

The Grecian dames are sunburnt, and not worth
The splinter of a lance. Even so much.

Agam. This shall be told our lovers, Lord
Æneas;

If none of them have soul in such a kind,
We left them all at home: but we are soldiers;
And may that soldier a mere recreant prove,
That means not, hath not, or is not in love! 288
If then one is, or hath, or means to be,
That one meets Hector; if none else, I am he.

Nest. Tell him of Nestor, one that was a
man

When Hector's grandsire suck'd: he is old now;
But if there be not in our Grecian host 293
One noble man that hath one spark of fire
To answer for his love, tell him from me,
I'll hide my silver beard in a gold beaver, 296
And in my vanbrace put this wither'd brawn;
And, meeting him, will tell him that my lady
Was fairer than his grandam, and as chaste
As may be in the world: his youth in flood, 300
I'll prove this truth with my three drops of
blood.

Æne. Now heavens forbid such scarcity of
youth!

Ulyss. Amen.

Agam. Fair Lord *Æneas*, let me touch your
hand;

To our pavilion shall I lead you first.
Achilles shall have word of this intent;
So shall each lord of Greece, from tent to tent:
Yourself shall feast with us before you go, 308
And find the welcome of a noble foe.

[*Exeunt all but ULYSSES and NESTOR.*]

Ulyss. Nestor!

Nest. What says Ulysses?

Ulyss. I have a young conception in my
brain;

Be you my time to bring it to some shape.

Nest. What is't?

Ulyss. This 'tis:
Blunt wedges rive hard knots: the seeded pride
That hath to this maturity blown up 317
In rank Achilles, must or now be cropp'd,
Or, shedding, breed a nursery of like evil,
To overbulk us all.

Nest. Well, and how? 320

Ulyss. This challenge that the gallant Hector
sends,

However it is spread in general name,
Relates in purpose only to Achilles.

Nest. The purpose is perspicuous even as
substance 324

Whose grossness little characters sum up:
And, in the publication, make no strain,
But that Achilles, were his brain as barren
As banks of Libya,—though, Apollo knows, 328
'Tis dry enough,—will with great speed of judg-
ment,

Ay, with celerity, find Hector's purpose
Pointing on him.

Ulyss. And wake him to the answer, think
you? 332

Nest. Yes, 'tis most meet: whom may you
else oppose,

That can from Hector bring those honours off,

If not Achilles? Though 't be a sportful combat,
Yet in the trial much opinion dwells; 336

For here the Trojans taste our dear'st repute
With their fin'st palate: and trust to me, Ulysses,

Our imputation shall be oddly pois'd
In this wild action; for the success, 340

Although particular, shall give a scantling
Of good or bad unto the general;

And in such indexes, although small pricks
To their subsequent volumes, there is seen 344

The baby figure of the giant mass
Of things to come at large. It is suppos'd

He that meets Hector issues from our choice;
And choice, being mutual act of all our souls, 348

Makes merit her election, and doth boil,
As 'twere from forth us all, a man distill'd

Out of our virtues; who miscarrying,
What heart receives from hence the conquering

part, 352
To steel a strong opinion to themselves?
Which entertain'd, limbs are his instruments,

In no less working than are swords and bows
Directive by the limbs. 356

Ulyss. Give pardon to my speech:
Therefore 'tis meet Achilles meet not Hector.

Let us like merchants show our foulest wares,
And think perchance they'll sell; if not, 360

The lustre of the better yet to show
Shall show the better. Do not consent

That ever Hector and Achilles meet;
For both our honour and our shame in this 364

Are dogg'd with two strange followers.
Nest. I see them not with my old eyes: what

are they?

Ulyss. What glory our Achilles shares from
Hector,

Were he not proud, we all should share with
him: 368

But he already is too insolent;
And we were better parch in Afric sun

Than in the pride and salt scorn of his eyes,
Should he 'scape Hector fair: if he were foil'd, 372

Why then we did our main opinion crush
In taint of our best man. No; make a lottery;

And by device let blockish Ajax draw
The sort to fight with Hector: among our-

selves 376
Give him allowance as the worthier man,
For that will physic the great Myrmidon

Who broils in loud applause; and make him
fall

His crest that prouder than blue Iris bends. 380
If the dull brainless Ajax come safe off,

We'll dress him up in voices: if he fail,
Yet go we under our opinion still

That we have better men. But, hit or miss, 384
Our project's life this shape of sense assumes:

Ajax employ'd plucks down Achilles' plumes.
Nest. Ulysses,

Now I begin to relish thy advice; 388
And I will give a taste of it forthwith

To Agamemnon: go we to him straight.
Two curs shall tame each other: pride alone

Must tarre the mastiffs on, as 'twere their
bone. [Exeunt.]

ACT II

SCENE I.—A Part of the Grecian Camp.

Enter AJAX and THERSITES.

Ajax. Thersites!

Ther. Agamemnon, how if he had boils? full,
all over, generally?

Ajax. Thersites!

Ther. And those boils did run? Say so, did
not the general run then? were not that a

botchy core?

Ajax. Dog!

Ther. Then would come some matter from
him: I see none now.

Ajax. Thou bitch-wolf's son, canst thou not
hear?

Feel, then. [Strikes him.]
Ther. The plague of Greece upon thee, thou
mongrel beef-witted lord!

Ajax. Speak then, thou vinewedst leaven,
speak: I will beat thee into handsomeness. 16

Ther. I shall sooner rail thee into wit and
holiness: but I think thy horse will sooner con

an oration than thou learn a prayer without
book. Thou canst strike, canst thou? a red

murrain o' thy jade's tricks! 21
Ajax. Toadstool, learn me the proclamation.

Ther. Dost thou think I have no sense, thou
strike me thus? 24

Ajax. The proclamation!

Ther. Thou art proclaimed a fool, I think.

Ajax. Do not, porpentine, do not: my fingers
itch. 28

Ther. I would thou didst itch from head to
foot, and I had the scratching of thee; I would

make thee the loathsome scab of Greece.
When thou art forth in the incursions, thou

strikest as slow as another. 33
Ajax. I say, the proclamation!

Ther. Thou grumblest and raillest every hour
on Achilles, and thou art as full of envy at his

greatness as Cerberus is at Proserpina's beauty,
ay that thou barkest at him.

Ajax. Mistress Thersites!

Ther. Thou shouldst strike him. 40
Ajax. Cobloaf!

Ther. He would pun thee into shivers with
his fist, as a sailor breaks a biscuit.

Ajax. You whoreson cur. [Beating him.]
Ther. Do, do. 45

Ajax. Thou stool for a witch!

Ther. Ay, do, do; thou sodden-witted lord!
thou hast no more brain than I have in mine

elbows; an assinego may tutor thee: thou scurvy-
valiant ass! thou art here but to thrash Trojans;

and thou art bought and sold among those of
any wit, like a barbarian slave. If thou use to

beat me, I will begin at thy heel, and tell what
thou art by inches, thou thing of no bowels, thou!

Ajax. You dog!

Ther. You scurvy lord! 56
Ajax. You cur! [Beating him.]

Ther. Mars his idiot! do, rudeness; do,
camel; do, do.

Enter ACHILLES and PATROCLUS.

Achil. Why, how now, Ajax! wherefore do
you this? 60

How now, Thersites! what's the matter, man?
Ther. You see him there, do you?

Achil. Ay; what's the matter?
Ther. Nay, look upon him. 64

Achil. So I do: what's the matter?
Ther. Nay, but regard him well.

Achil. 'Well!' why, so I do.
Ther. But yet you look not well upon him;

for, whosoever you take him to be, he is Ajax. 69
Achil. I know that, fool.

Ther. Ay, but that fool knows not himself.
Ajax. Therefore I beat thee. 72

Ther. Lo, lo, lo, lo, what modicums of wit he
utters! his evasions have ears thus long. I have

bobbed his brain more than he has beat my
bones: I will buy nine sparrows for a penny, and

his *pia mater* is not worth the ninth part of a
sparrow. This lord, Achilles, Ajax, who wears

his wit in his belly, and his guts in his head, I'll
tell you what I say of him. 80

Achil. What?
Ther. I say, this Ajax,—

[*Ajax offers to strike him.*]
Achil. Nay, good Ajax.

Ther. Has not so much wit— 84
Achil. Nay, I must hold you.

Ther. As will stop the eye of Helen's needle,
for whom he comes to fight.

Achil. Peace, fool! 88
Ther. I would have peace and quietness, but

the fool will not: he there; that he; look you
there.

Ajax. O thou damned cur! I shall— 92
Achil. Will you set your wit to a fool's?

Ther. No, I warrant you; for a fool's will
shame it.

Patr. Good words, Thersites. 96
Achil. What's the quarrel?

Ajax. I bade the vile owl go learn me the
tenour of the proclamation, and he rails upon

me. 100
Ther. I serve thee not.

Ajax. Well, go to, go to.
Ther. I serve here voluntary.

Achil. Your last service was sufferance, 'twas
not voluntary; no man is beaten voluntary:

Ajax was here the voluntary, and you as under
an impress. 107

Ther. Even so; a great deal of your wit too
lies in your sinews, or else there be liars. Hector

shall have a great catch if he knock out either of
your brains: a' were as good crack a fusty nut

with no kernel. 112
Achil. What, with me too, Thersites?

Ther. There's Ulysses and old Nestor, whose
wit was mouldy ere your grandsires had nails

on their toes, yoke you like draught-oxen, and
make you plough up the wars. 117

Achil. What, what?
Ther. Yes, good sooth: to, Achilles! to,

Ajax! to! 120
Ajax. I shall cut out your tongue.

Ther. 'Tis no matter; I shall speak as much as thou afterwards.

Patr. No more words, Thersites; peace! 124

Ther. I will hold my peace when Achilles' brach bids me, shall I?

Achil. There's for you, Patroclus.

Ther. I will see you hanged, like clotpoles, ere I come any more to your tents: I will keep where there is wit stirring and leave the faction of fools. [Exit.]

Patr. A good riddance. 132

Achil. Marry, this, sir, is proclaim'd through all our host:

That Hector, by the fifth hour of the sun, Will, with a trumpet, 'twixt our tents and Troy To-morrow morning call some knight to arms That hath a stomach; and such a one that dare 137 Maintain—I know not what: 'tis trash. Farewell.

Ajax. Farewell. Who shall answer him?

Achil. I know not: it is put to lottery; otherwise, 140

He knew his man.

Ajax. O, meaning you. I will go learn more of it. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—Troy. A Room in PRIAM'S Palace.

Enter PRIAM, HECTOR, TROILUS, PARIS, and HELENUS.

Pri. After so many hours, lives, speeches spent,

Thus once again says Nestor from the Greeks: 'Deliver Helen, and all damage else, As honour, loss of time, travail, expense, 4 Wounds, friends, and what else dear that is consum'd

In hot digestion of this cormorant war, Shall be struck off.' Hector, what say you to 't?

Hect. Though no man lesser fears the Greeks than I, 8

As far as toucheth my particular,

Yet, dread Priam,

There is no lady of more softer bowels, More spongy to suck in the sense of fear, 12 More ready to cry out 'Who knows what follows?'

Than Hector is. The wound of peace is surety, Surety secure; but modest doubt is call'd The beacon of the wise, the tent that searches 16 To the bottom of the worst. Let Helen go: Since the first sword was drawn about this question,

Every tithesoul, 'mongst many thousand dismes, Hath been as dear as Helen; I mean, of ours: If we have lost so many tenths of ours, 21 To guard a thing not ours nor worth to us, Had it our name, the value of one ten, What merit's in that reason which denies 24 The yielding of her up?

Tro. Fie, fie! my brother, Weigh you the worth and honour of a king So great as our dread father in a scale Of common ounces? will you with counters sum The past proportion of his infinite? 29 And buckle in a waist most fathomless

With spans and inches so diminutive

As fears and reasons? fie, for godly shame! 32

Hel. No marvel, though you bite so sharp at reasons,

You are so empty of them. Should not our father

Bear the great sway of his affairs with reasons, Because your speech hath none that tells him so? 36

Tro. You are for dreams and slumbers, brother priest;

You fur your gloves with reason. Here are your reasons:

You know an enemy intends you harm; You know a sword employ'd is perilous, 40

And reason flies the object of all harm:

Who marvels then, when Helenus beholds A Grecian and his sword, if he do set

The very wings of reason to his heels, 44

And fly like chidden Mercury from Jove, Or like a star disorb'd? Nay, if we talk of reason,

Let's shut our gates and sleep: manhood and honour

Should have hare-hearts, would they but fat their thoughts 48

With this cramm'd reason: reason and respect Make livers pale, and lustihood deject.

Hect. Brother, she is not worth what she doth cost

The holding.

Tro. What is aught but as 'tis valu'd? *Hect.* But value dwells not in particular will;

It holds his estimate and dignity As well wherein 'tis precious of itself

As in the prize. 'Tis mad idolatry 56

To make the service greater than the god; And the will dotes that is inclinable

To what infectiously itself affects, Without some image of the affected merit. 60

Tro. I take to-day a wife, and my election Is led on in the conduct of my will;

My will enkindled by mine eyes and ears, Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores 64

Of will and judgment. How may I avoid, Although my will distaste what it elected,

The wife I chose? there can be no evasion To blench from this and to stand firm by honour. 68

We turn not back the silks upon the merchant When we have soil'd them, nor the remainder viands

We do not throw in unrespective sink Because we now are full. It was thought meet

Paris should do some vengeance on the Greeks: Your breath of full consent bellied his sails;

The seas and winds—old wranglers—took a truce

And did him service: he touch'd the ports desir'd, 76

And for an old aunt whom the Greeks held captive

He brought a Grecian queen, whose youth and freshness

Wrinkles Apollo's, and makes stale the morning. 80

Why keep we her? the Grecians keep our aunt:

Is she worth keeping? why, she is a pearl, 81 Whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships,

And turn'd crown'd kings to merchants. If you'll avouch 'twas wisdom Paris went,— 84

As you must needs, for you all cried 'Go, go,'— If you'll confess he brought home noble prize,—

As you must needs, for you all clapp'd your hands,

And cry'd 'Inestimable!'—why do you now 88

The issue of your proper wisdoms rate, And do a deed that Fortune never did,

Beggar the estimation which you priz'd Richer than sea and land? O! theft most base,

That we have stol'n what we do fear to keep! 93 But thieves unworthy of a thing so stol'n,

That in their country did them that disgrace We fear to warrant in our native place. 96

Cas. [Within.] Cry, Trojans, cry! *Pri.* What noise? what shriek?

Tro. 'Tis our mad sister, I do know her voice. *Cas.* [Within.] Cry, Trojans!

Hect. It is Cassandra. 100

Enter CASSANDRA, raving.

Cas. Cry, Trojans, cry! lend me ten thousand eyes,

And I will fill them with prophetic tears. *Hect.* Peace, sister, peace!

Cas. Virgins and boys, mid-age and wrinkled eld, 104

Soft infancy, that nothing canst but cry, Add to my clamours! let us pay betimes

A moiety of that mass of moan to come. Cry, Trojans, cry! practise your eyes with tears!

Troy must not be, nor goodly Ilium stand; 109 Our firebrand brother, Paris, burns us all.

Cry, Trojans, cry! a Helen and a woe! Cry, cry! Troy burns, or else let Helen go. [Exit.]

Hect. Now, youthful Troilus, do not these high strains 113

Of divination in our sister work Some touches of remorse? or is your blood

So madly hot that no discourse of reason, 116 Nor fear of bad success in a bad cause,

Can qualify the same? *Tro.* Why, brother Hector,

We may not think the justness of each act Such and no other than event doth form it, 120

Nor once deject the courage of our minds, Because Cassandra's mad: her brain-sick raptures

Cannot distaste the goodness of a quarrel Which hath our several honours all engag'd 124

To make it gracious. For my private part, I am no more touch'd than all Priam's sons;

And Jove forbid there should be done amongst us

Such things as might offend the weakest spleen To fight for and maintain. 129

Par. Else might the world convince of levity As well my undertakings as your counsels;

But I attest the gods, your full consent 132 Gave wings to my propension and cut off

All fears attending on so dire a project: For what, alas! can these my single arms?

What propugnation is in one man's valour, 136 To stand the push and enmity of those

This quarrel would excite? Yet, I protest, Were I alone to pass the difficulties,

And had as ample power as I have will, 140 Paris should ne'er retract what he hath done,

Nor faint in the pursuit. *Pri.* Paris, you speak

Like one besotted on your sweet delights: You have the honey still, but these the gall; 144

So to be valiant is no praise at all. *Par.* Sir, I propose not merely to myself

The pleasure such a beauty brings with it; But I would have the soil of her fair rape 148

Wip'd off, in honourable keeping her. What treason were it to the ransack'd queen,

Disgrace to your great worths, and shame to me, Now to deliver her possession up, 152

On terms of base compulsion! Can it be That so degenerate a strain as this

Should once set footing in your generous bosoms?

There's not the meanest spirit on our party 156 Without a heart to dare or sword to draw

When Helen is defended, nor none so noble Whose life were ill bestow'd or death unfam'd

Where Helen is the subject: then, I say, 160 Well may we fight for her, whom, we know well,

The world's large spaces cannot parallel. *Hect.* Paris and Troilus, you have both said

well;

And on the cause and question now in hand 164 Have glaz'd, but superficially; not much

Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought Unfit to hear moral philosophy.

The reasons you allege do more conduce 168 To the hot passion of distemper'd blood Than to make up a free determination

'Twixt right and wrong; for pleasure and revenge

Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice Of any true decision. Nature craves 173

All dues be render'd to their owners: now, What nearer debt in all humanity

Than wife is to the husband? if this law 176 Of nature be corrupted through affection,

And that great minds, of partial indulgence To their benumbed wills, resist the same;

There is a law in each well-order'd nation 180 To curb those raging appetites that are

Most disobedient and refractory. If Helen then be wife to Sparta's king,

As it is known she is, these moral laws 184 Of nature, and of nations, speak aloud

To have her back return'd: thus to persist In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,

But makes it much more heavy. Hector's opinion 188

Is this, in way of truth; yet, ne'ertheless, My spritely brethren, I propend to you

In resolution to keep Helen still; For 'tis a cause that hath no mean dependance

Upon our joint and several dignities. 193 *Tro.* Why, there you touch'd the life of our

design: Were it not glory that we more affected

Than the performance of our heaving spleens,
I would not wish a drop of Trojan blood 197
Spent more in her defence. But, worthy Hector,
She is a theme of honour and renown,
A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds, 200
Whose present courage may beat down our
foes,
And fame in time to come canonize us;
For, I presume, brave Hector would not lose
So rich advantage of a promis'd glory 204
As smiles upon the forehead of this action
For the wide world's revenue.

Hect. I am yours,
You valiant offspring of great Priamus.
I have a roisting challenge sent amongst 208
The dull and factious nobles of the Greeks
Will strike amazement to their drowsy spirits.
I was advertis'd their great general slept
Whilst emulation in the army crept: 212
This, I presume, will wake him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—The Grecian Camp. Before
ACHILLES' Tent.

Enter THERSITES.

Ther. How now, Thersites! what, lost in the
labyrinth of thy fury! Shall the elephant Ajax
carry it thus? he beats me, and I rail at him:
O worthy satisfaction! Would it were otherwise;
that I could beat him, whilst he railed at me.
'Sfoot, I'll learn to conjure and raise devils, but
I'll see some issue of my spiteful execrations.
Then there's Achilles, a rare enginer. If Troy be
not taken till these two undermine it, the walls
will stand till they fall of themselves. O! thou
great thunder-darter of Olympus, forget that
thou art Jove the king of gods, and, Mercury,
lose all the serpentine craft of thy caduceus, if
ye take not that little little less than little wit
from them that they have; which short-armed
ignorance itself knows is so abundant scarce it
will not in circumvention deliver a fly from a
spider, without drawing their massy irons and
cutting the web. After this, the vengeance on
the whole camp! or, rather, the Neapolitan
bone-ache! for that, methinks, is the curse de-
pendant on those that war for a placket. I have
said my prayers, and devil Envy say Amen.
What, ho! my Lord Achilles! 24

Enter PATROCLUS.

Patr. Who's there? Thersites! Good Ther-
sites, come in and rail.

Ther. If I could have remembered a gilt
counterfeit, thou wouldst not have slipped out
of my contemplation: but it is no matter; thy-
self upon thyself! The common curse of man-
kind, folly and ignorance, be thine in great
revenue! heaven bless thee from a tutor, and
discipline come not near thee! Let thy blood be
thy direction till thy death! then, if she that
lays thee out says thou art a fair corpse, I'll be
sworn and sworn upon't she never shrouded
any but lazars. Amen. Where's Achilles? 37

Patr. What! art thou devout? wast thou in
prayer?

Ther. Ay; the heavens hear me! 40

Enter ACHILLES.

Achil. Who's there?

Patr. Thersites, my lord.

Achil. Where, where? Art thou come? Why,
my cheese, my digestion, why hast thou not
served thyself in to my table so many meals?
Come, what's Agamemnon?

Ther. Thy commander, Achilles. Then tell
me, Patroclus, what's Achilles? 48

Patr. Thy lord, Thersites. Then tell me, I
pray thee, what's thyself?

Ther. Thy knower, Patroclus. Then tell me,
Patroclus, what art thou? 52

Patr. Thou mayst tell that knowest.

Achil. O! tell, tell.

Ther. I'll decline the whole question. Aga-
memnon commands Achilles; Achilles is my
lord; I am Patroclus' knower; and Patroclus is
a fool.

Patr. You rascal!

Ther. Peace, fool! I have not done. 60

Achil. He is a privileged man. Proceed,
Thersites.

Ther. Agamemnon is a fool; Achilles is a
fool; Thersites is a fool; and, as aforesaid,
Patroclus is a fool. 65

Achil. Derive this; come.

Ther. Agamemnon is a fool to offer to com-
mand Achilles; Achilles is a fool to be com-
manded of Agamemnon; Thersites is a fool to
serve such a fool; and Patroclus is a fool
positive.

Patr. Why am I a fool? 72

Ther. Make that demand to the Creator. It
suffices me thou art. Look you, who comes
here?

Achil. Patroclus, I'll speak with nobody.
Come in with me, Thersites. [Exit.]

Ther. Here is such patchery, such juggling,
and such knavery! all the argument is a
cuckold and a whore; a good quarrel to draw
emulous factions and bleed to death upon. Now,
the dry serpigio on the subject! and war and
lechery confound all! [Exit.]

Enter AGAMEMNON, ULYSSES, NESTOR, DIO-
MEDES, and AJAX.

Agam. Where is Achilles? 84

Patr. Within his tent; but ill-dispos'd, my
lord.

Agam. Let it be known to him that we are
here.

Ther. He shent our messengers; and we lay by
Our appertainments, visiting of him: 88

Let him be told so; lest perchance he think
We dare not move the question of our place,
Or know not what we are.

Patr. I shall say so to him.

Ulyss. We saw him at the opening of his
tent: 92

He is not sick.

Ajax. Yes, lion-sick, sick of proud heart: you
may call it melancholy if you will favour the

man; but, by my head, 'tis pride: but why,
why? let him show us a cause. A word, my
lord. [Takes AGAMEMNON aside.]

Nest. What moves Ajax thus to bay at him?
Ulyss. Achilles hath inveigled his fool from
him. 101

Nest. Who, Thersites?

Ulyss. He.

Nest. Then will Ajax lack matter, if he have
lost his argument. 105

Ulyss. No; you see, he is his argument that
has his argument, Achilles.

Nest. All the better; their faction is more
our wish than their faction: but it was a strong
composure a fool could disunite.

Ulyss. The amity that wisdom knits not folly
may easily untie. Here comes Patroclus. 112

Re-enter PATROCLUS.

Nest. No Achilles with him.

Ulyss. The elephant hath joints, but none for
courtesy: his legs are legs for necessity, not for
flexure. 116

Patr. Achilles bids me say, he is much sorry
If any thing more than your sport and pleasure
Did move your greatness and this noble state
To call upon him; he hopes it is no other 120
But, for your health and your digestion sake,
An after-dinner's breath.

Agam. Hear you, Patroclus:
We are too well acquainted with these answers:
But his evasion, wing'd thus swift with scorn,
Cannot outfly our apprehensions. 125

Much attribute he hath, and much the reason
Why we ascribe it to him; yet all his virtues,
Not virtuously on his own part beheld, 128

Do in our eyes begin to lose their gloss,
Yea, like fair fruit in an unwholesome dish,
Are like to rot untasted. Go and tell him,
We come to speak with him; and you shall not
sin 132

If you do say we think him over-proud
And under-honest, in self-assumption greater
Than in the note of judgment; and worthier
than himself

Here tend the savage strangeness he puts
on, 136

Disguise the holy strength of their command,
And underwrite in an observing kind
His humorous predominance; yea, watch
His pettish luns, his ebbs, his flows, as if 140

The passage and whole carriage of this action
Rode on his tide. Go tell him this, and add,
That if he overhold his price so much,
We'll none of him; but let him, like an engine
Not portable, lie under this report: 145

'Bring action hither, this cannot go to war.'
A stirring dwarf we do allowance give
Before a sleeping giant: tell him so. 148

Patr. I shall; and bring his answer pre-
sently. [Exit.]

Agam. In second voice we'll not be satisfied;
We come to speak with him. Ulysses, enter
you. [Exit ULYSSES.]

Ajax. What is he more than another? 152

Agam. No more than what he thinks he is.

Ajax. Is he so much? Do you not think he
thinks himself a better man than I am?

Agam. No question. 156

Ajax. Will you subscribe his thought, and
say he is?

Agam. No, noble Ajax; you are as strong,
as valiant, as wise, no less noble, much more
gentle, and altogether more tractable. 161

Ajax. Why should a man be proud? How
doth pride grow? I know not what pride is.

Agam. Your mind is the clearer, Ajax, and
your virtues the fairer. He that is proud eats
up himself: pride is his own glass, his own
trumpet, his own chronicle; and whatever
praises itself but in the deed, devours the deed
in the praise. 169

Ajax. I do hate a proud man, as I hate the
engendering of toads.

Nest. [Aside.] Yet he loves himself: is't not
strange? 173

Re-enter ULYSSES.

Ulyss. Achilles will not to the field to-
morrow.

Agam. What's his excuse?

Ulyss. He doth rely on none,
But carries on the stream of his dispose 176
Without observance or respect of any,
In will peculiar and in self-admission.

Agam. Why will he not upon our fair re-
quest

Untent his person and share the air with us?

Ulyss. Things small as nothing, for request's
sake only, 181

He makes important: possess'd he is with great-
ness,

And speaks not to himself but with a pride
That quarrels at self-breath: imagin'd worth
Holds in his blood such swoln and hot dis-
course, 185

That 'twixt his mental and his active parts
Kingdom'd Achilles in commotion rages
And batters down himself: what should I say?
He is so plaguy proud, that the death-tokens
of it 189

Cry 'No recovery.'

Agam. Let Ajax go to him.
Dear lord, go you and meet him in his tent:
'Tis said he holds you well, and will be led 192
At your request a little from himself.

Ulyss. O Agamemnon! let it not be so.
We'll consecrate the steps that Ajax makes
When they go from Achilles: shall the proud
lord 196

That bastes his arrogance with his own seam,
And never suffers matter of the world
Enter his thoughts, save such as do revolve
And ruminate himself, shall he be worshipp'd
Of that we hold an idol more than he? 201

No, this thrice-worthy and right valiant lord
Must not so stale his palm, nobly acquir'd;
Nor, by my will, assubjugate his merit, 204
As amply titled as Achilles is,
By going to Achilles:

That were to enlard his fat-already pride,
And add more coals to Cancer when he burns

With entertaining great Hyperion. 209
This lord go to him! Jupiter forbid,
And say in thunder, 'Achilles go to him.'
Nest. [Aside.] O! this is well; he rubs the
vein of him. 213
Dio. [Aside.] And how his silence drinks up
this applause!
Ajax. If I go to him, with my armed fist 216
I'll pash him o'er the face.
Agam. O, no! you shall not go.
Ajax. An a' be proud with me, I'll pheeze
his pride.
Let me go to him. 220
Ulyss. Not for the worth that hangs upon
our quarrel.
Ajax. A paltry, insolent fellow!
Nest. [Aside.] How he describes himself!
Ajax. Can he not be sociable? 224
Ulyss. [Aside.] The raven chides blackness.
Ajax. I'll let his humours blood.
Agam. [Aside.] He will be the physician
that should be the patient. 228
Ajax. An all men were o' my mind,—
Ulyss. [Aside.] Wit would be out of fashion.
Ajax. A' should not bear it so, a' should eat
swords first: shall pride carry it? 232
Nest. [Aside.] An't would, you'd carry half.
Ulyss. [Aside.] A' would have ten shares.
Ajax. I will knead him; I will make him
supple.
Nest. [Aside.] He's not yet through warm:
force him with praises: pour in, pour in; his
ambition is dry. 238
Ulyss. [To AGAMEMNON.] My lord, you feed
too much on this dislike.
Nest. Our noble general, do not do so. 240
Dio. You must prepare to fight without
Achilles.
Ulyss. Why, 'tis this naming of him does
him harm.
Here is a man—but 'tis before his face;
I will be silent.
Nest. Wherefore should you so? 244
He is not emulous, as Achilles is.
Ulyss. Know the whole world, he is as
valiant.
Ajax. A whoreson dog, that shall palter thus
with us! Would he were a Trojan! 248
Nest. What a vice were it in Ajax now,—
Ulyss. If he were proud,—
Dio. Or covetous of praise,—
Ulyss. Ay, or surly borne. 252
Dio. Or strange, or self-affected!
Ulyss. Thank the heavens, lord, thou art of
sweet composure;
Praise him that got thee, her that gave thee
suck:
Fam'd be thy tutor, and thy parts of nature 256
Thrice-fam'd, beyond all erudition:
But he that disciplin'd thy arms to fight,
Let Mars divide eternity in twain,
And give him half: and, for thy vigour, 260
Bull-bearing Milo his addition yield
To sinewy Ajax. I will not praise thy wisdom,
Which, like a bourn, a pale, a shore, confines
Thy spacious and dilated parts: here's Nestor

Instructed by the antiquary times, 265
He must, he is, he cannot but be wise;
But pardon, father Nestor, were your days
As green as Ajax, and your brain so temper'd,
You should not have the eminence of him, 269
But be as Ajax.
Ajax. Shall I call you father?
Ulyss. Ay, my good son.
Dio. Be rul'd by him, Lord Ajax.
Ulyss. There is no tarrying here; the hart
Achilles 272
Keeps thicket. Please it our great general
To call together all his state of war;
Fresh kings are come to Troy: to-morrow,
We must with all our main of power stand fast:
And here's a lord,—come knights from east to
west, 277
And cull their flower, Ajax shall cope the best.
Agam. Go we to council. Let Achilles sleep:
Light boats sail swift, though greater hulks
draw deep. [Exeunt.]

ACT III

SCENE I.—Troy. PRIAM'S Palace.

Enter PANDARUS and a Servant.

Pan. Friend! you! pray you, a word: do not
you follow the young Lord Paris?
Serv. Ay, sir, when he goes before me.
Pan. You depend upon him, I mean? 4
Serv. Sir, I do depend upon the Lord.
Pan. You depend upon a noble gentleman;
I must needs praise him.
Serv. The Lord be praised! 8
Pan. You know me, do you not?
Serv. Faith, sir, superficially.
Pan. Friend, know me better. I am the
Lord Pandarus. 12
Serv. I hope I shall know your honour
better.
Pan. I do desire it.
Serv. You are in the state of grace. 16
Pan. Grace! not so, friend; honour and
lordship are my titles. [Music within.] What
music is this?
Serv. I do but partly know, sir: it is music
in parts. 21
Pan. Know you the musicians?
Se v. Wholly, sir.
Pan. Who play they to? 24
Serv. To the hearers, sir.
Pan. At whose pleasure, friend?
Serv. At mine, sir, and theirs that love music.
Pan. Command, I mean, friend. 28
Serv. Who shall I command, sir?
Pan. Friend, we understand not one another:
I am too courtly, and thou art too cunning. At
whose request do these men play? 32
Serv. That's to't, indeed, sir. Marry, sir, at
the request of Paris my lord, who is there in
person; with him the mortal Venus, the heart-
blood of beauty, love's invisible soul. 36
Pan. Who, my cousin Cressida?
Serv. No, sir, Helen: could you not find out
that by her attributes?
Pan. It should seem, fellow, that thou hast

not seen the Lady Cressida. I come to speak
with Paris from the Prince Troilus: I will make
a complimentary assault upon him, for my busi-
ness seethes. 44
Serv. Sudden business: there's a stewed
phrase, indeed.

Enter PARIS and HELEN, attended.

Pan. Fair be to you, my lord, and to all this
fair company! fair desires, in all fair measures,
fairly guide them! especially to you, fair queen!
fair thoughts be your fair pillow! 50
Helen. Dear lord, you are full of fair words.
Pan. You speak your fair pleasure, sweet
queen. Fair prince, here is good broken music.
Par. You have broke it, cousin; and, by my
life, you shall make it whole again: you shall
piece it out with a piece of your performance.
Nell, he is full of harmony. 57
Pan. Truly, lady, no.
Helen. O, sir!
Pan. Rude, in sooth; in good sooth, very
rude. 61
Par. Well said, my lord! Well, you say so
in fits.
Pan. I have business to my lord, dear queen.
My lord, will you vouchsafe me a word? 65
Helen. Nay, this shall not hedge us out:
we'll hear you sing, certainly.
Pan. Well, sweet queen, you are pleasant
with me. But, marry, thus, my lord. My dear
lord and most esteemed friend, your brother
Troilus—
Helen. My Lord Pandarus; honey-sweet
lord,— 73
Pan. Go to, sweet queen, go to: commends
himself most affectionately to you.
Helen. You shall not bob us out of our
melody: if you do, our melancholy upon your
head!
Pan. Sweet queen, sweet queen! that's a
sweet queen, i' faith. 80
Helen. And to make a sweet lady sad is a
sour offence.
Pan. Nay, that shall not serve your turn;
that shall it not, in truth, la! Nay, I care not
for such words: no, no. And, my lord, he
desires you, that if the king call for him at
supper, you will make his excuse. 88
Helen. My Lord Pandarus,—
Pan. What says my sweet queen, my very
sweet queen?
Par. What exploit's in hand? where sups he
to-night? 92
Helen. Nay, but my lord,—
Pan. What says my sweet queen! My
cousin will fall out with you. You must know
where he sups. 96
Par. I'll lay my life, with my disposer
Cressida.
Pan. No, no, no such matter; you are wide.
Come, your disposer is sick. 100
Par. Well, I'll make excuse.
Pan. Ay, good my lord. Why should you
say Cressida? no, your poor disposer's sick.
Par. I spy. 104

Pan. You spy! what do you spy? Come,
give me an instrument. Now, sweet queen.
Helen. Why, this is kindly done.
Pan. My niece is horribly in love with a
thing you have, sweet queen. 109
Helen. She shall have it, my lord, if it be not
my Lord Paris.
Pan. He! no, she'll none of him; they two
are twain. 113
Helen. Falling in, after falling out, may
make them three.
Pan. Come, come, I'll hear no more of this.
I'll sing you a song now. 117
Helen. Ay, ay, prithee now. By my troth,
sweet lord, thou hast a fine forehead.
Pan. Ay, you may, you may. 120
Helen. Let thy song be love: this love will
undo us all. O Cupid, Cupid, Cupid!
Pan. Love! ay, that it shall, i' faith.
Par. Ay, good now, love, love, nothing but
love. 125
Pan. In good troth, it begins so:
[Sings.]
Love, love, nothing but love, still more!
For, oh! love's bow
Shoots buck and doe: 128
The shaft confounds,
Not that it wounds,
But tickles still the sore. 132
These lovers cry O! O! they die!
Yet that which seems the wound to kill,
Doth turn O! O! to ha! ha! he!
So dying love lives still: 136
O! O! a while, but ha! ha! ha!
O! O! groans out for ha! ha! ha!
Heigh-ho!
Helen. In love, i' faith, to the very tip of the
nose. 141
Par. He eats nothing but doves, love; and
that breeds hot blood, and hot blood begets hot
thoughts, and hot thoughts beget hot deeds, and
hot deeds is love. 145
Pan. Is this the generation of love? hot
blood? hot thoughts, and hot deeds? Why,
they are vipers: is love a generation of vipers?
Sweet lord, who's a-field to-day? 149
Par. Hector, Deiphobus, Helenus, Antenor,
and all the gallantry of Troy: I would fain have
armed to-day, but my Nell would not have it so.
How chance my brother Troilus went not? 153
Helen. He hangs the lip at something: you
know all, Lord Pandarus.
Pan. Not I, honey-sweet queen. I long to
hear how they sped to-day. You'll remember
your brother's excuse?
Par. To a hair.
Pan. Farewell, sweet queen. 160
Helen. Commend me to your niece.
Pan. I will, sweet queen.
[Exit. A retreat sounded.]
Par. They're come from field: let us to
Priam's hall
To greet the warriors. Sweet Helen, I must
woo you 164
To help unarmour Hector: his stubborn buckles,
With these your white enchanting fingers
touch'd,

Shall more obey than to the edge of steel
Or force of Greekish sinews; you shall do
more 168
Than all the island kings,—disarm great Hector.
Helen. 'Twill make us proud to be his servant, Paris;
Yea, what he shall receive of us in duty
Gives us more palm in beauty than we have, 172
Yea, overshines ourself.
Par. Sweet, above thought I love thee.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*The Same.* PANDARUS' Orchard.*Enter* PANDARUS and TROILUS' Boy, meeting.

Pan. How now! where's thy master? at my cousin Cressida's?
Boy. No, sir; he stays for you to conduct him thither. 4

Enter TROILUS.

Pan. O! here he comes. How now, how now!
Tro. Sirrah, walk off. [Exit Boy.]
Pan. Have you seen my cousin?
Tro. No, Pandarus: I stalk about her door, Like a strange soul upon the Stygian banks 9 Staying for waftage. O! be thou my Charon, And give me swift transportance to those fields Where I may wallow in the lily-beds 12 Propos'd for the deserver! O gentle Pandarus! From Cupid's shoulder pluck his painted wings, And fly with me to Cressid.
Pan. Walk here i' the orchard. I'll bring her straight. [Exit.]
Tro. I am giddy, expectation whirls me round. The imaginary relish is so sweet That it enchants my sense. What will it be When that the watery palate tastes indeed 20 Love's thrice-repured nectar? death, I fear me, Swounding destruction, or some joy too fine, Too subtle-potent, tun'd too sharp in sweetness For the capacity of my ruder powers: 24 I fear it much; and I do fear besides That I shall lose distinction in my joys; As doth a battle, when they charge on heaps The enemy flying. 28

Re-enter PANDARUS.

Pan. She's making her ready: she'll come straight: you must be witty now. She does so blush, and fetches her wind so short, as if she were frayed with a sprite: I'll fetch her. It is the prettiest villain: she fetches her breath as short as a new-ta'en sparrow. [Exit.]
Tro. Even such a passion doth embrace my bosom; My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse; 36 And all my powers do their bestowing lose, Like vassalage at unawares encountering The eye of majesty.

Re-enter PANDARUS with CRESSIDA.*Pan.* Come, come, what need you blush?

shame's a baby. Here he is now: swear the oaths now to her that you have sworn to me. What! are you gone again? you must be watched ere you be made tame, must you? Come your ways, come your ways; an you draw backward, we'll put you i' the fills. Why do you not speak to her? Come, draw this curtain, and let's see your picture. Alas the day, how loath you are to offend day-light! an 'twere dark, you'd close sooner. So, so; rub on, and kiss the mistress. How now! a kiss in fee-farm! build there, carpenter; the air is sweet. Nay, you shall fight your hearts out ere I part you. The falcon as the tercel, for all the ducks i' the river: go to, go to.

Tro. You have bereft me of all words, lady.
Pan. Words pay no debts, give her deeds; but she'll bereave you of the deeds too if she call your activity in question. What! billing again? Here's 'In witness whereof the parties interchangeably'—Come in, come in: I'll go get a fire. [Exit.]

Cres. Will you walk in, my lord?*Tro.* O Cressida! how often have I wished me thus! 64*Cres.* Wished, my lord! The gods grant,—O my lord!

Tro. What should they grant? what makes this pretty abruption? What too curious dreg espies my sweet lady in the fountain of our love?
Cres. More dregs than water, if my fears have eyes.

Tro. Fears make devils of cherubins; they never see truly. 73

Cres. Blind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds safer footing than blind reason stumbling without fear: to fear the worst oft cures the worse. 77

Tro. O! let my lady apprehend no fear: in all Cupid's pageant there is presented no monster.

Cres. Nor nothing monstrous neither? 80
Tro. Nothing but our undertakings; when we vow to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers; thinking it harder for our mistress to devise imposition enough than for us to undergo any difficulty imposed. This is the monstruosity in love, lady, that the will is infinite, and the execution confined; that the desire is boundless, and the act a slave to limit. 88

Cres. They say all lovers swear more performance than they are able, and yet reserve an ability that they never perform; vowing more than the perfection of ten and discharging less than the tenth part of one. They that have the voice of lions and the act of hares, are they not monsters? 95

Tro. Are there such? such are not we. Praise us as we are tasted, allow us as we prove; our head shall go bare, till merit crown it. No perfection in reversion shall have a praise in present: we will not name desert before his birth, and, being born, his addition shall be humble. Few words to fair faith: Troilus shall be such to Cressid, as what envy can say worst shall be a mock for his truth; and what truth can speak truest not truer than Troilus. 105

Cres. Will you walk in, my lord?*Re-enter* PANDARUS.*Pan.* What! blushing still? have you not done talking yet? 108*Cres.* Well, uncle, what folly I commit, I dedicate to you.*Pan.* I thank you for that: if my lord get a boy of you, you'll give him me. Be true to my lord; if he flinch, chide me for it. 113*Tro.* You know now your hostages; your uncle's word, and my firm faith.

Pan. Nay, I'll give my word for her too. Our kindred, though they be long ere they are wooed, they are constant being won: they are burrs, I can tell you; they'll stick where they are thrown. 120

Cres. Boldness comes to me now, and brings me heart:

Prince Troilus, I have lov'd you night and day For many weary months.

Tro. Why was my Cressid then so hard to win? 124*Cres.* Hard to seem won; but I was won, my lord,

With the first glance that ever—pardon me— If I confess much you will play the tyrant.

I love you now; but, till now, not so much 128 But I might master it: in faith, I lie;

My thoughts were like unbridled children, grown Too headstrong for their mother. See, we fools!

Why have I blabb'd? who shall be true to us 132 When we are so unsecret to ourselves?

But, though I lov'd you well, I woo'd you not; And yet, good faith, I wish'd myself a man,

Or that we women had men's privilege 136 Of speaking first. Sweet, bid me hold my tongue;

For in this rapture I shall surely speak The thing I shall repent. See, see! your silence,

Cunning in dumbness, from my weakness draws My very soul of counsel. Stop my mouth. 141

Tro. And shall, albeit sweet music issues thence.*Pan.* Pretty, i' faith.*Cres.* My lord, I do beseech you, pardon me; 'Twas not my purpose thus to beg a kiss: 145 I am ashamed: O heavens! what have I done?

For this time will I take my leave, my lord. *Tro.* Your leave, sweet Cressid? 148

Pan. Leave! an you take leave till to-morrow morning,—*Cres.* Pray you, content you.*Tro.* What offends you, lady?*Cres.* Sir, mine own company. 152*Tro.* You cannot shun yourself.*Cres.* Let me go and try:

I have a kind of self resides with you; But an unkind self, that itself will leave, 156 To be another's fool. I would be gone:

Where is my wit? I speak I know not what. *Tro.* Well know they what they speak that speak so wisely.

Cres. Perchance, my lord, I show more craft than love; 160

And fell so roundly to a large confession, To angle for your thoughts: but you are wise,

Or else you love not, for to be wise, and love,

Exceeds man's might; that dwells with gods above. 164

Tro. O! that I thought it could be in a woman—

As if it can I will presume in you— To feed for aye her lamp and flames of love;

To keep her constancy in plight and youth, 168 Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind That doth renew swifter than blood decays:

Or that persuasion could but thus convince me, That my integrity and truth to you 172

Might be affronted with the match and weight Of such a winnow'd purity in love;

How were I then uplifted! but, alas! I am as true as truth's simplicity, 176

And simpler than the infancy of truth. *Cres.* In that I'll war with you.

Tro. O virtuous fight! When right with right wars who shall be most right.

True swains in love shall in the world to come Approve their truths by Troilus: when their 181

rimes, Full of protest, of oath, and big compare,

Want smiles, truth tir'd with iteration, As true as steel, as plantage to the moon, 184

As sun to day, as turtle to her mate, As iron to adamant, as earth to the centre,

Yet, after all comparisons of truth, As truth's authentic author to be cited, 188

'As true as Troilus' shall crown up the verse And sanctify the numbers.

Cres. Prophet may you be! If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,

When time is old and hath forgot itself, 192 When waterdrops have worn the stones of Troy,

And blind oblivion swallow'd cities up, And mighty states characterless are grated

To dusty nothing, yet let memory, 196 From false to false, among false maids in love

Upbraid my falsehood! when they have said 'as false

As air, as water, wind, or sandy earth, As fox to lamb, as wolf to heifer's calf, 200

Pard to the hind, or stepdame to her son; Yea, let them say, to stick the heart of false-

hood, 'As false as Cressid.'

Pan. Go to, a bargain made; seal it, seal it: I'll be the witness. Here I hold your hand, here

my cousin's. If ever you prove false one to another, since I have taken such pains to bring you

together, let all pitiful goers-between be called to the world's end after my name; call them all

Pandars; let all constant men be Troiluses, all false women Cressids, and all brokers-between

Pandars! say, Amen. 212

Tro. Amen.*Cres.* Amen.

Pan. Amen. Whereupon I will show you a chamber and a bed; which bed, because it shall

not speak of your pretty encounters, press it to death: away!

And Cupid grant all tongue-tied maidens here Bed, chamber, Pandar to provide this gear! 220

[Exeunt.]