

# **WAR MUSIC Texts**

**Words by Christopher Logue**

**Music by Paul Phillips**

## **Opening scene**

Picture the east Aegean sea by night,  
And on a beach aslant its shimmering  
Upwards of fifty thousand men  
Asleep like spoons beside their lethal Fleet.  
The sea as quiet as light.

Now look along that beach, and see a man  
Whose beauty's silent power stops your heart.  
Fast walk, face wet with tears,  
He seems to break the speed of light  
As he runs across the dry, then damp, sand.  
Stopping, he kneels and cries:

Source, hear my voice.

God, your friend, that Shepherd of the Clouds  
has seen me trashed.

Surely as if he sent a hand to shoo  
The army into one, and then, before its eyes,  
Painted my body with fresh Trojan filth.

God swore: If I chose to die young,  
By violence, far from home,  
My standing would be first: be best;  
The best of best; here; and in perpetuity.  
And so I chose.  
Nor have I changed.  
But now

God, your friend, that Shepherd of the Clouds  
has seen me trashed.

Surely as if he sent a hand to shoo  
The army into one, and then, before its eyes,  
Painted my body with fresh Trojan excrement.

Source, hear my voice.

## **Helen's Song**

I have never been alone,  
I have always known that one  
Body is half humanity  
At its minimum.

My mother told me early on.  
You have just one choice –  
Don't go wrong.

I can see all day long men choosing me  
Whom I would not choose because  
I derive my choice from them.  
Yet I fit them all. They, me.

Choice, in my city of three rings,  
Lies less with men, than even we

(Out of forbearance) let them think.

Choose I must and not to lie  
Beside who turns up his nose now  
At the wife that caught his eye.  
And do not match without the ring,  
My mother said.  
Love, did she lie?

Before my breasts stood out,  
Mindful of kisses and guzzlings,  
I kept the future wide awake  
And spoke it out, sometimes.  
Yet Beauty for men is something I must have.  
What some of them possess I see as  
Beautiful. But not their choice.  
Too many pick me out of foolishness.

It's dirty to have more than one,  
My mother says, yet I  
Have ridden down them all,  
In my hot dream.

Beauty for men is something I must have, yet  
Terror resides in choosing without choice.

### **Paris's Song**

It cannot be said that I am wise.  
I am a man needing much forgiveness.  
Indeed, I would like to change, to be wise.

And I've been told that wisdom consists in avoiding strife.  
To dig my own square inch till it bears  
Apples in February, is held to be wise.

Be still, they say, and when  
Your neighbour's beard goes up in flames  
Wet your own. Do not live out your dreams  
But destroy them as vanity.

It is hard, I know.  
Cold comfort, I know.

And if you came to me you would find  
A man needing much forgiveness.  
Indeed, I would like to change, to be wise,  
Losing all shame in compromise.

Alas, I can do none of these things.  
Alas, I can do none of these things.  
It cannot be said that I am wise.  
It cannot be said that I am wise.

## Helen-Paris Duet

Who knows when love has had its day?  
Who never leaves can never say,  
For can who cannot please today  
Say: "Yesterday I did?"  
When I who can is but who may  
Be sure what now does not gainsay  
Tomorrow shall forbid?

How much of what is love is fear?  
This woman answers from despair,  
For can who cannot please today  
Say: "Yesterday I did?"  
When I who can is but who may  
Be sure what now does not gainsay  
Tomorrow shall forbid?

Beauty,  
I bless the day, the month, the year,  
The season and the spirits of the place where we two met.

Beauty,  
Our dance began with eyes, and then  
With words, and soon our limbs were interlocked in a duet.  
And we are loved, who were unloved before.  
But we were shivering with lust. Such heat!

And when the crew had gone ashore to sacrifice,  
Me, nude on the rug,  
You, little girl  
Still with one thing on.  
"Shall I be naked, too?" you said,  
And then: "Watch me get rid of it!"  
And threw it off.  
Then threw yourself (myself)  
Into my (your) arms.

Ah!  
The world all gone.  
And then the sun rose early to see us.  
The world all gone.  
Ah!