

One data nugget, side by side: the “Orifex” specimen

Source: Owen, *Cipher Story* Vol. I, p. 9 — “Letter to the Decipherer” (London, 1623) · Destination: *Troilus and Cressida*, First Folio 1623

SOURCE — the reassembled letter

And yet the spacious breadth of this division, As it spreads round in the widest circle, Admits the mingling of the four great guides we use, So that we have no need of any minute rule To make the opening of our device Appear as plainly to you as the sun.

But sir, at the same time, there is no orifex For a point as subtle as Ariachne’s broken woof To enter, in its whole bulk or substance, unless you have Found out the guides of all our shifts and changes.

And if you give way or hedge aside From the direct forthright, Like to an entered tide they all rush by And leave you hindermost; Or like a gallant horse falne in first rank, Lie there for pavement to the abject nere, O’errun and trampled on.

DESTINATION — the First Folio, in place

Troilus & Cressida V.ii — Troilus (selected via the rare KEY word)

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.

Troilus & Cressida III.iii — Ulysses (selected via GUIDE-word clustering)

For honour travels in a strait so narrow, Where one but goes abreast: keep then the path; For emulation hath a thousand sons That one by one pursue: if you give way, Or hedge aside from the direct forthright, Like to an enter’d tide, they all rush by And leave you hindmost; Or like a gallant horse fall’n in first rank, Lie there for pavement to the abject rear, O’er-run and trampled on

The same scene’s guide-word CLUSTER (the entry signal)

“skittish Fortune’s hall” · “honour travels in a strait so narrow” · “one touch of nature makes the whole world kin” · “case thy reputation in thy tent” — all four great guides, one scene.

Legend: V.ii correspondence III.iii correspondence guide words (Fortune · Honour · Nature · Reputation) rare key word (unique in the canon) Owen’s joining tissue