

Troilus and Cressida

[Shakespeare homepage](#) | [Troilus and Cressida](#) | Act 3, Scene 2
[Previous scene](#) | [Next scene](#)

SCENE II. The same. Pandarus' orchard.

Enter PANDARUS and Troilus's Boy, meeting

PANDARUS

How now! where's thy master? at my cousin
Cressida's?

Boy

No, sir; he stays for you to conduct him thither.

PANDARUS

O, here he comes.

Enter TROILUS

How now, how now!

TROILUS

Sirrah, walk off.

Exit Boy

PANDARUS

Have you seen my cousin?

TROILUS

No, Pandarus: I stalk about her door,
Like a strange soul upon the Stygian banks
Staying for waftage. O, be thou my Charon,
And give me swift transportance to those fields
Where I may wallow in the lily-beds
Proposed for the deserver! O gentle Pandarus,
From Cupid's shoulder pluck his painted wings
And fly with me to Cressid!

PANDARUS

Walk here i' the orchard, I'll bring her straight.

Exit

TROILUS

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
Love's thrice repured nectar? death, I fear me,
Swooning destruction, or some joy too fine,
Too subtle-potent, tuned too sharp in sweetness,
For the capacity of my ruder powers:
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.

Re-enter PANDARUS

PANDARUS

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

TROILUS

Even such a passion doth embrace my bosom:
My heart beats thicker than a feverous pulse;
And all my powers do their bestowing lose,
Like vassalage at unawares encountering
The eye of majesty.

Re-enter PANDARUS with CRESSIDA

PANDARUS

Come, come, what need you blush? shame's a baby.
Here she 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
daylight! 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.

TROILUS

You have bereft me of all words, lady.

PANDARUS

Words pay no debts, give her deeds: but she'll bereave you o' 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

CRESSIDA

Will you walk in, my lord?

TROILUS

O Cressida, how often have I wished me thus!

CRESSIDA

Wished, my lord! The gods grant,--O my lord!

TROILUS

What should they grant? what makes this pretty abruption? What too curious dreg espies my sweet lady in the fountain of our love?

CRESSIDA

More dregs than water, if my fears have eyes.

TROILUS

Fears make devils of cherubims; they never see truly.

CRESSIDA

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

TROILUS

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

CRESSIDA

Nor nothing monstrous neither?

TROILUS

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 monstrosity in love, lady, that the will is infinite and the execution confined, that the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit.

CRESSIDA

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?

TROILUS

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.

CRESSIDA

Will you walk in, my lord?

Re-enter PANDARUS

PANDARUS

What, blushing still? have you not done talking yet?

CRESSIDA

Well, uncle, what folly I commit, I dedicate to you.

PANDARUS

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.

TROILUS

You know now your hostages; your uncle's word and my firm faith.

PANDARUS

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 burs, I can tell you; they'll stick where they are thrown.

CRESSIDA

Boldness comes to me now, and brings me heart.
Prince Troilus, I have loved you night and day
For many weary months.

TROILUS

Why was my Cressid then so hard to win?

CRESSIDA

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 not, till now, so much
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,
When we are so unsecret to ourselves?
But, though I loved 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
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.

TROILUS

And shall, albeit sweet music issues thence.

PANDARUS

Pretty, i' faith.

CRESSIDA

My lord, I do beseech you, pardon me;
'Twas not my purpose, thus to beg a kiss:
I am ashamed. O heavens! what have I done?
For this time will I take my leave, my lord.

TROILUS

Your leave, sweet Cressid!

PANDARUS

Leave! an you take leave till to-morrow morning,--

CRESSIDA

Pray you, content you.

TROILUS

What offends you, lady?

CRESSIDA

Sir, mine own company.

TROILUS

You cannot shun Yourself.

CRESSIDA

Let me go and try:
I have a kind of self resides with you;
But an unkind self, that itself will leave,
To be another's fool. I would be gone:
Where is my wit? I know not what I speak.

TROILUS

Well know they what they speak that speak so wisely.

CRESSIDA

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

TROILUS

O that I thought it could be in a woman--
As, if it can, I will presume in you--

To feed for aye her ramp and flames of love;
To keep her constancy in plight and youth,
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
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
And simpler than the infancy of truth.

CRESSIDA

In that I'll war with you.

TROILUS

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 rhymes,
Full of protest, of oath and big compare,
Want similes, truth tired with iteration,
As true as steel, as plantage to the moon,
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,
'As true as Troilus' shall crown up the verse,
And sanctify the numbers.

CRESSIDA

Prophet may you be!
If I be false, or swerve a hair from truth,
When time is old and hath forgot itself,
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,
From false to false, among false maids in love,
Upbraid my falsehood! when they've said 'as false
As air, as water, wind, or sandy earth,
As fox to lamb, as wolf to heifer's calf,
Pard to the hind, or stepdame to her son,'
'Yea,' let them say, to stick the heart of falsehood,
'As false as Cressid.'

PANDARUS

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.

TROILUS

Amen.

CRESSIDA

Amen.

PANDARUS

Amen. Whereupon I will show you a chamber with 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!

Exeunt

[Shakespeare homepage](#) | [Troiles and Cressida](#) | Act 3, Scene 2
[Previous scene](#) | [Next scene](#)