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ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Cressida is delivered to Diomedes in exchange for Antenor, from Thomas Hanmer’s edition (1744).

2. Simon Russell Beale as Thersites in Sam Mendes’ production (RSC 1990).

3. Diomedes and Cressida, viewed by Troilus, an engraving by Henry Fuseli, 1804.


5. Cassandra, by Byam Shaw, 1902.

6. Elspeth Keith as Thersites in William Poel’s production, 1912.


13. The first ‘state’ of the quarto title page.

14. The second ‘state’ of the quarto title page.

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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 the 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 freightage; now on Dardan plains
The fresh and yet unbruised Greeks do pitch

PROLOGUE [Enter the PROLOGUE in armour]

7 Phrygia An area in Asia Minor, now Turkey, where Troy was thought to have been located.
8 immures walls.
9 ravished stolen, abducted. The word has a sexual connotation but does not necessarily imply a lack of consent on Helen’s part.
10 immures walls.
11 Tenedos An island off the coast near Troy.
12 deep-drawing barks boats (‘barks’) that because of their size and weight ‘draw’, i.e. displace, a great depth of water (OED Draw v.13). Cf. 2.3.249.
13 disgorge empty out.
14 warlike freightage i.e. the Greek troops.
15 Dardan Trojan; the word derives from ‘Dardanus’, son of Zeus and grandfather of Tros, founder of Troy, as described in The Iliad xx.200 ff. (Chapman, Iliad).
16 yet unbruised not yet wounded. This is the first of many instances in the play of words beginning with the prefix ‘un–’ (e.g. ‘unpractised’, 1.1.12; ‘ungracious’, 1.1.83; ‘ungained’, 1.2.249);
Troilus and Cressida

Their brave pavilions. Priam’s six-gated city,
Dardan and Timbria, Helias, Chetas, Troien,
And Antenorides with massy staples
And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts
Spar 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 conditions as our argument,
To tell you, fair beholders, that our play
Leaps o’er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,
Beginning in the middle, starting thence away,
To what may be digested in a play.
Like, or find fault, do as your pleasures are,
Now good or bad, ’tis but the chance of war.

Exit

17 Antenorides Theobald; Antenorides Pope Sperre; conj. Theobald; Stirre Walker subst.; not unbodied, 1.3.16, etc.; many of these are Shakespearean coinages.
15 brave splendid. The word, together with the chivalric associations of ‘pavilions’ (large tents), creates a sense of grandeur offset by the venality of the Greek heroes when they appear.
16–17 Dardan Antenorides The names of the six gates of Troy (taken from Caxton).
17–18 massy...bolts huge metal braces into which fit correspondingly huge bolts.
19 Spar up Enclose and secure (OED v1). Theobald’s suggestion for it’s ‘Stirre’ puts the emphasis where the rest of the sentence would seem to require – on the protective strength of the city’s gates. Compare ‘There sparred up in gates,/The valiant Thaebane...a following fight awaits’ (William Warner, Albion’s England, 2.12.50 (1589), cited in OED). Technically, the verb should be singular, since the subject is ‘city’ (15), but the naming of the six gates makes the grammatical slip-page understandable; some editors, notably Palmer, have regarded ‘sons of Troy’ as the subject of the sentence and envisaged them ‘stirring up’ the city. But such a reading not only makes the grammar awkward but misses the emphasis on protection.
20 expectation The feeling of anticipation on both sides is personified, and imagined to be flirtatiously toying with (‘tickling’) the lively (‘skittish’) spirits of the soldiers. Bevington notes that ‘tickle’ occurs frequently in the play, usually with teasingly sexual implications – see, for example, 1.2.119, 3.1.104, 5.2.26 and 176.
21 Sets...hazard Puts everything at risk, as in a game of chance (OED Hazard sb1 1). 23 armed The Prologue wears armour appropriate to the occasion. There is probably a satirical allusion here to Jonson’s play, Poetaster (1601), which also features an armed prologue. If so, this would suggest that the Prologue, though not printed till 1623, was written for an early performance, since only then would the allusion have had much bite. See Introduction, p. 6.
23–4 not...voice without much confidence in either play or performance – a comment in the self-deprecating style of Shakespeare’s prologues (e.g. H5) and epilogues (e.g. AYLI). See Introduction, p. 9.
24–5 suited...argument dressed in a way suitable to our theme.
27 vaunt beginning (cf. ‘vanguard’). ‘Vaunt and firstlings’ is deliberately and sonorously redundant, the first of many such doublings in the play. There may also be a hint of ‘vaunt’ in the sense of ‘boast’, the kind of thing that warriors do before combat.
28 Beginning...middle Epic poems also typically begin in medias res – a further instance of the ironically heightened rhetoric of this speech.
29 digested suitably contained in; the term introduces the pervasive strain of eating and cooking images in the play.
31 War, like theatrical success, was notoriously and proverbially (Dent c.223) chance.
Act 1, Scene 1

1.1] TROILUS

Troilus, coming onstage armed but with no taste for battle, directs an offstage attendant to call his personal servant ('varlet').

2–3 The image of love as an internal battle is a common one and marks Troilus out as in some respects a traditional courtly lover. The language announces the persistent linking of love and war in the play as a whole.

5 none Troilus has no heart, having given it to Cressida.

6 gear business.

7, 8 to Either (1) in proportion to, or (2) in addition to. Troilus here employs an intricate rhetorical figure, a form of reduplication in which verbal ideas are repeated in an alternating way. He follows this with extended parallelism in the next four lines, in which he elaborates the antitheses of the same ideas (strength / weakness, fierceness / tameness, etc.) as they apply to him. All of this indicates the self-consciousness with which he suffers the pangs of love.

10 unpractised inexperienced.

13–14 not . . . farther have nothing more to do with. A proverbial phrase (Dent 5852) repeated at 77.

15 tarry wait.

17 bolting sifting. That these baking terms have a sexual reference seems clear from Justini-an’s remarks in Dekker and Webster’s Westward Ho (1604): ‘Why should I long to eate of Bakers bread onely, when there is so much Sifting, and bolting, and grynding in euery corner of the Citty; men and women are borne, and come running into the world faster than coaches doe into Cheap-side vpon Symon and Iudes day’ (2.1.169–73, in The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker, ed. Fredson Bowers, Cambridge, 1955, vol. 2).
Troilus and Cressida

Pandarus Ay, to the leavening; but here’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 burn your lips.

Troilus Patience herself, what goddess e’er she be,
Doth lesser blench at suff’rance than I do:
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 wedg’d 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.

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 –

21 hereafter| q, r, ‘hereafter’ Dyce 22 heating of] r (second setting); heating q, v (first setting) 23 you may] r, ye may q, 24 burn q, to burne r 26 suff’rance] q (suffrance); suffrance r 29 So traitor... thence?] Rowe* (subt.);
So traitor then she comes when she is thence. q, So (traitor) then she comes, when she is thence. r 30-1] q, Well / She... looks. / Or... else. r 35 a storm] Rowe; a scorn q, a-scorn r; askance Oxford 42 praise her] q, praise it r

21 the word i.e. ‘tarry’ which implies that after the leavening must come the kneading, etc. Many editors follow Dyce in assuming that ‘word’ refers to ‘hereafter’ (21), but ‘tarry’ seems the likelier possibility.

26 blench blanch, flinch. Though Troilus means that Patience is less able to endure painful waiting than he is, he actually says the opposite.

29 Troilus calls himself a traitor for even entertaining the possibility that Cressida might sometimes be absent from his thoughts. Although some editors follow q, f here, Rowe’s emendation makes excellent sense. If the emendation were rejected, the line would read, ‘So, traitor, then she comes when she is thence’, and Troilus would be berating himself for sometimes forgetting Cressida (since she can only come into his thoughts (28) if she is absent from them).

33 wedg’d split (as with a wedge).

33 rive break.

35 a storm Although q, it’s ‘a-scorn’ has been defended, notably by Evans who understands it to mean ‘in mockery’, Rowe’s emendation fits the context well, especially in the light of the interplay between sorrow and ‘seeming gladness’ in 37–8. A graphic misreading is also possible. In both Lear and Oth., ‘scorn’ and ‘storm’ are (possibly) confused. The quarto of Lear (at 3.1.10), in lines not in f, reads ‘outscorne’ but many editors have emended to ‘outstorm’ and q1 of Oth. has ‘scomne of fortunes’ at 1.3.249 while f reads ‘storme’.

39 An If (as frequently in the play).
TROILUS O Pandarus! I tell thee Pandarus,
    When I do tell thee there my hopes lie drowned
    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,
In whose comparison all whites are ink
Writing their own reproach, to whose soft seizure
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 it – let her be as she is; if she be
    fair 'tis the better for her; an she be 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

51 discourse – . . . hand,] Capell (subst.); discourse: . . . hand q; discourse: . . . hand r  62 in it] q; in't r  67 on of
you] r; of you q  71 not kin] r (second setting); kin q, r (first setting)  71 o'Friday] q (a Friday), on Friday r

49 ulcer Troilus' image is characteristically excessive. It fits with the strain of disease imagery in the
play generally and hints at a dark undertone to the love theme.
51 Again Troilus interrupts himself (as in 29), this time losing track of the grammar of his sentence. 'Handlest' (= treat of, discuss) suggests Cressida's white hand to him, and he follows that vein for the next four lines.
53-4 to whose . . . harsh in comparison to whose soft grasp ('seizure'), the down of a baby
swan ('cygnet') seems rough.
54 spirit of sense the most delicate touch. In Elizabethan physiology, each sense had its own 'spirit' or vapour that flowed through the body, conveying sensation to the brain. See 3.3.106 n.
63 mends remedy (OED Mend sb 2).
65 Perhaps Pandarus has turned as if to go, prompting Troilus' remonstration.
66 my . . . travail my labour ('travail', with a pun on the 'travel' involved in going between) has been the only reward I have received.
67 gone between The standard action of the pander, or 'go-between'.
71-2 an she . . . Sunday if she weren't related to me, I would say that she is as lovely on an ordinary
is on Sunday. But what care I? I care not an she were a blackamoor, ’tis all 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 leave all as I found it and there an end.

*Exit*

**Sound alarum**

**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,
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 wand’ring flood,
Ourself the merchant and this sailing Pandar

---

72 what care] r; what Q 75 sd] q, r (first setting, subst.); Troy. r (second setting) 72 82 Exit] q; Exit Pand. r 84 stuborn, chaste] q, r; stubborn-chaste 87 stay behind her father] remain in Troy after her father (Calchas) has left. 88 alarum] call to battle (usually with trumpet and drum). 89 argument] theme, cause.
90 starved] narrow, unfulfilling. The word alludes to the pervasive language of eating, weight, inflation, stuffing, etc. (see Parker, p. 225). 90 tetchy] touchy.
92 Apollo wooed the nymph Daphne, who refused his advances and finally escaped his pursuit by being changed into a laurel tree (Ovid, Book 1). 94 While India is a traditional source of exotic wealth (compare Oth. 5.2.347–8 where Othello compares himself to a ‘base Indian’ who ‘threw a pearl away / Richer than all his tribe’), Troilus’ explicit comparison with Cressida’s bed is indecorous and ‘impugns his . . . idealism’ (Greene, p. 138). See also 2.2.81–2 n. 95 Ilium The ancient name for Troy, frequently used also to denote the palace; here, though, the reference is more to the city itself, as Cressida’s bed is imagined to be far-off India. 97–8 Troilus compares himself to a merchant ship and Pandarus to a ‘bark’ or smaller ship, acting as a ‘convoy’ or escort (*OED Convoy sb 3, 7b; OED* dates the first specifically nautical use of the noun under this sense to 1602).
Our doubtful hope, our convoy and our bark.

Alarum. Enter Aeneas

Aeneas 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, Aeneas, from the field today?
Aeneas That Paris is return'd home and hurt.
Troilus By whom, Aeneas?
Aeneas Troilus, by Menelaus.
Troilus Let Paris bleed – 'tis but a scar to scorn,
Paris is gored with Menelaus' horn.

Alarum

Aeneas 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?
Aeneas In all swift haste.
Troilus Come, go we then together.

Exeunt

[1.2] Enter Cressida and her man [Alexander]

Cressida Who were those went by?
Alexander Queen Hecuba and Helen.

in 1636, but this seems to be an earlier instance. The image of the lover as a boat tossed by wind and wave is another of Troilus' clichés adapted from the courtly love tradition.

100 woman's answer referring to the proverb, 'Because is woman's reason' (Dent B179).
105 sorts is fitting.
106 scar wound.
107 horn The reference is to the cuckold's horns, the classic mark of masculine sexual shame, resulting from a wife's infidelity. Similar jokes recur throughout.
110, 110 sport Aeneas is referring to the athletic challenge of battle, but Troilus puns on 'sport' in the sense of 'sexual play'.

Act 1, Scene 2
0 SD Editors often place Cressida, Alexander, and later Pandarus on the upper stage for this scene. Although this would give them a vantage point from which they can review the procession of heroes later on, it seems unnecessarily restrictive. For one thing, the first 150 lines of the scene do not require any such expedient. The Elizabethan upper stage, which offered no visible access to the main level, was a relatively small area and was rarely used for scenes of this length. Exceptions, such as the 'balcony scene' in Rom. (2.2) or the castle scene in R2 (3.3) typically have a split focus, with much of the action on the main platform. Modern productions, with more flexible stage spaces, often find a compromise solution, perhaps a slightly raised platform at the back to which Pandarus and Cressida can move at 151–2 (see n.). The scene simply requires us to imagine Cressida and the others standing somewhere outdoors, but within the Trojan citadel.

1 Hecuba and Helen As in a few modern productions this reference could mean that they are briefly visible to the audience, though Hecuba
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
    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.
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 sauced with discretion.
There is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor any man an attain but he carries some stain of it. He is melancholy.

never again appears in the play. This is the first of many instances where characters watch and comment upon one another (see Introduction, pp. 19–22).
3 The tower is compared to a king who controls those beneath him.
3 vale valley.
5 fixed constant, steadfast.
5 moved agitated, angry.
7 like as if.
7 husbandry thrift, good management. There is an implied comparison to a careful farmer who goes early to the 'field' (q).
8 harnessed light Either (1) lightly armed, or (2) quickly dressed in armour.
9–11 where... wrath In Alexander's rather strained conceit, the dew on the flowers is interpreted as tears that foretell the suffering Hector will inflict on the Greeks.
12 noise rumour.
13 nephew According to the tradition Shakespeare follows in the rest of the play, Ajax is actually Hector's cousin, son of Priam's sister, Hesione, the 'old aunt' referred to in 2.2.77.
15 per se in himself; i.e. one of a kind, in a class by himself.
17–25 Alexander's hybrid, even contradictory, assessment of Ajax links to the general difficulties of evaluation posed by the mixed and inconsistent status of many of the play's characters. See Introduction, pp. 38–41.
18 additions qualities, attributes.
19 humours contradictory inclinations.
20 valour... discretion his valour is mixed with (literally, squeezed into) folly and his folly flavoured with discretion. The metaphor is from cookery.
22 attain fault.
22 stain tinge, blot. In both sound and meaning, 'stain' echoes 'attain'. 
without cause and merry against the hair; he hath the joints of ev-
erything, 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 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?

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 ye came to Ilium? Helen was not up, was she?

CRESSIDA Hector was gone but Helen was not up.

PANDARUS Even so. Hector was stirring early.

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 [He dismisses Alexander], and there’s 
Troilus will not come far behind him, let them take heed of Troilus,

23 against the hair contrary to the prevailing mood (i.e. when there is no good reason).
23 joints pieces, bits (used especially of parts of the body).
24-6 Briareus... sight In mythology, Briareus was a giant with a hundred hands and Argus, the 
guardian of Io, had a hundred eyes. Ajax has, as it were, their extraordinary parts, but his 
many hands are wracked by gout, and his eyes are blind. This is the first of many descriptions of 
the various Homeric heroes that mock their heroic pretensions.
28 coped encountered, fought with.
34 Cressida no doubt wants her comment to be 
overheard by the approaching Pandarus.
38 cousin relative, here niece.
39 Ilium The royal palace. See 1.1.95 n.
48 lay about do some damage with his sword.
49 SD Since Alexander does not speak for 
the rest of the scene, and the banter between
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.
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 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 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.
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 —
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.
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 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.
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.
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?

74 wit] Rowe; will q, r
102 lift] r; liste q
103 he so] q; he is so r

74 wit understanding. Rowe’s emendation makes better sense than q, r’s ’will’ (i.e. desire), and has been generally adopted. The fact that q is the only authoritative source for this part of the text adds weight to the emendation.

74 this year Used indefinitely, to mean ‘for a long time’.

81 a brown favour someone with a dark complexion. Cf. 1.1.72 n.

86 above above that of.

90 his . . . his ‘Troilus’ . . . Paris’.

90 he Paris.

92 had as lief would just as soon.

93 copper red from too much drinking.

95 merry Greek someone of loose morals, a wanton. The phrase is proverbial (Dent m301), but the wit here resides in the fact that Helen really is a Greek. See 4.4.55.

97 compassed window curved bay window.

99 tapster’s arithmetic Tapsters served drinks in taverns and needed only the simplest arithmetic to keep track of what they sold.

103 so old a lifter such a practised thief; Cressida puns on the slang and literal senses of ‘lifter’.

[87] Troilus and Cressida 1.2.103
PANDARUS But to prove to you that Helen loves him, she came and
puts me her white hand to his cloven chin –
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.
PANDARUS Does he not?
CRESSIDA O yes, an 'twere 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 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'the shell.
PANDARUS I cannot choose but laugh to think how she tickled his chin –
indeed she has a marvellous white hand I must needs confess –
Without the rack.
PANDARUS And she takes upon her to spy a white hair 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.
PANDARUS And Cassandra laughed –
But there was a more temperate fire under the pot of her eyes — did her eyes run o'er too?

And Hector laughed.

And Helen spied on Troilus' chin.

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

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

What was his answer?

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

This is her question.

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 him.' But there was such laughing, and Helen so blushed and Paris so chafed and all the rest so laughed, that it passed.

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

Well, cousin, I told you a thing yesterday — think on't.

I'll be sworn 'tis true, he will weep you as though he were born in April.

And I'll spring up in his tears as though he were a nettle against May.

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.
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.

Enter aeneas [and passes over the stage]
cressida Speak not so loud.
pandarus That’s Aeneas, is not that a brave man? He’s one of the flowerers of Troy, I can tell you, but mark Troilus, you shall see anon.
cressida Who’s that?

Enter antenor [and passes over the stage]
pandarus That’s Antenor. He has a shrewd wit, I can tell you, and he’s a man good enough, he’s one o’the 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.
cressida Will he give you the nod?
pandarus You shall see.
cressida If he do, the rich shall have more.

Enter hector [and passes over the stage]
pandarus That’s Hector, that, that, look you that, 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.

157 to and...stage] Rowe (subst.); not in Q, V; in two sty at 161, 168, 180, 185, 192 158 can tell] Q, can r 159 a man] v; man q 160 judgement] q; judgement r 161 him] q; him him r 162 a brave] q; braue r

Two observers take up their station on some sort of a raised platform or dais. In 1990 at the Swan (RSC) they occupied a side gallery in the auditorium.

136 bravely excellently.

157 to What follows is a processional scene, where the almost ritual formality of the return from battle, one hero on the heels of another, is placed in counterpart to the informal banter of the observers; audience interest is focused as much on the exact status of Cressida’s feelings for Troilus as it is on the warriors as they are introduced to us. Modern productions are divided as to whether the warriors should see Cressida and Pandarus or remain oblivious to their presence. Some productions cut the warriors altogether, leaving uncle and niece to gaze out at the audience, sometimes with the aid of binoculars (Old Vic 1956, RSC 1985). Exactly when the various figures, especially Helenus, Antenor, and Troilus, enter (after or before they are mentioned) has been debated – see Hodgdon. Except at 180 (Paris’ entrance) I have followed Q, V throughout.

159 brave admirable, impressive (as in 170–2, 182, 194, and 196).
162 shrewd sharp.
164 proper...person a handsome man.
166 give you the nod (1) nod to you, (2) call you fool (‘noddy’).

168 the rich...more be (Pandarus) that already has much (folly) will have even more.
PANDARUS Is 'a not? It does a man's heart good, look you 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?

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.

Enter PARIS [and passes over the stage]

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.

CRESSIDA Who's that?

Enter HELENUS [and passes over the stage]

PANDARUS That's Helenus. I marvel where Troilus is. That's Helenus.

CRESSIDA Can Helenus fight, uncle?

PANDARUS Helenus? No – yes, he'll fight indifferent well. I marvel where Troilus is – hark, do you not hear the people cry 'Troilus'?

Helenus is a priest.

CRESSIDA What sneaking fellow comes yonder?

Enter TROILUS [and passes over the stage]

PANDARUS Where? Yonder? – that's Deiphobus. 'Tis Troilus! There's a man, niece. Hem! Brave Troilus, the prince of chivalry!

CRESSIDA Peace, for shame, peace!

PANDARUS Mark him, note him, O brave Troilus! Look well upon man's...
him niece: look you how his sword is 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 change would give an eye to boot.

Enter common soldiers [and pass over the stage]

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: crows and daws, crows and daws! I had rather be such a man as Troilus than Agamemnon and all Greece.
cressida There is amongst the Greeks Achilles, a better man than Troilus.
pandarus Achilles? A drayman, a porter, a very camel!
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 such like, 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 a woman – a man knows not at what ward you lie.

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.

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 it’s past watching.

Enter [Troilus’] Boy

BOY Sir, my lord would instantly speak with you.

PANDARUS Where?

BOY At your own house, there he unarms him.

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.

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220 such a] q; such another r
220 a] q; one r
225 lie, at] q; lie at, at r
228 too] r; two q
230 as in r; after 231 q
230 to Troilus’] Capell; not in q, r
234 there . . . him] q; not in r
235} Capell; not in q, r
238 I’ll be] r; I wilbe q

220 ward posture of defence in fencing (OED sb 8); possibly, Pandarus also plays on ‘ward’, a subdivision of a parish, implying that it is not known where Cressida lies (i.e. lives, lies down), with no doubt a teasing sexual suggestion.

222 Upon . . . belly An odd, perhaps ironic, way for Cressida to defend her chastity, but her remark might help explain her behaviour later, when she arrives in the Greek camp.

223 secrecy . . . honesty Cressida equivocates; both her silence and her sense of independent selfhood (‘secrecy’) will allow her to retain a reputation for chastity (one meaning of ‘honesty’), if not the thing itself.

223 mask veil worn to protect the face from the sun.

224 you . . . these The tone is playful, since Cressida knows that Pandarus is unlikely to defend her belly or her honesty.

225–30 This passage, continuing from ‘ward’ as ‘defensive posture’ (220), plays on the phrase ‘watch and ward’, meaning to guard or watch over (OED Watch v 6b).

235 watches ways of looking out for oneself.

Pandarus’ response (226) adds the meanings: sentries, times of guard, and divisions of the night (as in ‘night watches’), with a sly innuendo that Cressida may divide her night among several watches (i.e. men).

227 watch you for that Cressida hints that she will have to keep an eye on him if it comes to warding off men in the night.

228–30 If I . . . watching If I cannot protect what I would not want a man to ‘hit’ (sexually), I can ‘watch’ you so you won’t gossip about it, unless I ‘well past hiding’ (become visibly pregnant), and then it is beyond keeping secret.

231 You are quite a woman!

236 doubt he be fear he might be.
Troilus and Cressida

To bring, uncle?

Ay, a token from Troilus.

By the same token, you are a bawd.

Exit Pandarus

Words, vows, gifts, tears, and love’s full sacrifice
He offers in another’s enterprise,
But more in Troilus thousandfold I see
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 belov’d knows nought that knows not this:
Men prize the thing ungained more than it is;
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 content firm love doth bear,
Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear. Exit

Editors have had trouble with Cressida’s ‘enigmatic rejoinder’ (Evans). After ‘be with you’ the phrase ‘to bring’ was often used as an intensive, connoting a vague threat of some kind (Variorum). Here it probably carries a bawdy suggestion as well (sex is what is being threatened). Pandarus takes the phrase literally, but he may, as frequently in the scene, be deliberately misinterpreting Cressida’s apparent meaning.

bawd procurer. Often spoken playfully, this accusation was suddenly deadly serious in Juliet Stevenson’s performance (RSC 1985), suggesting something of her fears for the future (Roger Warren review in SQ 37.1 (1986), 117).

love’s full sacrifice whatever ‘the lover can offer to his mistress in the way of selfless devotion’ (Bevington).

wooing during courtship, while being wooed.

(1) The joy of pursuit (‘doing’) falters once the prize is won; (2) The joy of sex (‘doing’) vanishes once love-making is over. The second sense is sharply registered in Sonnet 129. The quotation marks in the left margin in Q (for this line and 249) are an indication of aphoristic speech.

That she Any woman who is.

Men value an object that is as yet ungained more than it is really worth. This idea links to the persistent questioning of value in the play (and made explicit in Q’s spelling of ‘prize’ as ‘price’). See Introduction, pp. 38-41.

she woman.

Love got The achievement of love.

Cressida’s ‘maxim’ introduces an important element into her rather sententious speech: that withholding love confers power on the woman, which is lost once she surrenders (the man’s ‘achievement’ gives him ‘command’). This of course helps to explain Cressida’s witty defensive manoeuvres during the preceding exchange with her uncle. The gnomic quality of the line is indicated in both Q and R by italics and quotation marks.

my heart’s content Either (1) my heart’s capacity, or (2) my heart’s full satisfaction.
Troilus and Cressida

Act 1, Scene 3

[1.3] Senet. Enter AGAMEMNON, NESTOR, ULYSSES, DIOMEDES, MENELAUS, with others

AGAMEMNON Princes,
What grief hath set the jaundice on your cheeks?
The ample proposition that hope makes
In all designs begun on earth below
Fails in the promised largeness: checks and disasters
Grow in the veins of actions highest reared,
As knots, by the conflux of meeting sap,
Infests the sound pine and diverts his grain,
Tortive and errant, from his course of growth.
Nor, princes, is it matter new to us
That we come short of our suppose so far
That after seven years’ siege yet Troy walls stand,
Sith every action that hath gone before
Whereof we have record, trial did draw
Bias and thwart, not answering the aim
And that unbodied figure of the thought
That gave’t surmis’d shape. Why then, you princes,

Act 1, Scene 3

6 SD.1 Sennet Processional trumpet notes.
0 SD.1 Diomedes Although he says nothing,
Diomedes’ watchful presence in this scene can add an ominous note – as in Trevor Nunn’s 1999 National Theatre production.
1–54 Agamemnon and Nestor’s speeches are full of windy rhetoric and circumlocution, with simple ideas weighed down by abstraction and tortured expression. Their political discourse is analogous to Troilus’ excessively self-conscious language of love. But they also express important political positions. Many performances have, all too easily, delighted in mocking the rhetorical pretensions of the various Greek speakers, even including Ulysses. See Introduction, pp. 23, 43–5.
1 Princes Kings. Agamemnon uses a formal title to address the leaders of the Greek army, many of whom are monarchs of the territories they command.
2 jaundice yellowish skin and wanness – signs of melancholy.
3–5 The . . . largeness The rich plans and proposals which hope inspires in all earthly endeavours always fail to achieve the expected fulfilment.
5–9 checks . . . growth obstacles (‘checks’) and disasters plague the greatest actions, as knots, developing where the sap flows together, infect the healthy pine, twisting the grain of the wood from its normal ‘course of growth’.
7 conflux flowing together (earliest citation in OED – the first of many Latinate coinages in this scene; see nn. to 9, 20, 21, 87, 99, 101, 111, 196).
8 Infects . . . diverts Shakespeare frequently uses the singular form of the verb with a plural subject, here probably as a result of the proximity of the singular ‘sap’.
9 Tortive and errant Twisted and straying.
‘Tortive’ is Shakespeare’s coinage (OED).
11 suppose expectations.
13 Sith Since.
13 action great enterprise.
14 record Accented on the second syllable.
14 trial being put to the test (a personified abstraction, subject of the verb ‘did draw’; the object of ‘draw’ is ‘action’ in the previous line).
15 Bias and thwart Off-centre and crosswise.
15–17 not . . . shape not commensurate with the original goal and abstract idea that gave the action its imagined shape.
Do you with cheeks abashed behold our works
And call them shames, which are indeed nought else
But the protractive trials of great Jove
To find persistive constancy in men,
The fineness of which metal is not found
In Fortune's love? For then the bold and coward,
The wise and fool, the artist and unread,
The hard and soft, seem all affined and kin;
But in the wind and tempest of her frown,
Distinction, with a broad and powerful fan
Puffing at all, winnows the light away,
And what hath mass or matter by itself
Lies rich in virtue and unmingled.

NESTOR

With due observance of thy god-like seat,
Great Agamemnon, Nestor shall apply
Thy latest words. In the reproof of chance
Lies the true proof of men: the sea being smooth,
How many shallow bauble boats dare sail
Upon her patient breast, making their way
With those of nobler bulk.
But let the ruffian Boreas once enrage
The gentle Thetis, and anon behold
The strong-ribbed bark through liquid mountains cut,
Bounding between the two moist elements
Like Perseus' horse. Where's then the saucy boat