

Troilus and Cressida

4.1

*Enter at one door Aeneas with a torch; at another
Paris, Deiphobus, Antenor, and Diomedes the
Grecian, with torch-bearers*

PARIS See, ho! Who is that there?

DEIPHOBUS It is the Lord Aeneas.

AENEAS Is the Prince there in person?

Had I so good occasion to lie long
As you, Prince Paris, nothing but heavenly business 5
Should rob my bed-mate of my company.

DIOMEDES

That's my mind too. Good morrow, Lord Aeneas.

PARIS

A valiant Greek, Aeneas, take his hand.
Witness the process of your speech, wherein
You told how Diomed e'en a whole week by days 10
Did haunt you in the field.

AENEAS *(to Diomedes)* Health to you, valiant sir,
During all question of the gentle truce.
But when I meet you armed, as black defiance
As heart can think or courage execute.

DIOMEDES

The one and other Diomed embraces. 15
Our bloods are now in calm; and so long, health.
But when contention and occasion meet,
By Jove I'll play the hunter for thy life
With all my force, pursuit, and policy.

AENEAS

And thou shalt hunt a lion that will fly 20
With his face backward. In humane gentleness,
Welcome to Troy. Now by Anchises' life,
Welcome indeed! By Venus' hand I swear
No man alive can love in such a sort
The thing he means to kill more excellently. 25

DIOMEDES

We sympathize. Jove, let Aeneas live±±
If to my sword his fate be not the glory±±

A thousand complete courses of the sun;
But, in mine emulous honour, let him die
With every joint a wound±±and that, tomorrow. 30

AENEAS We know each other well.

DIOMEDES

We do, and long to know each other worse.

PARIS

This is the most despitefull'st gentle greeting,
The noblest hateful love, that e'er I heard of.
What business, lord, so early? 35

AENEAS

I was sent for to the King; but why, I know not.

PARIS

His purpose meets you: 'twas to bring this Greek
To Calchas' house, and there to render him,
For the enfreed Antenor, the fair Cressid.
Let's have your company, or if you please 40
Haste there before us. *[Aside]* I constantly do think±±
Or rather, call my thought a certain knowledge±±
My brother Troilus lodges there tonight.
Rouse him and give him note of our approach,
With the whole quality wherefore. I fear 45
We shall be much unwelcome.

AENEAS *[aside]* That I assure you.

Troilus had rather Troy were borne to Greece
Than Cressid borne from Troy.

PARIS *[aside]* There is no help.

The bitter disposition of the time
Will have it so. 50

[Aloud] On, lord, we'll follow you.

AENEAS Good morrow all.

Exit

PARIS

And tell me, noble Diomed±±faith, tell me true,
Even in the soul of sound good-fellowship±±
Who in your thoughts merits fair Helen most, 55
Myself or Menelaus?

DIOMEDES Both alike.

He merits well to have her that doth seek her,
Not making any scruple of her soilure,

With such a hell of pain and world of charge;
And you as well to keep her that defend her, 60
Not palating the taste of her dishonour,
With such a costly loss of wealth and friends.
He like a puling cuckold would drink up
The lees and dregs of a flat 'tameÁd piece;
You like a lecher out of whorish loins 65
Are pleased to breed out your inheritors.
Both merits poised, each weighs nor less nor more,
But he as he: which heavier for a whore?

PARIS

You are too bitter to your countrywoman.

DIOMEDES

She's bitter to her country. Hear me, Paris. 70
For every false drop in her bawdy veins
A Grecian's life hath sunk; for every scruple
Of her contaminated carrion weight
A Trojan hath been slain. Since she could speak
She hath not given so many good words breath 75
As, for her, Greeks and Trojans suffered death.

PARIS

Fair Diomed, you do as chapmen do:
Dispraise the thing that you desire to buy.
But we in silence hold this virtue well:
We'll but commend what we intend to sell.±± 80
Here lies our way.

Exeunt