

Troilus and Cressida

Act V, sc. 2 (line 163)

TROILUS

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 is 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, dissolved, and loosed;

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 bound to Diomed.