Troilus and Cressida Act V Scene 2   Troilus: Ewan Mitchel

To make a recordation to my soul

Of every syllable that here was spoke.

But if I tell how these two did co-act,

Shall I not lie in publishing a truth?

Sith yet there is a credence in my heart,

An esperance so obstinately strong,

That doth invert th’ attest of eyes and ears,

As if those organs had deceptious functions,

Created only to calumniate.

Was Cressid here?

Let it not be believ’d for womanhood!

Think we had mothers, do not give advantage

To stubborn critics, apt without a theme

For depravation, to square the general sex

By Cressid’s rule. Rather think this not Cressid.

This she? No, this is Diomed’s Cressida.

If beauty have a soul, this is not she;

If souls guide vows, if vows be sanctimonies,

If sanctimony be the gods’ delight,

If there be rule in unity itself,

This was not she. O madness of discourse,

That cause sets up with and against itself!

Bi-fold authority, where reason can revolt

Without perdition, and loss assume all reason

Without revolt. This is, and is not, Cressid!

Within my soul there doth conduce a fight

Of this strange nature, that a thing inseparate

Divides more wider than the sky and earth,

And yet the spacious breadth of this division

Admits no orifex for a point as subtle

As Ariachne’s broken woof to enter.

Instance, O instance, strong as Pluto’s gates,

Cressid is mine, tied with the bonds of heaven;

Instance, O instance, strong as heaven itself,

The bonds of heaven are slipp’d, dissolv’d, and loos’d,

And with another knot, five-finger-tied,

The fractions of her faith, orts of her love,

The fragments, scraps, the bits and greasy relics

Of her o’er-eaten faith, are given to Diomed.

Never did young man fancy

With so eternal and so fix’d a soul.

Hark, Greek: as much as I do Cressid love,

So much by weight hate I her Diomed.

That sleeve is mine that he’ll bear on his helm.

Were it a casque compos’d by Vulcan’s skill,

My sword should bite it. Not the dreadful spout

Which shipmen do the hurricano call,

Constring’d in mass by the almighty sun,

Shall dizzy with more clamor Neptune’s ear,

In his descent, than shall my prompted sword

Falling on Diomed.

O Cressid! O false Cressid! False, false, false!

Let all untruths stand by thy stained name,

And they’ll seem glorious.