked one,' quoth he, 'pluck't out and give it 160  
him.' But there was such laughing, and Helen so  
blushed and Paris so chafed and all the rest so laughed,  
that it passed.

**CRESSIDA** So let it now, for it has been a great while going  
by. 165

**PANDARUS** Well, cousin, I told you a thing yesterday.  
Think on't.

**CRESSIDA** So I do.

**PANDARUS** I'll be sworn 'tis true. He will weep you an't  
were a man born in April. 170

**CRESSIDA** And I'll spring up in his tears an't were a nettle  
against May.

*A retreat is sounded*

**PANDARUS** Hark, they are coming from the field. Shall we  
stand up here and see them as they pass toward Ilium?  
Good niece, do, sweet niece Cressida. 175

**CRESSIDA** At your pleasure.

**PANDARUS** Here, here, here's an excellent place, here we may see most bravely. I'll tell you them all by their names as they pass by, but mark Troilus above the rest. 180

*Enter Aeneas passing by [below]*

**CRESSIDA** Speak not so loud.

**PANDARUS** That's Aeneas. Is not that a brave man? He's one of the flowers of Troy, I can tell you. But mark Troilus; you shall see anon.

*Enter Antenor passing by [below]*

**CRESSIDA** Who's that? 185

**PANDARUS** That's Antenor. He has a shrewd wit, I can tell you, and he's a man good enough. He's one o'th' soundest judgements in Troy whosoever, and a proper man of person. When comes Troilus? I'll show you Troilus anon. If he see me you shall see him nod at me. 190

**CRESSIDA** Will he give you the nod?

**PANDARUS** You shall see.

**CRESSIDA** If he do, the rich shall have more.

*Enter Hector passing by [below]*

**PANDARUS** That's Hector, that, that, look you, that. 195  
There's a fellow!±±Go thy way, Hector!±±There's a brave man, niece. O brave Hector! Look how he looks. There's a countenance. Is't not a brave man?

**CRESSIDA** O a brave man.

**PANDARUS** Is a not? It does a man's heart good. Look you 200  
what hacks are on his helmet. Look you yonder, do you see? Look you there. There's no jesting. There's laying on, take't off who will, as they say. There be hacks.

**CRESSIDA** Be those with swords? 205

*Enter Paris passing by [below]*

**PANDARUS** Swords, anything, he cares not. An the devil come to him it's all one. By God's lid it does one's heart good. Yonder comes Paris, yonder comes Paris. Look ye yonder, niece. Is't not a gallant man too? Is't not? Why, this is brave now. Who said he came hurt home today? He's not hurt. Why, this will do Helen's heart good now, ha! Would I could see Troilus now. You

shall see Troilus anon.

*Enter Helenus passing by [below]*

**CRESSIDA** Who's that?

**PANDARUS** That's Helenus. I marvel where Troilus is. 215  
That's Helenus. I think he went not forth today. That's  
Helenus.

**CRESSIDA** Can Helenus fight, uncle?

**PANDARUS** Helenus? No±±yes, he'll fight indifferent well.  
I marvel where Troilus is. 220

*[A Shout]*

Hark, do you not hear the people cry `Troilus'? Helenus  
is a priest.

*Enter Troilus passing by [below]*

**CRESSIDA** What sneaking fellow comes yonder?

**PANDARUS** Where? Yonder? That's Deiphobus.±±'Tis  
Troilus! There's a man, niece, h'm? Brave Troilus, the 225  
prince of chivalry!

**CRESSIDA** Peace, for shame, peace.

**PANDARUS** Mark him, note him. O brave Troilus! Look  
well upon him, niece. Look you how his sword is 230  
bloodied and his helm more hacked than Hector's, and  
how he looks and how he goes. O admirable youth!  
He ne'er saw three-and-twenty. ±±Go thy way, Troilus,  
go thy way!±±Had I a sister were a grace, or a daughter  
a goddess, he should take his choice. O admirable man!  
Paris? Paris is dirt to him, and I warrant Helen to 235  
change would give an eye to boot.

*Enter common soldiers passing by [below]*

**CRESSIDA** Here comes more.

**PANDARUS** Asses, fools, dolts. Chaff and bran, chaff and  
bran. Porridge after meat. I could live and die i'th' eyes  
of Troilus. Ne'er look, ne'er look, the eagles are gone. 240  
Crows and daws, crows and daws. I had rather be such  
a man as Troilus than Agamemnon and all Greece.

**CRESSIDA** There is among the Greeks Achilles, a better  
man than Troilus.

**PANDARUS** Achilles? A drayman, a porter, a very camel. 245

**CRESSIDA** Well, well.

**PANDARUS** Well, well? Why, have you any discretion?  
Have you any eyes? Do you know what a man is? Is

not birth, beauty, good shape, discourse, manhood,  
learning, gentleness, virtue, youth, liberality, and so 250  
forth, the spice and salt that season a man?

**CRESSIDA** Ay, a minced man±±and then to be baked with  
no date in the pie, for then the man's date is out.

**PANDARUS** You are such another woman! One knows not  
at what ward you lie. 255

**CRESSIDA** Upon my back to defend my belly, upon my wit  
to defend my wiles, upon my secrecy to defend mine  
honesty, my mask to defend my beauty, and you to  
defend all these±±and at all these wards I lie at a  
thousand watches. 260

**PANDARUS** Say one of your watches.

**CRESSIDA** `Nay, I'll watch you for that'±±and that's one  
of the chiefest of them too. If I cannot ward what I  
would not have hit, I can watch you for telling how I  
took the blow±±unless it swell past hiding, and then 265  
it's past watching.

**PANDARUS** You are such another!

*Enter Boy*

**BOY** Sir, my lord would instantly speak with you.

**PANDARUS** Where?

**BOY** At your own house. 270

**PANDARUS** Good boy, tell him I come.

*Exit Boy*

I doubt he be hurt. Fare ye well, good niece.

**CRESSIDA** Adieu, uncle.

**PANDARUS** I'll be with you, niece, by and by.

**CRESSIDA** To bring, uncle? 275

**PANDARUS** Ay, a token from Troilus.

**CRESSIDA** By the same token, you are a bawd.

*Exeunt Pandarus [and Alexander]*

Words, vows, gifts, tears, and love's full sacrifice  
He offers in another's enterprise;  
But more in Troilus thousandfold I see 280  
Than in the glass of Pandar's praise may be.  
Yet hold I off. Women are angels, wooing;  
Things won are done. Joy's soul lies in the doing.  
That she beloved knows naught that knows not this:  
Men price the thing ungained more than it is. 285



That she was never yet that ever knew  
Love got so sweet as when desire did sue.  
Therefore this maxim out of love I teach:  
Achievement is command; ungained, beseech.  
Then though my heart's contents firm love doth bear, 290  
Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear.  
*Exit*