Troilus and Cressida Act III scene 2   Cressida: Ashleigh Madsen

Blind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds safer

footing than blind reason stumbling without fear: to

fear the worst oft cures the worse.

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?

Boldness comes to me now, and brings me heart.

Prince Troilus, I have loved you night and day

For many weary months.

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.

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.

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.'