

Troilus and Cressida

Act II, sc. 3 (line 59)

AGAMEMNON

Hear you, Patroclus:

We are too well acquainted with these answers:

But his evasion, wing'd thus swift with scorn,

Cannot outfly our apprehensions.

Much attribute he hath, and much the reason

Why we ascribe it to him; yet all his virtues,

Not virtuously on his own part beheld,

Do in our eyes begin to lose their gloss,

Yea, like fair fruit in an unwholesome dish,

Are like to rot untasted. Go and tell him,

We come to speak with him; and you shall not sin,

If you do say we think him over-proud

And under-honest, in self-assumption greater

Than in the note of judgment; and worthier than himself

Here tend the savage strangeness he puts on,

Disguise the holy strength of their command,

And underwrite in an observing kind

His humorous predominance; yea, watch

His pettish lunes, his ebbs, his flows, as if

The passage and whole carriage of this action

Rode on his tide. Go tell him this, and add,

That if he overhold his price so much,
We'll none of him; but let him, like an engine
Not portable, lie under this report:
'Bring action hither, this cannot go to war:
A stirring dwarf we do allowance give
Before a sleeping giant.' Tell him so.