

# TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

ONE OF THE THREE GREAT LOVE STORIES OF THE  
MIDDLE AGES

*A READER-FRIENDLY EDITION*  
*in the original words with modern spelling*

Unabbreviated

edited

by

MICHAEL MURPHY

**A somewhat abbreviated version is also to be found at this site, together with  
Henryson's medieval sequel "The Testament of Cresseid."**

This edition of Geoffrey Chaucer's **Troilus and Criseyde** is copyright. It may be freely downloaded for personal use, and may be freely copied by teachers and their students for pedagogical use. If you do download it, the editor would appreciate being informed.

The editor will also be grateful to have any errors, big or small, called to his attention. Other suggestions for improvement are likewise very welcome.

The editor can be reached at the following addresses:

Sarsfield0@aol.com (zero after Sarsfield)

or at

641 East 24 St, Brooklyn, New York 11210.

A full-text edition of **Troilus and Criseyde** in Middle English spelling is available on the Internet through Labyrinth.

## On Modernizing the Text

Let a few plain rules be given for sounding the final —é of syllables and for expressing the termination of such words as *ocèan*, and *nation*, etc, as disyllables -- or let the syllables to be sounded in such cases be marked by a competent metrist. This simple expedient would, with a very few trifling exceptions where the errors are inveterate, enable any reader to feel the perfect smoothness and harmony of Chaucer's verse. As to understanding his language, if you read twenty pages with a good glossary, you surely can find no further difficulty, even as it is; but I should have no objection to see this done: Strike out those words which are now obsolete, and I will venture to say that I will replace every one of them by words still in use out of Chaucer himself, or Gower his disciple. I don't want this myself: I rather like to see the significant terms which Chaucer unsuccessfully offered as candidates for admission into our language; but surely so very slight a change of the text may well be pardoned, even by black-letterati, for the purpose of restoring so great a poet to his ancient and most deserved popularity.

Coleridge, *Table Talk*, March 15, 1834

-----

This edition is designed to make the text of a great medieval English classic more reader-friendly to students and general readers, especially to those who are not English majors and those not interested in becoming medievalists.

It is **NOT** a translation. The words are Chaucer's line for line. I have been a great deal more conservative than a great poet and critic like Coleridge was willing to allow: I did not "strike out" any of Chaucer's words and replace them with others. Only the spelling is modernized, as it is in Shakespeare texts.

This version is more faithful than a translation but is a lot less demanding than the standard Middle English text. It is better than a translation because it keeps the verse **and** in Chaucer's own language, but in a friendlier form than the old text.

With this text, readers have the language that Chaucer wrote, but without the frustration of trying to master the vagaries of Middle English spelling. The change is meant to allow the reader to enjoy Chaucer not merely endure him.

### A Short Note on How the Text may be Read

This is mostly a brief summary of what is said at greater length immediately below in "The Language of this Edition".

Readers are invited to pronounce or not, as they see fit, all instances of dotted è, as in "Inspirèd", "easèd", "youngè", "sunnè". This superscript dot indicates a letter that was probably pronounced in Chaucer's medieval poetic dialect, possibly with a light schwa sound, a kind of brief "-eh". Hence, this modspell text has kept some medieval spellings that differ somewhat from ours: "sweetè" for "sweet", "halfè" for "half", "couldè" for "could", "lippès" for "lips", and so on. This preserves the extra syllable to indicate the more regular meter that many scholars insist was Chaucer's, and that many readers will prefer. The reader is the final judge.

It is perfectly possible to read "With locks curled as they were laid in press" rather than "With lockès curled as they were laid in press." Some would prefer "She let no morsel from her lips fall" over "She let no morsel from her lippès fall". Similarly a sentence of strong monosyllables like "With scaled brows black and piled beard" should be at least as good as "With pilèd browès black and pilèd beard." As in these examples from The General Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, a stanza like the following could get much of the effect of the pronounced -e- from a crisp pronunciation of final consonants or separation of words: *young -- knights*

<i>This Troilus as he was wont to guide</i>	<i>accustomed to</i>
<i>His youngè knightès, led them up and down</i>	
<i>In thilkè largè temple on every side,</i>	<i>In this</i>
<i>Beholding ay the ladies of the town</i>	
<i>Now here, now there, for no devotion</i>	
<i>Had he to none to reiven him his rest.</i>	<i>deprive him of</i>
<i>But gan to praise and lacken whom him lest.</i>	<i>And blame</i>
(Troilus & Criseyde: I, 20)	

There is nothing to prevent any reader from ignoring the superscript -è- whenever you feel that is appropriate. Similarly you may wish (or not) to pronounce the ï of words like *devotiön*, to make three syllables for the word instead of two, etc. The text offers a choice. Blameth not me if that you choose amiss.

The medieval endings of some words, especially verbs, in **-n** or **-en** have been retained for reasons of smoother rhythm: "**lacken, sleepen, seeken, weren, woulden, liveen, withouten.**" Such words mean the same with or without the **-n** or **-en**. Also words beginning **y-** mean the same with or without the **y-** as in **y-tied, y-taught**.

An acute accent indicates that a word was probably stressed in a different way from its modern counterpart: **serviceáble** to rhyme with **table**, **uságe**, **viságe**, **daggér**, **mannér**.

## The Language of this Edition<sup>1</sup>

Some Chaucerians, act as if the works of the poet should be carefully kept away from the general reader and student, and reserved for those few who are willing to master the real difficulties of Middle English grammar and spelling, and the speculative subtleties of Middle English pronunciation. Others may read him in translation if they wish !

The text of this edition in modern English spelling is intended to subvert that misguided notion. It is designed for those readers in school, university, living room or commuter train who would like to read or re-read Chaucer as readily as they can read or re-read other classics in English; for people who do not want the vagaries of archaic Middle English spelling, nor yet a flat translation. Very few scholars now read Shakespeare in the spelling of his day, but *all* readers of Chaucer are forced to read him in the spelling of *his* day, and this is a great obstacle for most people. This edition is meant to supply a version of Chaucer that avoids both simple translation or scholarly archaism.

This edition is *not* a translation. The grammar, the syntax, and the vocabulary of this modspell edition remain essentially unchanged from the language of the original. Everything is Chaucer's except for the spelling. Hence it can also be used as an accompanying or preliminary text by those who wish to master Chaucer's dialect as it is displayed in scholarly editions.

Here are some simple examples of changes from the manuscript forms. The citations are from *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Canterbury Tales*. Categories overlap a little.

## Spelling and Inflections

Virtually all words are spelled in the modern way. A few examples from the early parts of *T & C* will illustrate:

*Fro wo to wele* becomes *From woe to weal*;  
*ye loveres* is changed to *you lovers*.

*if any drope of pyte in yow be*

---

<sup>1</sup> For fuller development of the argument sketched here see my articles "On Not Reading Chaucer -- Aloud," *Mediaevalia* 9 (1986 for 1983), 205-224, and "On Making an Edition of The Canterbury Tales in Modern Spelling," *Chaucer Review* 26 (1991), 48-64.

becomes

*if any drop of pity in you be*

Here *be* rhymes with *adversity* rather than with *adversité*.

becomes

*ye han wonne hym with to gret an ese*

*you have won him with too great an ease.*

Notice that the vocabulary does not change, only the spelling. Even some archaic spellings are retained:

*For by that mortar which that I see bren  
Know I full well that day is not far henne.*

lamp / burn  
hence

(a) Since the modspell forms *burn* and *hence* would give no kind of rhyme, *bren* and *henne*, are retained and glossed.

(b) More frequently the older form is kept for the rhythm where the extra syllable is needed. The most frequent and most noticeable of these are those words ending in *-en*: *bathen*, *departen*, *wroughten*. The words mean the same with or without the *-(e)n*. Similarly *aboven*, *withouten*. Many other words also have an *-e-* that we no longer use either in spelling or pronunciation. When it is necessary or helpful to keep such *-e*'s they are marked with a dot: *ê*. (See **Rhythm** below).

The modern form of the third person singular present tense ends in *-s*: *he comes*. This was a dialectal form for Chaucer who thought it funny. His standard form ended in *-eth*: *he cometh*. Shakespeare could use either form—*comes* or *cometh*, one syllable or two—to suit his metrical needs. I follow his example here, using our modern form wherever the meter allows, as in the three occurrences in the first two stanzas of the *Canticus Troili* where I suspect that even with *cometh* (the spelling of the standard edition) the pronunciation was one syllable:

in place of: *If love be good, from whencè comes my woe ?  
If love be good, from whennes cometh my woo*

in place of : *....every torment and adversity  
That comes from him may to me savory think  
....every torment and adversite  
That cometh of hym may to me savory thinke*

in place of: *From whencè comes my wailing and my plaint?  
From whennes cometh my waillynge and my pleynte?*

By contrast the *-eth* is **retained** for the pentameter in the four rhyming words in **T & C, I, 55**:

*defendeth, offendeth, availeth, saileth*, and in the plural imperative that means the same with and without the *-eth*: *Remembereth, Thinketh = Remember! Think!*

Past participles of verbs that begin with *y-* are sometimes retained for the same reason. They also mean the same with or without the *y-*: *y-born, y-wrought, y-beat* for *born, wrought, beaten*. For both meaning and rhythm, a word like *bisynesse* is retained as *busyness* rather than as *business*

## Vocabulary

As we have said, the vocabulary remains intact throughout. The word *thee* is not changed to *you*, nor *wood* to *mad* when that is the meaning; *durst* means *dared*, *clepe* means *call*, *I wot* means *I know* and has the same number of syllables, but our word is not substituted for Chaucer's in any of these cases. In these and in many others like them where a word has become obsolete or has changed its meaning over the centuries, Chaucer's word is kept and the meaning given in a gloss in the margin where it can be readily glanced at or ignored. For Chaucer's *hem* and *hir(e)* I use *them* and *their* which were dialect forms in his day but which became standard like the *-s* of *sends*. Middle English used *his* to mean both *his* and *its*. I have generally used *its* when that is the meaning. Chaucerian English often used *there* to mean *where*; I generally use *where* when *there* might be confusing for a modern reader.

## Pronunciation

Whether read silently or aloud this text is designed to accommodate the reader's own modern English pronunciation, modified wherever that reader thinks necessary for rhyme or rhythm. Scholars expect old spelling versions to be read in a reconstructed Middle English dialect whose sounds are at least as difficult to master as the archaic spelling. Moreover, the phonetic accuracy of the reconstruction is quite dubious. A regular assignment in college classes is for the students to memorize the first eighteen lines of the General Prologue of *The Canterbury Tales* in this reconstructed dialect. Instructions on how to pronounce the different vowels, consonants and diphthongs in this reconstructed dialect can be found in standard old-spelling editions. For those who are curious to know how medievalists think Chaucer's verse *might* have sounded, I append a very rough "phonetic" transcription of those first eighteen lines of The General Prologue. Dotted *-è's* are pronounced; so is the *-l-* in *folk, half* and *palmers*. Syllables marked with an acute accent are stressed. (See further the section below on **Rhythm and Meter**).

#### Phonetic Version

Whan that Avril with his shoorez sohteh  
The druughth of March hath persèd toe the rohteh,  
And baathèd every vein in swich licoor  
Of which virtúe engendrèd is the flure,  
Whan Zephirus ache with his sway-teh braith,  
Inspeerèd hath in every holt and haith  
The tender cropez, and the yung-eh sun-eh  
Hath in the Ram his hal-f coorse y-run-eh,  
And smaaleh foolez maaken melody-eh  
That slaipen al the nicked with awpen ee-eh  
So pricketh hem Nat-yóor in hir cooráhjez--  
Than longen fol-k to gawn on pilgrimahjez  
And pal-mers for to saiken straunjeh strondez  
To ferneh halwehs couth in sundry londez  
And spesyaly from every sheerez end  
Of Engelond to Caunterbry they wend  
The hawly blissful martyr for to saik  
That hem hath holpen whan that they were saik.

#### Hengwrt Manuscript

Whan that Auerylle with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March / hath perced to the roote  
And bathed euery veyne in swich lycour  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour  
Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth  
Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth  
The tendre croppes / and the yonge sonne  
Hath in the Ram / his half cours yronne  
And smale foweles / maken melodye  
That slepen al the nyght with open Iye  
So priketh hem nature / in hir corages  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilrymages  
And Palmeres for to seeken straunge strondes  
To fernè halwes / kouthe in sondry londes  
And specially / from euery shyres ende  
Of Engelond / to Caunterbury they wende  
The holy blisful martir / for to seke  
That hem hath holpen whan at they weere seeke.

This passage and others are reproduced in the International Phonetic Alphabet in Helge Kokeritz's pamphlet *A Guide To Chaucer's Pronunciation*. Even in Kokeritz, which is the standard version, the uncertainties of the phonetics are clear from the fact that Kokeritz gives fifteen alternative pronunciations in sixteen lines.

### Rhyme

In any modspell version of a Chaucer poem it is clear that some rhymes do not work perfectly or at all, though they did in the original Middle English. This is usually accounted for by the theory that English sounds have changed in a fairly systematic way over the centuries, a change especially noticeable (to us anyway) between about 1400 (the year Chaucer died) and 1800. The change is called the Great Vowel Shift. Roughly, this theory says that in Chaucer's day the long vowels were pronounced more or less as they still are in modern Romance Languages. For example, the *i* in *mine* was pronounced like the *i* in the word *machine*, a word that retains its French pronunciation. Hence, Chaucer's *mine* is pronounced *mean*, his *name* would rhyme with our *calm*, his *root* with our *boat* and so on.

This would not concern us much if the Great Vowel Shift theory worked perfectly; the long vowel sounds might have changed radically, but if the change was consistent, the words that rhymed then would rhyme now. But the Vowel Shift was **not** wholly consistent, and its inconsistency is probably most observable in the shift from *o* to *u*. For example, the theory says that words like



*root* and *mood* were pronounced with an *o* sound -- *rote* and *mode*, and they have moved to a *u* sound today. But for Chaucer the words *hood*, *blood*, would both have rhymed with *mood* and with each other ( *hode*, *blode*, *mode*); for us they are at best half rhymes or eye rhymes. Similarly *deed* and *dread*, *mead* and *red*, *have* and *save*, *heart* and *convert* rhymed for him as they no longer do perfectly for us.

Another reason that all of Chaucer's rhymes are not perfect for us is that some of his French-derived words still had their French pronunciation or were still accented in a French way. This accounts for the problem with now-imperfect rhymes like *wise* / *service*. The words *creature* and *nature* were both accented on the last syllable and the first has three syllables, French fashion. These accents have generally been marked in the text, but not always:

<i>As to my doom in all of Troy <b>city</b></i>	<i>my judgement</i>
<i>Was none so fair, for-passing every wight</i>	<i>surpassing everyone</i>
<i>So angel like was her <b>native beauty</b></i>	

The original ME *cite* for *city* was probably pronounced French fashion with the accent on the second syllable. But the reader can make the decision how to pronounce *city*. The French-influenced Middle English spelling of *natif beaute* in the third line fairly clearly indicated stress on the second syllable in each word. In reading to oneself, one can either exaggerate a pronunciation in the French direction in order to make the rhymes work fully, or simply accept the imperfections as half rhymes or eye rhymes which are well established features of almost all rhymed verse in English. Most of the rhymes work very well, and a few half rhymes or eye rhymes simply add variety that should be acceptable to modern taste. (See also below the section on *Rhythm* and *Meter*).

We should also perhaps remember that many of the rhymes of later poets present much the same situation -- Shakespeare's sonnets or *Venus and Adonis*, Milton's rhymed poems, Donne's lyrics, and even Dryden's translations from Chaucer. Indeed the same final rhyming syllable that occurs in the description of the Squire in the General Prologue: *serviceable* / *table* also occurs in Milton's *Morning of Christ's Nativity* in the closing lines: *stable* / *serviceable*. This causes little difficulty for modern readers of Milton and the other poets, and produces no comment among their modern critics. The final rhyme in **Troilus and Criseyde**: *digne* / *benign* also provides a small challenge. Since *digne* is obsolete we can, presumably, give it any suitable pronunciation, in this case probably something like *dine*.

## Rhythm and Meter

This section is closely related to the sections on Spelling and Pronunciation above.

Many Chaucerian plural and possessive nouns end in *-es* where our equivalents end in *-s*, and many

of his words of all sorts end in an *-e* where we no longer have it:

*Madáme Pertelote, my worldes blisse  
Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they synge  
And se the fresshe floures how they sprynge.*

It seems that Chaucer would have pronounced all the occurrences of *-es* and some of those of *-e* in these lines; the reader's sense of rhythm and meter has to tell him which *-e*'s, unless the "pronounced" *-e*'s are dotted, as they are **not** dotted in the manuscripts or in scholarly editions. So the rhythm of the original would be somewhat different from that of a radical modspell version (like my first edition of the *Tales*) which dropped **all** the archaic *-e*'s:

*Madam Pertelot, my world's bliss,  
Hearken these blissful birds-- how they sing!  
And see the fresh flowers-- how they spring!*

The place of the syllabic *-e*'s would have to be taken by apt pauses. That choice is still possible even after some of the *-e*'s have been restored, as they are here to satisfy a more strictly iambic meter:

*Madamè Pertelot, my worldè's bliss,  
Hearken these blissful birdès -- how they sing!  
And see the freshè flowers -- how they spring!*

Sometimes the *-e* is pronounced or not pronounced in the same word depending on its position in the line. For example in the old-spelling *Troilus and Criseyde* the word *Troye / Troie* is almost invariably spelled with a final *-e*, which is pronounced or elided as the meter demands. In the modspell version the spelling reflects this:

	<i>The folk of Troie hire observaunces olde (I, 160)</i>
becomes	<i>The folk of Troy their óbservances old (I, 16:6)</i>
but	
	<i>Knew wel that Troie sholde destroièd be (I, 68)</i>
becomes	<i>Knew well that Troyè should destroyèd be (I, 6:5)</i>

There are many other occasions when the meter seems to require the pronunciation of a now silent or absent *-e*-. In such cases the *è* in this text generally has a superscript dot which the reader is free to ignore at will, thus:

*So that his soul her soulè follow might (II, 106.4)*

The question of pronounced *-e*- arises with particular frequency in the ending of verbs in the normal past tense or past participle as in the line quoted above:

*Knew well that Troyè should destroyèd be*

where it is clear that *-ed* has to be pronounced in either version.

Or take this couplet from the *Canterbury Tales*, for example:

*And set a supper at a certain price,  
And we will rulèd be at his device.*

The rhythm is improved if the *-ed* of *ruled* is pronounced as it almost certainly was in Chaucer's day and as *-ed* was often pronounced in poetry until almost modern times. In this text such *-ed*'s are often marked where the editor feels that the rhythm would benefit, but I have not been relentless about it, and readers should use their own judgement about it. There is plenty of leeway for taste. A reader might easily decide for example, that the following line in the description of the leprous Summoner in the *Canterbury Tales* is best read as a series of strong monosyllables, and ignore the suggestion to pronounce the *-e*'s of *scalled*, *browes* and *piled*:

*With scallèd browès black and pilèd beard*

Another couple of illustrations of rhythmical questions with a modspell version:

*Make no comparison ...  
Oh levè Pandare in conclusion  
I will not be of thine opiniön*

The editorial accent mark on the *i* of *conclusion* and *opinion* suggests the possibility of pronouncing each word as four syllables: *con-clus-i-on*, *o-pin-i-on* as they presumably were in the original, but again the reader is free to prefer the normal three-syllable pronunciation and to be satisfied with a nine-syllable line, of which the Chaucer manuscripts have many.

One other thing to be kept in mind is that for Chaucer as for us there were unpronounced *-e*'s and other unpronounced letters. In short, for him as for Shakespeare and for us, there was such a thing as elision, the dropping or blending of syllables, reducing the number that seem to be present on the page. Thus *ever* and *evil* may well have been pronounced *e'er* and *ill* where the rhythm suited as in the following:

*“Alas!” quod Absalom, “and Welaway!  
That truè love was e'er so ill beset”  
(Orig: That true love was **ever** so **evil** beset)*

*Remembereth you on passèd heaviness*

*That you have felt, and on the adversity  
Of other folk*

To get a pentameter *Rememb'reth* probably needs to be pronounced thus, eliding one of the *e*'s, and *the adversity* needs to be said as *th'adversity* even if these elisions are not so marked in the text.

Our modern pronunciation of *generally* often has three rather than four syllables, and a three-syllable *sovereignty* fits well with this couplet either in its Middle English or modspell form:

*My liegè lady, generally, quod he,  
Women desiren to have sovereignty*

Elision or slurring is particularly noticeable in a word like *benedicitee*, a common exclamation with Chaucer's characters in the Tales. It was clearly pronounced with anything from two to five syllables to fit the rhythm: *benstee*, *bensitee*, *bendisitee*, *ben-e-disitee*. And a line like the following is an impossible pentameter without some elision:

*And certes yet ne dide I yow nevere unright*

Look at the two different forms of the same verb in the following consecutive lines of Middle English:

*Thy gentillesse cometh fro God allone.  
Than comth oure verray gentillesse of grace*

The spelling *comth*, occurs in the second line in two MSS, suggesting a common pronunciation of the word, whatever way it was spelled, a pronunciation something like *comes* in both lines. Clearly rhythm is related to spelling and inflection mentioned above.

Assuming the following line to have ten syllables, the first word should come out as one syllable:

*Fareth every knight thus with his wife as ye?*

Here the pronunciation of *Fareth* may have verged on *Fares*, its modern form, which I have adopted. Analogously, we are so accustomed to pronouncing *every* as two syllables that we do not notice that it is written with three. The alert reader will see and adapt to other such occurrences in the course of reading this version.

In some lines an acute accent is inserted to suggest a probable emphasis different from our current stress patterns

*If this be wist, but e'er in thine absénce*

or

*And short and quick and full of high sentéce*

and rhyming groups like the following:

*sort / comfórt; dance / penánce; disáventure / creäture / measúre*

One syntactical liberty has been taken with the text of the original **Troilus and Criseyde**. The second line reads in Middle English: "That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye"; it has been changed to the more modern and comprehensible syntactic arrangement: "That was the son of Priam king of Troy." This is, I think, the only such change in the poem.

Reading a modspell edition of **The Canterbury Tales** or of **Troilus and Criseyde** needs goodwill, some intelligence, humor, adaptability, and a little skill, qualities that most of us would readily confess to.

### **A Note on the Names in *Troilus and Criseyde***

1. Pronunciation and spelling of the heroine's name: in the manuscripts of **Troilus & Criseyde** and in other places where she is mentioned, the name is variously spelled: Criseyde, Crisseyde, Creseyde, Criseyde, Criseda, Criseyda.

In this edition it first appears in I. 8 (Bk. I, stanza 8) where it rhymes with *died* (possibly a different sound from *deyde* of the original).

*Of Troilus in loving of Criseyde  
And how that she forsook him ere she died*

Later it rhymes also with *said* (*seyde*) and *played* (*pleyde*), an interesting illustration of the sometimes unpredictable change in pronunciations since Chaucer's day.

In I.15 it appears as Criséydè — 3 syllables, with the emphasis on the 2nd syllable

*Criséydè was this lady named aright*

Shortly after, in I.25, as Créssida (*Críseyda*) with the emphasis on the first syllable and rhyming with capital "A", and therefore to be pronounced here as Créssid-eh or Créssid-ah. :

*Among those other folk was Criseyda  
Right as our firstè letter is now an A*

Immediately after that in I.26 it is Criseyde again but with 2 syllables and stressed on the second syllable.

*As was Criséyde as folk said everyone*

Late in the poem the name occurs more than once with 4 syllables: Cris-eh-i-deh.

*And until time that it began to night            ( to get dark)*  
*They speaken of Criseyde the bright,*

**2.** The name of Criseyde's uncle and Troilus's friend is also variously spelled in the manuscripts; this edition follows suit, and also puts stresses on the appropriate syllable : Pándare, Pandáre, Pándarus, Pandárus.

Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde

**TROILUS AND CRISEYDE**

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

**Book I**

## Book I

## Proem

1. The double sorrow of Troilus to tell,  
 That was the son of Priam, King of Troy,<sup>1</sup>  
 In loving how his áventurès fell  
 From woe to weal, and after out of joy  
 My purpose is, ere that I part from you.  
 Thesiphonè,<sup>2</sup> thou help me to endite  
 These woeful verses that weepen as I write

*fortunes  
 sorrow to joy*

*write*

2. To thee clepe I, thou goddess of tormént,  
 Thou cruel Fury sorrowing ever in pain:  
 Help me that am the sorrowful instrument  
 That helpeth lovers (as I can) to 'plain.  
 For well sits it, the sooth for to sayn,  
 A woeful wight to have a dreary fere,  
 And to a sorrowful tale a sorry cheer.

*I call*

*complain  
 it's suitable, truly  
 sad person ... sad companion  
 manner*

3. For I, that god of Love's servants serve  
 Ne dare to Love for mine unlikeliness<sup>3</sup>  
 Prayen for speed, al should I therefore starve.  
 So far am I from his help in darkness.  
 But nathelees, if this may do gladness  
 To any lover, and his cause avail,  
 Have he my thanks, and mine be this travail.

*for success / die*

*labor*

---

<sup>1</sup> 1-5: "Before I part from you (the audience) my purpose is to tell the double sorrow of Troilus, son of Priam, King of Troy:- how his fortunes in love went from sorrow to joy and then out of joy." The poet cultivates the impression that he is addressing a listening audience, but his phrases "to endite" and "as I write" in ll. 6-7 rather give the game away. 1.2: MSS: "That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye."

<sup>2</sup> 1.6: The poet calls not on God or the Virgin Mary as many makers of English romances did, nor on the pagan muse as the classical poets did, nor on the god of Love but, because his is a sad story, on a Fury, Thesiphone, the voice of all the Furies, who were agents of retribution. 6-7: Grammatically it is the verses that weep (*weepen*), but perhaps it is really the author that is meant.

<sup>3</sup> 3.1-3: "I, who serve the servants of Love, do not dare to pray to Love for success (*speed*) because of my unlikeliness, even if I should die (*starve*).



4. But, you lovers, that bathen in gladness,  
If any drop of pity in you be,  
Remembereth you on passèd heaviness  
That you have felt, and on th’adversity  
Of other folk; and thinketh how that ye  
Have felt that Lovè durstè you displease,  
Or you have won him with too great an ease.<sup>2</sup>

*Remember past sorrow*

*made you suffer*

5. And prayeth for them that be in the case  
Of Troilus, as you may after hear,  
That Love them bring in heaven to soláce;  
And eke for me prayeth to God so dear,  
That I have might to show in some mannér  
Such pain and woe as Lovè’s folk endure  
In Troilus’s unsely áventure.

*ability to*

*unlucky*

6. And biddeth eke for them that be despaired  
In love, that never will recovered be;  
And eke for them that falsely been appaired  
Through wicked tonguès, be it he or she.  
Thus biddeth God, for His benignity,  
So grant them soon out of this world to pace,  
That be despaired out of Lovè’s grace.

*And pray also*

*harmed*

*ask*

7. And biddeth eke for them that be at ease,  
That God them grant ay good perséverance,  
And send them might their lovers for to please  
That it to Love be worship and pleasáncé,  
For so I hope my soul best to advance,  
To pray for them that Lovè’s servants be,  
And write their woe and live in charity;

*pray also*  
*ay = always*  
*power*  
*honor & pleasure*

8. And for to have of them compassïon  
As though I were their ownè brother dear,  
Now hearken with a good intention,  
For now will I go straight to my mattér,  
In which you may the double sorrows hear  
Of Troilus in loving of Criseyde,

---

<sup>2</sup> 3 - 5: Here as elsewhere in the poem there is a lack of distinction between the Christian God and a god of Love, both to be prayed to; elsewhere in the poem love seems to be a natural human phenomenon (it). 4.3: *Rembereth* is the imperative plur. like *thinketh* and *prayeth* later.

And how that she forsook him ere she died.

*before*

-----

9. It is well wist how that the Greekès, strong  
In arms, with a thousand shippès went  
To Troywards, and the city long  
Assiegèden — nigh ten years ere they stent;<sup>1</sup>  
And in diversè wise and one intent,  
The ravishing to wreaken of Elaine  
By Paris done, they wroughten all their pain.

*well known*

*Towards Troy  
besieged / nearly / ceased*

*abduction of Helen to avenge  
took / trouble*

10. Now fell it so that in the town there was  
Dwelling a lord of great authority  
A great divine that clepèd was Calchas,  
That in sciéce so expert was that he  
Knew well that Troyè should destroyèd be  
By answer of his god that hightè thus:  
Daun Phoebus or Apollo Delphicus.

*Now, it happened*

*priest who was called  
in knowledge*

*was called  
Lord (god) Phoebus*

11. So when this Calchas knew by calculing  
And eke by answer of this Ápollo,  
That Greekès shoulde such a people bring  
Through which that Troyè mustè be for-do,  
He cast anon out of the town to go.  
For well wist he by sort that Troyè should  
Destroyèd be, yea, whoso would or n'ould.

*calculation  
also*

*destroyed  
planned quickly  
knew by divination  
like it or not*

12. For which, for to departen softely  
Took purpose full this forè-knowing wise,  
And to the Greekès' host full privily  
He stole anon; and they in courteous wise  
Him didn bothè worship and service  
In trust that he hath cunning them to redd  
In every peril which that is to dread.

*forseeing wise man  
secretly  
fashion  
gave him honor & service  
knowledge to advise them*

13. The noise uprose when it was first espied  
Throughout the town, and generally was spoken,  
That Calchas traitor fled was and abide  
With them of Greece; and casten to be wroken

*& living  
(they) wanted revenge*

---

<sup>1</sup> 9.3-7: "And they besieged the city for a long time -- for nearly ten years -- before they stopped (*stent*); and they took all this trouble (*wroughten all their pain*) in different ways but with one intention: to avenge (*wreaken*) the abduction (*ravishing*) of Helen by Paris."

On him that falsely had his faith so broken,  
 And said: ‘He and all his kin at once  
 Be worthy for to burnen, fell and bones.’

*skin & bones*

14. Now had this Calchas left in this mischance,  
 All unwist of his false and wicked deed,  
 His daughter which that was in great penance;  
 For of her life she was full sore in dread,  
 As she that n’istè what was best to redd,  
 For both a widow was she and alone  
 Of any friend to whom she durst her moan.

*difficulty*

*unaware*

*anguish*

*knew not / to do*

*and without...*

*dared confide*

15. Criseyde was this lady's name aright.  
 As to my doom, in all of Troy city  
 Was none so fair, for-passing every wight  
 So angel-like was her native beauty,  
 That like a thing immortal seemed she,  
 As doth a heavenish perfect creature  
 That down were sent in scorning of Nature.

*indeed*

*In my judgement  
 surpassing everyone*

16. This lady which that all day heard at ear  
 Her father's shame, his falseness and treason,  
 Well nigh out of her wit for sorrow and fear,  
 In widow's habit large of samite brown,  
 On knees she fell before Hector a-down <sup>1</sup>  
 With piteous voice, and tenderly weeping,  
 His mercy bade, her-selfen excusing.

*nearly*

*long dress of b. silk*

*begged*

17. Now was this Hector piteous of nature  
 And saw that she was sorrowfully begone,  
 And that she was so fair a creature.  
 Of his goodness he gladdened her anon  
 And said: "Let your father's treason gon  
 Forth with mischance; and you yourself in joy  
 Dwell with us while you good list in Troy.

*afflicted*

*at once*

*go ...*

*...To the devil*

*as long as you like*

18. “And all th’honour that men may do you have  
 As far forth as your father dwellèd here  
 You shall have, and your body men shall save,  
 As far as I may aught enquire or hear.”

*may give you*

*As if*

*your person / respect*

---

<sup>1</sup> 16.5: Hector, son of Priam, was the greatest of the Trojan heroes. As one of the Nine Worthies of the Middle Ages he took his place among warriors like Julius Caesar and Alexander.

And she him thankèd with full humble cheer. *manner*  
 And oftener would, if it had been his will,  
 And took her leave, and home, and held her still. *and (went) home*

19. And in her house she abode with such meinee *retinue*  
 As to her honour needè was to hold  
 And while she dwelling was in that city  
 Kept her estate, and both of young and old  
 Full well beloved, and well men of her told, *spoke of her*  
 But whether that she children had or no,  
 I read it not; therefore I let it go. *read (in Boccaccio)*

20. The thingès fallen, as they do of war, *in war*  
 Betwixen them of Troy and Greekès oft:  
 For some days boughten they of Troy it dear,  
 And oft the Greekès founden nothing soft  
 The folk of Troy. And thus Fortúne aloft <sup>1</sup>  
 And under eft gan them to wheelen both  
 After their course, ay while that they were wroth. *In their turn / angry*

21. But how this town came to destruction  
 Ne falleth not to purpose me to tell, *Not my business to*  
 For it were here a long digression  
 From my mattér, and you too long to dwell. *delay*  
 But the Trojan gestès, as they fell, *(accounts of) events*  
 In Homer or in Dares or in Dyte  
 Whoso that can may read them as they write. <sup>2</sup>

22. But though that Greekès them of Troy in shut,  
 And their city besieged all about,  
 Their oldè usage wouldè they not let, *would not relinquish*  
 As for t' honoúr their goddès full devout; *devoutly*  
 But aldermost in honour, out of doubt, *foremost*  
 They had a relic hight Palladion, *called*  
 That was their trust aboven every one.

---

<sup>1</sup> The first mention of the Wheel of Lady Fortune, who spins it at intervals, so that sometimes one is up (*aloft*), sometimes down (*under*).

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer makes it clear that his subject (*matter*) is not the Trojan War (a digression ! ). Those who want that story can, he says, find it in Homer, or in Dares Phrygius and Dictys Cretensis, Latin writers who came long after Homer, but were respected in the Middle Ages for their story of Troy.

23. And so befell, when comen was the time  
 Of April when clothèd was the mead  
 With newè green (of lusty Ver the prime)  
 And sweetè smelling flowers white and red --  
 In sundry wisè showèd (as I read)  
 The folk of Troy their óbservances old,  
 Palladionè's feastè for to hold.

*meadow*  
*start of vigorous Spring*  
*various ways celebrated*

24. And to the temple in all their goodly wise  
 In general there wenten many a wight  
 To hearken of Palladion the service:  
 And namely so many a lusty knight,  
 So many a lady fresh, and maiden bright,  
 Full well arrayèd, bothè most and least,  
 Yea, bothè for the season and the feast.

*person*  
*To hear*  
*well dressed, rich & poor*

25. Among these other folk was Cressida  
 In widow's habit black; but natheless,  
 Right as our firstè letter is now an `A,'  
 In beauty first so stood she makèless.  
 Her goodly looking gladdened all the press.  
 Was never seen thing to be praisèd dear,  
 Nor under cloudè black so bright a star

*dress*  
*peerless*  
*good looks / crowd*  
*more highly*

26. As was Criseyde, as folk said everyone  
 That her behelden in her blackè weed;  
 And yet she stood full low and still alone  
 Behind the other folk in little brede  
 And nigh the door, ay under shamè's dread,  
 Simple of attire and debonair of cheer  
 With full assurèd looking and mannér.<sup>1</sup>

*dress*  
*space*  
*always fearing a slight*  
*& quiet in manner*

27. This Troilus as he was wont to guide  
 His youngè knightès, led them up and down  
 In thilkè largè temple on every side,  
 Beholding ay the ladies of the town  
 Now here, now there, for no devotion  
 Had he to none to rieven him his rest,

*constantly*  
*attachment*  
*deprive him of*

---

<sup>1</sup> 26.7: It is a little difficult to reconcile the somewhat contradictory information about attitudes in stanzas 25 & 26. Criseyde is admired by the people and yet apprehensive; shy and yet self-assured. In stanza 42 below she is even "*somedel deynous*", somewhat haughty.

But gan to praise and lacken whom him lest.<sup>1</sup>

28. And in his walk full fast he gan to wait *to watch*  
 If knight or squire in his company  
 Gan for to sigh or let his eyen bait *eyes rest*  
 On any woman that he could espy;  
 He wouldè smile and holden it folly  
 And say him thus: "God wot, *she* sleepeth soft *God knows*  
 For love of thee, when *thou* turnest full oft. *you toss & turn*

29. "I have heard tell, pardee, of your living, *by God / way of life*  
 You lovers, and your lewèd observánces, *foolish behavior*  
 And such labóur as folk have in winning  
 Of love, and, in the keeping which doutánces;<sup>2</sup> *what difficulties*  
 And when your prey is lost — woe and penánces !  
 Oh very foolès, nice and blind be ye. *total fools, silly & b.*  
 There is not one can 'ware by other be." *warned by the others*

30. And with that word he gan cast up the brow  
 Askances: "Lo, is this not wisely spoken?" *As if to say:*  
 At which the god of Love gan looken rough  
 Right for despite, and shope for to be wroken *prepared to be avenged*  
 He kidd anon his bowè was not broken; *showed promptly*  
 For suddenly he hit him at the full, *he = Love, him = Troilus*  
 And yet as proud a peacock can he pull. *And still (today)*

31. O blindè world! O blind intention!  
 How often falleth all th' effect contrair *outcome is opposite*  
 Of surquidry and foul presumption; *Of arrogance*  
 For caught is proud, and caught is debonair.  
 This Troilus is clomben on the stair, *has climbed*  
 And little weeneth that he must descend.  
 But alday falleth thing that fools ne wend: *every day; do not intend*

32. As proudè Bayard ginneth for to skip *B = a horse / begins*  
 Out of the way (so pricketh him his corn), *(feels his oats so much)*  
 Till he the lash have of the longè whip

---

<sup>1</sup> 27.6-7: Troilus, who loses no sleep over love-sickness, began to praise or to fault whomever he wanted to.

<sup>2</sup> 29.3-4: "And the trouble people have getting lovers and the difficulties (*doutances*) in retaining them"

Then thinketh he, ‘Though I prance all befor,<sup>1</sup>  
 First in the trace, full fat and newè shorn,  
 Yet am I but a horse, and horse’s law  
 I must endure, and with my fellows draw.’

33. So fared it by this fierce and proudè knight,  
 Though he a worthy kingè’s sonnè were,  
 And wendè nothing had had suchè might  
 Against his will that should his heartè stir,  
 Yet with a look his heartè waxed a-fire,  
 That he that now was most in pride above  
 Waxed suddenly most subject unto love.

*And thought*

*caught fire*

*Grew suddenly*

34. Forthy, example taketh of this man,  
 You wisè, proud and worthy folkès all  
 To scornen Love, which that so soonè can  
 The freedom of your heartès to him thrall.  
 For e’er it was, and e’er it shall befall,  
 That Love is he that allè thing may bind,  
 For may no man for-do the law of Kind

*Therefore*

*(not) to scorn*

*enslave*

*e’er: ever, always*

*undo; of Nature*

35. That this be sooth hath provèd, and doth yet;  
 For this, trow I, you knowen, all or some.  
 Men readen not that folk have greater wit  
 Than they that have been most with love y-nom,  
 And strongest folk be therewith overcome  
 The worthiest and greatest of degree;  
 This was, and is, and yet men shall it see.

*is true h. been proved*

*I imagine / one and all*

*overcome*

36. And truly well it sitteth to be so,  
 For alderwisest have therewith been pleased;  
 For they that have been aldermost in woe  
 With love have been most comforted and eased.  
 And oft it has the cruel heart appeased,  
 And worthy folk made worthier of name  
 And causeth most to dreaden vice and shame.<sup>2</sup>

*it is right*

*wisest of all*

*most of all*

*in reputation*

37. Now since it may not goodly be withstond,

*withstood*

---

<sup>1</sup> 32. Bayard (i.e. any good horse), made proud with good feeding, decides to go his own way till he feels the whip and realizes that, though he is the lead horse in the traces, is well fed and well groomed (*newe shorn*), he is still just a horse.

<sup>2</sup> 36: Standard notion in medieval romance of the effects of love.

And is a thing so virtuous in kind,  
 Refuseth not to Love for to be bound,  
 Since as Himselfen list He may you bind.  
 The yard is bet that bowen will and wind,<sup>1</sup>  
 Than that that bursts; and therefore I you rede  
 To follow him that so well can you lead.

*strong (virtuous) in nature.*

*breaks; advise*

38. But for to tellen forth in special  
 As of this kingè's son of which I told,  
 And letten other things collateral:  
 Of him think I my talè for to hold,  
 Both of his joy and of his carès cold,  
 And all his work as touching this mattér,  
 For I it gan, I will thereto refer.<sup>2</sup>

*And leave / on the side*

*return*

39. Within the temple he went him forth playing,  
 This Troilus, of every wight about,  
 On this lady and now on that looking,  
 Whereso she were of town or of without,  
 And upon case befell that through a rout  
 His eyè piercèd, and so deep it went  
 Till on Criseyde it smote, and there it stent.

*jesting  
 about everyone there*

*Whether  
 by chance / a crowd*

*rested*

40. And suddenly he waxed therewith astoned  
 And gan her bet' behold in thrifty wise.  
 "Oh mercy, God!" quod he, "Where hast thou woned?  
 Thou art so fair and goodly to devise!"  
 Therewith his heart began to spread and rise,  
 And soft he sighèd, lest men might him hear,  
 And caught again his firstè playing cheer.

*became stunned  
 better / admiring way  
 lived  
 to see*

*original joking manner*

41. She was not with the least of her statúre  
 But all her limbs so well answering  
 Weren to womanhood, that creäture  
 Was never lessè mannish in seeming;  
 And eke the purè wise of her moving  
 Showèd well that men might in her guess  
 Honour, estate and womanly noblesse.

*size  
 proportioned*

*in appearance  
 very manner*

*rank / nobility*

---

<sup>1</sup> 37.5-6: "The branch that will bend and twist is better than one that breaks."

<sup>2</sup> 38.7: "Because I began it, I will return to it."



42. To Troilus right wonder well withall  
 Gan for to like her moving and her cheer,<sup>1</sup>  
 Which somdeal deynous was, for she let fall  
 Her look a little aside in such mannér  
 Askances: "What! May I not standen here?"  
 And after that, her looking gan she light,  
 That never thought him seen so good a sight.

*bearing  
 somewhat haughty*

*As if to say:  
 her looks brightened(?)  
 It seemed he'd never*

43. And of her look in him there gan to quick  
 So great desire and such affection,  
 That in his heartè's bottom gan to stick  
 Of her his fixed and deep impression;  
 And though he erst had porèd up and down,  
 He was then glad his hornès in to shrink.  
 Unnethè wist he how to look or wink.<sup>2</sup>

*spring up*

*first sized (her) up*

44. Lo, he that let himselfen so cunning,  
 And scornèd them that Lovè's painès drye,  
 Was full unaware that Love had his dwelling  
 Within the subtle streamès of her eye,  
 That suddenly him thought he feltè die,  
 Right with her look, the spirit in his heart.  
 Blessèd be Love, that folk can thus convert!<sup>3</sup>

*who had thought himself  
 endure*

*(So) That*

45. She, this in black, liking to Troilus  
 Over all thing, he stood for to behold;  
 Nor his desire, nor wherefore he stood thus,  
 He neither cheerè made nor wordès told,<sup>4</sup>  
 But from afar (his manner for to hold),  
 On other things his look sometimes he cast  
 And eft on her, while that the service last.

*this (woman) / pleasing to  
 stopped*

*openly showed nor said  
 (usual) manner*

*And sometimes*

---

<sup>1</sup> 42.1-2: "Her carriage (*moving*) and her manner (*cheer*) were very pleasing to Troilus." *to like* = to be pleasing to.

<sup>2</sup> 43.7: "He hardly knew whether to look or close his eyes."

<sup>3</sup> 44.5-6: "He felt the spirit of his heart die ..." 44.7: "folk" is the grammatical object of the verb "convert": "Blessed be Love that can convert folk thus".

<sup>4</sup> 45.3-4: "Neither by overt action (*cheere*) nor by word did he show his desire nor his reason for standing that way." 45.4-7: That is, he tried to keep up his usual (haughty) manner by pretending to look at various things from a distance to cover up the constant return

46. And after this, not fully all a-whaped,  
 Out of the temple all easily he went,  
 Repenting him that he had ever japed  
 Of folk's love, lest fully the descent  
 Of scorn fall on himself; but, what he meant,  
 Lest it were wist on any manner side,  
 His woe he gan dissimulate and hide.

*dazed  
 quietly  
 jested  
  
 he felt  
 be known anywhere*

47. When he was from the temple thus departed  
 He straight anon unto his palace turneth,  
 Right with her look through-shotten and through-darted,  
 Al feigneth he in lust that he sojourneth;<sup>1</sup>  
 And all his cheer and speech also he borneth  
 And ay of Love's servants every while  
 Himself to wry, at them he gan to smile.

*shot through  
 Although / joy / lives  
 manner / burnishes  
 always / all time  
 to cover up*

48. And saidè: "Lord! so you live all in lest,  
 You lovers; for the cunningest of you,  
 That serveth most attentively and best,  
 Him tides as often harm thereof as prow:  
 Your hire is quit again, yea, God wot how!  
 Not well for well, but scorn for good service;  
 In faith, your order is rulèd in good wise!

*in joy  
  
 (To) him comes ... as help  
 You are paid / G. knows  
  
 (religious) order*

49. "In un-certain be all your observances,  
 But it a fewè silly pointès be;  
 Ne nothing asketh so great attendances  
 As does your law, and that know allè you.  
 But that is not the worst, as mote I thee;  
 But, told I you the worstè point, I 'lieve,  
 Al said I sooth, you woulden at me grieve.

*Except for  
  
  
 if I told you ... I believe  
 Although I tell the truth*

50. "But take this: what you lovers oft eschew,  
 Or elsè do of good intention,<sup>2</sup>  
 Full oft thy lady will it misconstrue  
 And deem it harm in her opinion;

*Take t. for a fact*

---

<sup>1</sup> 47.3-7: The meaning is that, smitten as he is with her looks, he still pretends that he is amused by lovers; he goes on pretending that he is totally cheerful, and by his manner and speech mocks the "servants of love" so as to cover up (*to wry*) his actual love-struck feelings.

<sup>2</sup> 50.1-3: Your lady will put a bad construction on (*misconstrue*) whatever well-meaning things you lovers do or do not do (*eschew*). 50.7 :*Well is him* is sarcastic.

And yet if she for other encheson  
 Be wroth, then shalt thou have a groan anon.  
 Lord! well is him that may be of you one.”

*reason*  
*angry*  
*Good for him !*

51. But for all this, when that he saw his time,  
 He held his peace, no other bote he gained.  
 For love began his feathers so to lime,  
 That well unnethe unto his folk he feigned  
 That other busy needès him distrained.  
 For woe was him, that what to do he n’ist,  
 But bade his folk to go wherè that them list.

*help*  
*to stick*  
*was barely (able to) pretend*  
*occupied*  
*didn’t know*  
*where they liked*

52. And when that he in chamber was alone,  
 He down upon his bed's foot him set,  
 And first he gan to sigh, and eft to groan  
 And thought ay on her so withouten let,  
 That as he sat awake, his spirit mett  
 That he her saw at temple, and all the wise  
 Right of her look,<sup>1</sup> and gan it new avise.

*and then*  
*constantly without ceasing*  
*dreamed*  
*ways(?)*  
*think about it anew*

53. Thus gan he make a mirror of his mind  
 In which he saw all wholly her figùre,  
 And that he well could in his heartè find  
 It was to him a right good áventure  
 To love such one, and if he did his cure,  
 To serven her, yet might he fall in grace  
 Or else for one of her servants pass.

*fortune*  
*if he took care*  
*get in her favor*  
*become servant (in love)*

54. Imagining that [no] travail nor grame  
 Ne mightè for so goodly one be lorn  
 As she;<sup>2</sup> nor he for his desire no shame,  
 Al were it wist, but in price and up-born  
 Of allè lovers well morè than befor;  
 Thus argumented he in his beginning,  
 Full unavisèd of his woe coming.

*labor or pain*  
*lost*  
*no shame (would feel)*  
*If it were known*  
*By all*  
*unaware*

---

<sup>1</sup> 52.6-7: The precise meaning of the phrase *all the wise right of her look* is a little uncertain, but it clearly has to do with Criseyde's appearance. Perhaps he saw in his mind's eye "just exactly the way she looked."

<sup>2</sup> 54: "Imagining that no labor or pain endured for one so good as she would be lost; nor would he feel any shame because of his desire, if it became known, but he would be held in esteem by lovers and regarded more highly than before."

55. Thus took he purpose lovè's craft to sue  
 And thought that he would worken privily,  
 First to hiden his desire in mew  
 From every wight y-born, all utterly  
 But he might aught recovered be thereby,  
 Remembering him that love too wide y-blow  
 Yields bitter fruit, although sweet seed be sow.

*to follow  
 secretly  
 in secret place  
 from everyone, totally  
 Unless he could be helped  
 talked about*

56. And overall this yet muchè more he thought  
 What for to speak and what to holden in  
 And what to arten her to love he sought  
 And on a song anonright to begin,  
 And gan loud on his sorrow for to win,  
 For with good hope he fully gan assent  
 Criseyde for to love and not repent:

*to urge  
 immediately  
 fight against*

57. And of his song not only the sentence,  
 As writ mine author callèd Lollius,<sup>1</sup>  
 But plainly, save our tonguè's difference,  
 I dare well say, in all that Troilus  
 Said in his song, lo! every word right thus  
 As I shall say; and whoso list it hear,  
 Lo, next this verse, he may it finden here.

*meaning  
  
 wants to hear*

#### CANTICUS TROILI<sup>2</sup>

58. "If no love is, O God, what feel I so?  
 And if love is, what thing and which is he?  
 If love be good, from whencè comes my woe?  
 If it be wick'd, a wonder thinketh me

*wicked / it seems*

---

<sup>1</sup> 57.2: Lollius is the mysterious author Chaucer professes to be following for his story. No such author is known, and is either an invention or a misunderstanding by Chaucer. Medieval writers often went out of their way to show that they were NOT original; that they were merely re-telling a story made famous by someone earlier, an "authority".

<sup>2</sup> "Troilus's Song" is a version of Petrarch's sonnet 132 enumerating the paradoxical feelings induced by being in love; this was a literary convention going back to the classics. Troilus's talent as a songwriter, as brief as it is sudden, is not meant to be taken too seriously.

When every torment and adversity  
That comes from him may to me savoury think,  
For ay thirst I the more that I it drink.<sup>1</sup>

*seem sweet  
ever*

59. “And if that at my ownè lust I burn,  
From whence comes my wailing and my 'plaint?  
If harm agree me, whereto 'plain I then?  
I n'ot ne why unwearied that I faint.  
O quickè death, O sweetè harm so quaint,  
How may of thee in me such quantity  
But if that I consent that it so be ?

*joy, desire  
complaint  
agrees with / complain  
I don't know  
living / so strange  
How can there be  
Unless*

60. “And if that I consent, I wrongfully,  
Complain, iwis; thus possèd to and fro,  
All steerless within a boat am I  
Amid the sea betwixen windès two  
That in contráry standen evermo'.  
Alas! What is this wonder malady?  
For heat of cold, for cold of heat I die.”<sup>2</sup>

*indeed / tossed*

*opposite directions*

61. And to the god of Lovè thus said he  
With piteous voice: “O lord, now yourès is  
My spirit, which that oughtè yourès be.  
You thank I, lord, that have me brought to this;  
But whether goddess or woman, y-wis,  
She be, I n'ot, which that you do me serve,”<sup>3</sup>  
But as her man I will ay live and starve.

*indeed  
I don't know  
live & die*

62. “You standen in her eyen mightily,<sup>4</sup>  
As in a place unto your virtue digne  
Wherefore, Lord, if my service or I  
May likè you, so be to me benign;

*may please you*

---

<sup>1</sup> 58: This stanza illustrates again the unconcern in the poem about a precise distinction between the idea of love as a powerful god (he, him), and love as a natural human phenomenon ( it ).

<sup>2</sup> 60.7: "I die of heat when it is cold, of cold when it is hot."

<sup>3</sup> 61.5-6: “But whether the one you make me serve (*do me serve*) is woman or goddess I do not know (*I n'ot*)

<sup>4</sup> This seems to mean that Love has his home in Criseyde's eyes, a place worthy of him.

For mine estate royál I here resign  
 Into her hand, and with full humble cheer  
 Become her man, as to my lady dear.”

63. In him ne deignéð sparen blood royál  
 The fire of Love, wherefrom God me bless,  
 Nor him forbore in no degree, for all  
 His virtue or his excellent prowess;<sup>1</sup>  
 But held him as his thrall low in distress  
 And burned him so in sundry ways ay new,  
 That sixty times a day he lost his hue.

*did not spare him  
 achievement  
 his (Love's) slave  
 always different  
 color*

64. So muchè day by day, his ownè thought  
 For lust to her gan quicken and increase,  
 That every other charge he set at nought.  
 Forthy, full oft, his hot fire to cease,  
 To see her goodly look he gan to press;  
 For thereby to be easèd well he wend,  
 And ay the nearer was, the more he brend.

*desire / grow  
 (So) that / duty  
 Therefore / to alleviate  
 exert himself  
 he thought  
 And always / burned*

65. For ay the nearre the fire, the hotter is;  
 This, trow I, knoweth all this company.  
 But were he far or near, I dare say this,  
 By night or day, for wisdom or folly,  
 His heartè, which that is his breastè's eye,  
 Was ay on her, that fairer was to seen  
 Than ever was Elaine or Polixene.

*nearer  
 I imagine*

*always  
 Helen or Polyxena*

66. Eke of the day there passèd not an hour  
 That to himself a thousand times he said:  
 “Good, goodly, whom serve I and labóur  
 As best I can, now would to God, Criseyde,  
 You woulden on me rue ere that I died.  
 My dearè heart, alas, my heal and hue  
 And life is lost, but you will on me rue.

*Eke = And  
  
 would take pity  
 health & color  
 unless you take pity*

67. All other dreadès weren from him fled  
 Both of the siege and his salvation  
 N' in his desire no other fawnès bred

*no young fancies (?)*

---

<sup>1</sup> 63.1-7: "The fire of Love did not deign to spare his (Troilus's) royal blood (God save me from that fire). Nor did it spare him because of his courage and his excellent achievements, but kept him in deep distress like a slave, and burned him in so many new and different ways, that he lost color sixty times a day."

But arguments to this conclusion:

That she on him would have compassion,  
And he to be her man while he may dure  
Lo, here his life, and from his death his cure.

*may live*

68. The showers sharpè fell of armès proof  
That Hector or his other brethren did,  
Ne made him only therefore oncè move,<sup>1</sup>  
And yet was he, where so men went or rid,  
Found one the best, and longest time abode  
Where peril was; and eke did such travail  
In armès that to think it was marvail.

*fell = terrible*

*marched or rode  
stayed*

69. But for no hate he to the Greekès had  
Nor also for the rescue of the town  
Ne made him there in armès for to mad,  
But only, lo, for this conclusion  
To liken her the best for his renown;  
From day to day in armès so he sped  
That all the Greekès as the death him dread.<sup>2</sup>

*to rage*

*to please h. / by his fame  
succeeded*

70. And from this forth then reft him love his sleep,  
And made his meat his foe; and eke his sorrow  
'Gan multiply, that whoso tookè keep,  
It showed in his hue both eve and morrow,  
Therefore a tittle he 'gan him for to borrow,  
Of other sickness, lest men of him wend  
That the hot fire of love him sorè brend;

*love robbed him of  
he lost his appetite  
whoever took notice  
color / a.m. & p.m.  
a pretense  
lest they think  
painfully burned*

71. And said he had a fever and fared amiss  
And how it was, certáin I cannot say,  
If that his lady understood not this,  
Or feigned her she n'ist, one of the tway,  
But well rede I, that by no manner way  
Ne seemèd it as if she on him raught,

*felt sick*

*pretended she didn't know / two  
I read or I know  
cared about*

---

<sup>1</sup> 68. 1-3: "The sharp, terrible attacks made by (or upon) Hector and his brothers did not move him once (or moved him only once)." *armes proof* means either that the attacks were proof of the valor in arms of Hector and his brothers, or that the arms with which they were attacked were "arms of proof", i.e. tested and hard.

<sup>2</sup> 69.7: This stanza again expresses the standard romance convention that love improves, among other things, a man's military prowess. See also below stanzas 154-5.

Or of his pain, nor whatsoe’er he thought.

72 . But then fell to this Troilus such woe  
That he was well nigh wood, for ay his dread  
Was this, that she some wight had lovèd so  
That ne’er of him she would have taken heed;  
For which him thought he felt his heart to bleed.  
Nor of his woe ne durst he not begin  
To tellen it, for all the world to win.

*mad / for constantly  
man*

*dared he not*

73. But when he had a spacè from his care  
Thus to himself full oft he gan to 'plain.  
He said: "O fool, now art thou in the snare  
That whilom japedest at lover's pain.  
Now art thou hent; now gnaw thine ownè chain.  
Thou wert ay wont each lover reprehend  
Of thing from which thou canst thee not defend.

*complain*

*once jested  
caught*

*always accustomed*

74. "What will now every lover say of thee  
If this be wist, but e'er in thine absènce  
Laughen in scorn and say: `Lo, there goes he  
That is the man of so great sapience  
That held us lovers least in reverence;  
Now thanked be God he may go in the dance  
Of them that Love list feebly to advance.’

*known, but ever*

*wisdom*

*whom L. does not want to help*

75. “But O, thou woeful Troilus , God would  
(Since thou must loven through thy destiny)  
That thou beset were on such one that should  
Know all thy woe, al’ lackèd her pity.  
But all so cold in love towardès thee  
Thy lady is, as frost in winter moon,  
And thou fordone, as snow in fire is soon.<sup>1</sup>

*would to God*

*fixated on  
even if she*

76. “God would I were arrivèd in the port  
Of death, to which my sorrow will me lead !  
Ah, Lord, it were to me a great comfórt  
Then were I quit of languishing in dread.  
For be my hidden sorrow y-blow abroad  
I shall bejapèd be a thousand time

*For if / spread about  
made fun of*

---

<sup>1</sup> The self pity of Troilus, who has not even spoken to Criseyde, is already in full bloom.



More than that fool of whose folly men rhyme.

77. “ But now help, God, and you, [my] sweet, for whom  
I ’plain; y-caught, yea, never wight so fast:  
O mercy, my dear heart, and help me from  
The death; for I, while that my life may last  
More than my life will love you to my last;  
And with some friendly look gladeth me, sweet,  
Though never morè thing you me behete. ”

*never man so firmly*

*gladden me  
promise me*

78. These wordès and full many another too.  
He spoke, and callèd e’er in his complaint  
Her name, for to tellen her his woe  
Till nigh that he in salty tears him drent.  
All was for nought; she heardè not his ’plaint,  
And when that he bethought on that folly,  
A thousand-fold his woe gan multiply.

*called constantly*

*Till nearly / drowned  
complaint  
thought about*

79. Bewailing in his chamber thus alone,  
A friend of his that callèd was Pandàre  
Came in once unaware, and heard him groan,  
And saw his friend in such distress and care.  
"Alas!" quod he, "who causeth all this fare?  
Oh mercy God, what unhap may this mean?  
Have now, thus soon, the Greekès made you lean?

*trouble*

*misfortune  
gaunt (with fear)*

80. “Or hast thou some remorse of conscience  
And art now fall in some devotion  
And wailest for thy sin and thine offence,  
And hast, for fearè, caught contritiön?  
God save them that besieged have our town,  
And so can lay our jollity on press,  
And bring our lusty folk to holiness.”

*make us pack up our merriment*

81. These wordès said he for the nonès all,  
That with such thing he might him angry make,  
And with an anger do his sorrow fall  
As for the time, and his couráge awake.  
But well he wist as far as tonguès spake<sup>1</sup>  
There n’as a man of greater hardiness

*for the occasion*

*reduce his sorrow*

*But he knew  
was not / courage*

---

<sup>1</sup> 81.5-6: He knew (*wist*) that everybody agreed (*as far as tongues spoke*) that Troilus was a man of the greatest courage and honor.

Than he, ne more desirèd worthiness.

*he = Troilus / honor*

82. "What case," quod Troilus, "what áventure  
Has guided thee to see my languishing  
That am refused of every creäture?  
But for the love of God, at my praying  
Go hence away, for certès my dying  
Will thee dis-ease, and I must needès die.  
Therefore go `way; there is no more to say.

*chance / accident*

*of = by*

*certainly  
distress*

83. "But if thou ween I be thus sick for dread,  
It is not so, and therefore scornè nought.  
There is another thing I take of heed  
Well more than aught the Greekès have y-wrought,<sup>1</sup>  
Which cause is of my death for sorrow and thought.  
But though that I now tell it thee ne lest,  
Be thou not wroth. I hide it for the best."

*if you think  
don't mock*

*don't wish to tell you  
angry*

84. This Pándare that nigh melts for woe and ruth  
Full often said: "Alas! What may this be?  
Now friend," quod he, "if ever love or truth  
Hath been or is betwixen thee and me,  
Ne do thou never such a cruelty  
To hidè from thy friend so great a care.  
Wost thou not well that it am I, Pandáre?

*nearly melts / pity*

*between*

*Know you not*

85. "I will parten with thee all thy pain  
If it be so I do thee no comfórt,  
As it is friend's right, sooth for to sayn,  
To interparten woe as glad desport.  
I have and shall, for true or false report,  
In wrong and right, y-loved thee all my life;  
Hide not thy woe from me, but tell it blive."

*share*

*truth  
To share woe as well as joy*

*at once*

86. Then gan this sorrowful Troilus to sigh  
And said him thus: "God leave it be my best  
To tell it thee, for since it may thee like,  
Yet will I tell it though my heartè burst;  
And well wot I thou mayst me do no rest.  
But lest thou deem I trustè not to thee,  
Now hearken, friend, for thus it stands with me.

*God grant  
since it pleases you*

*well I know  
you think  
Now, listen*

---

<sup>1</sup> 83.4: "Much more than anything that the Greeks have done."

87. "Love, (against the which whoso defendeth  
Himselfen most, him alderleast availeth)  
With disespair so sorrowful me offendeth  
That straight unto the death my heartè saileth.<sup>1</sup>  
Thereto, desire so burning me assaileth,  
That to be slain it were a greater joy  
To me than king of Greece to be or Troy.

*whoever  
least of all  
despair*

88. "Sufficeth this, my fullè friend Pandaré,  
What I have said, for now wost thou my woe,  
And for the love of God, my coldè care  
So hide it well, I tell it ne'er to mo' ;  
For harmès mighten follow more than two  
If it were wist; but be thou in gladness.  
And let me starve, unknown, of my distress."

*now you know  
  
more (than you)  
more than two = many  
known  
let me die*

89. "How hast thou thus unkindèly and long  
Hid this from me, thou fool?" quod Pándarus;  
"Paraunter, thou might after such one long  
That my advice anon may helpen us." <sup>2</sup>  
"This were a wonder thing," quod Troilus;  
"Thou never could'st in love thyselfen wiss;  
How devil mayst thou bringen *me* to bliss?"

*Perhaps  
  
succeed  
How the devil?*

90. "Yea, Troilus, now hearken," quod Pandaré,  
"Though I be nice; it happeth often so  
That one that excess doth full evil fare <sup>3</sup>  
By good counsel can keep his friend therefro.  
I have myself eke seen a blind man go  
There as he fell that couldè looken wide;<sup>4</sup>  
A fool may eke a wise man often guide.

*unsuccessful  
causes to do badly  
  
see all around  
also*

91. "A whetstone is no carving instrument,

---

<sup>1</sup> 87.1-4: "Love (against which he who tries to defend himself, does least well) has so overwhelmed me with despair that my heart is sailing straight to death."

<sup>2</sup> 89.3-4: "Perhaps you are longing for someone with whom I can be of help."

<sup>3</sup> 90.2-4: "It often happens that one who fares badly because of excess ... " It is not clear what "excess" Pandarus is referring to.

<sup>4</sup> 90.5-6: "I have seen a blind man walk safely where a man who could see all round him fell down."

And yet it maketh sharpè carving tools ;  
 And where thou wost that I have aught miswent  
 Eschew thou that, for such thing to thee school is.<sup>1</sup>  
 Thus often wisè men been ware by fools,  
 If thou do so, thy wit is well bewared.  
 By his contraire is everything declared.

*anywhere erred*  
*Avoid / a lesson to you*  
*are warned*  
*advised*  
*its contrary*

92. “For how might ever sweetness have been know  
 To him that never tasted bitterness?  
 Ne no man may be inly glad, I trow,  
 That never was in sorrow or some distress.  
 Eke white by black, by shame eke worthiness,  
 Each set by other, more for other seemeth,  
 As men may see; and so the wisè deemeth.

*fully happy, I guess*

*because of the other*  
*wise man*

93. “Since thus of two contraries is a lore,  
 I, that have in love so oft assayed  
 Grievances, oughtè can, and well the more,  
 Counsel thee of that thou art amayed.  
 Eke thee ne oughtè not been evil apayed,  
 Though I desirè with thee for to bear  
 Thy heavy charge; it shall thee lesse dere.

*lesson*  
*experienced*  
*to be able, all the m.*  
*(To) Advise / dismayed*  
*ill pleased*  
*hurt*

94. “I wot well that it fareth thus by me  
 As to thy brother Paris an herdess,  
 Which that y-clepèd was Oenone,  
 Wrote in a còmplaint of her heaviness.  
 You saw the letter that she wrote, I guess.”  
 “Nay never yet, y-wis,” quod Troilus.  
 “Now,” quod Pandare, “hearken; it was thus:

*shepherdess*

*indeed*

95. “ ‘Phoebus, that first found art of medicine,’  
 Quod she, ‘and could, in every wightè’s care,  
 Remede and rede by herbes he knew fine;  
 Yet to himself his cunning was full bare;  
 For love had him so bounden in a snare,  
 All for the daughter of the King Admete,  
 That all his craft ne could his sorrow beat ’<sup>2</sup>

*invented the art*  
*knew in every case*  
*r. and cure / knew well*  
*worthless*

---

<sup>1</sup> 91.3-4: “And where you know me to have gone wrong, avoid that; it should be a lesson to you.”

<sup>2</sup> 95: The point is that even the inventor of medicine could not cure himself of love sickness.

96 . "Right so fare I, unhappily for me.  
I love one best and that me smarteth sore.  
And yet, paraunter, can I redden thee  
And not myself. Reproveth me no more.  
I have no cause, I wot well, for to soar  
As does a hawk that listeth for to play,  
But to thy help yet somewhat can I say.

*pains me  
perhaps I can advise*

*I know well  
wants to*

97. "And of one thing right siker mayst thou be  
That certain, for to dien in the pain,  
That I shall never more discover thee.  
Nor, by my truth, I keep not to restrain  
Thee from thy love, though that it were Elaine  
That is thy brother's wife, if I it wist.  
Be what she be, and love her as thee list.

*quite sure  
die under torture  
give you away  
I care not  
Helen of Troy  
knew  
as you please*

98. "Therefore, as friend fully in me assure,  
And tell me plat what is thine encheson  
And final cause of woe that you endure:  
For, doubteth nothing, mine intention  
Is not to you of reprehension  
To speak as now, for no wight may bereave  
A man to love till that him list to leave.

*confide  
plainly / reason*

*rebuke  
nobody can prevent  
till he wants to*

99. "And witeth well, that bothè two been vices—  
Mistrusten all or elsè all believe,—  
But well I wot, the mean of it no vice is,  
For for to trusten some wight is a proof  
Of truth, and forthy would I fain remove.  
Thy wrong conceit, and do thee some wight trist  
Thy woe to tell; and tell me, if thee list.

*And know  
To mistrust  
I know, t. middle course  
someone  
therefore w. I gladly  
w. idea & make you trust  
if you please*

100. "The wisè saith, 'Woe him that is alone,  
For, an he fall, he has no help to rise.'  
And since thou hast a fellow, tell thy moan.  
For this is not, certáin, the nextè wise  
To winnen love, as teachen us the wise,  
To wallow and weep as Niobè the queen,  
Whose tearès yet in marble been y-seen.

*Wise man  
if he falls  
a friend / your complaint  
the best way*

101. "Let be thy weeping and thy dreariness,  
And let us lessen woe with other speech:  
So may thy woeful timè seemè less;

Delightè not in woe thy woe to seek,  
As do these foolès that their sorrows eke  
With sorrow, when they have misáventure,  
And listè not to seek them other cure.

*increase*

*And don't try to*

102. "Men say, 'To wretched is consolation  
To have another fellow in his pain.'  
That oughtè well be our opinion,  
For, bothe thou and I, of love we 'plain.  
So full of sorrow am I, sooth to sayn,  
That certainly no morè hardè grace  
May sit on me. For-why? There is no space.

*complain  
truth to tell  
bad fortune*

103. "If God will, thou art not aghast of me  
Lest I would of thy lady thee beguile?  
Thou wost thyself whom that I love pardee,  
As I best can, gone sithen a long while.  
And since thou wost I do it for no wile,  
And since that I am he thou trustest most,  
Tell me somewhat, since all my woe thou wost."

*afraid  
steal from you  
know / by God  
a long time now  
you know / no trick  
thou knowest*

104. Yet Troilus, for all this, no word said,  
But long he lay as still as he dead were.  
And after this with sighing he abrayed,  
And to Pandárus' voice he lent his ear.  
And up his eyen cast he, that in fear  
Was Pándarus lest that in frenzy  
He shouldè fall or elsè soonè die,

*came to  
eyes / (so) that  
a fit*

105. And cried: "Awake!" full wonderly and sharp.  
"What! Slumberest thou as in a lethargy?  
Or art thou like an ass unto the harp,  
That heareth sound when men the stringès ply  
But in his mind of that no melody  
May sinken him to gladden, for that he  
So dull is of his bestiality."

*touch*

106. And with that Pándare of his wordès stent,  
But Troilus yet him no word answéred,  
For why to tellen was not his intent

*ceased  
Because*

Never to no man, for whom that so he fared.<sup>1</sup>  
 For it is said: ‘Man maketh oft a yard  
 With which the maker is himself y-beat  
 In sundry manner,’ as these wise men treat.

*behaved*  
*stick*  
*beaten*  
*write*

107. And namely in his counsel telling  
 What toucheth love that ought to be secree  
 For of itself it would enough outspring  
 But if that it the better governed be;  
 Eke sometimes it is craft to seem to flee  
 From things which in effect men hunt fast.  
 All this gan Troilus in his heartè cast.

*especially / in confidence*  
*secret*  
*become known*  
*unless it is well conducted*  
*it is wise*  
*consider*

108. But natheless, when he had heard him cry  
 "Awake", he gan to sighen wonder sore  
 And said: "Friend, though that I stillè lie  
 I am not deaf; now peace, and cry no more,  
 For I have heard thy wordès and thy lore;  
 But suffer me my mischief to bewail,  
 For thy provérbès may me naught avail.

*advice*  
*my trouble*

109. "Nor other curè can'st thou none for me:  
 Eke, I will not be curèd, I will die.  
 What know I of the Queenè Niobe?  
 Let be thine old examples, I thee pray."  
 "No," quod Pandarus, "therefore I say.  
 Such is delight of foolès to bewEEP  
 Their woe, but seeken botè they ne keepe.

*you know no other c.*  
  
*seek remedy t. don' try*

110. "Now know I that there reason in thee failleth.  
 But tell me: if I wistè what she were  
 For whom that thee all this misaunter aileth,  
 Durst thou that I told her in her ear  
 Thy woe (since thou dar'st not thyself for fear)  
 And her besought on thee to have some ruth?"  
 "Why, nay," quod he, "by God and by my truth."

*if I knew who*  
*this distress ails you*  
*Would you prefer if I told*  
  
*pity*

111. "What? Not as busily," quod Pándarus  
 As though my own life lay upon this need?"

*Not (if I worked) as hard*

---

<sup>1</sup> 106.3-4: "It was his intention never to tell anyone [the name of the woman] for whom he was behaving in this manner."

"No, certès, brother," quod this Troilus. *certainly*  
 "And why?" "For thou should'st never speed." *succeed*  
 "Wost thou that well?" "Yea, that is out of dread," *Do you know that? / is certain*  
 Quod Troilus, "for all that e'er you can, *whatever you do*  
 She will to no such wretch as I be won."

112. Quod Pandarus: "Alas! what may this be,  
 That thou despairèd art thus causèless? *without cause*  
 What? liveth not thy lady? *Bless you!* *Ben' citee*  
 How wost thou so that thou art gracèless? *How do you know you're out of favor*  
 Such evil is not always bootèless *past cure*  
 Why, put not impossibël thus thy cure,  
 Since thing to come is oft in áventure. *up to chance*

113. "I grantè well that thou endurest woe  
 As sharp as doth he, Tityrus, in Hell,  
 Whose stomach fowlès tearen evermo' *birds ...*  
 That hightè vultures, as [the] bookès tell. *... called vultures*  
 But I may not endure that thou dwell *I can't stand*  
 In so unskilful an opiniön, *unenlightened*  
 That of thy woe is no curaciön. *cure*

114. "But oncè n'ilt thou -- for thy coward heart,  
 And for thine ire and foolish wilfulness, *not once will you*  
 For wan-trust -- tellen of thy sorrows smart?; *anger*  
 Ne to thine ownè help do busyness, *lack of trust / painful s.*  
 As much as speak a reason more or less, *make the effort*  
 But lie as he that list of nothing recche?  
 What woman couldè lovè such a wretch? *cares about nothing*

115. "What may she deemen other of thy death *think*  
 (If thou thus die and she n'ot why it is), *does not know*  
 But that for fear is yelden up thy breath  
 For Greekès have besieged us iwis? <sup>1</sup> *Just because Greeks*  
 Lord, what a thank then shalt thou have of this!  
 This will she say, and all the town at once:  
 'The wretch is dead. The devil have his bones.'

---

<sup>1</sup> 115 : "What else is she to think of your death, if you die without telling her, but that you died out of fear of the Greeks who have besieged us? And the thanks you will get from her and all the town is: The coward is dead; to hell with him."



116. "Thou mayst alone here weep and cry and kneel,  
 But, love a woman that she wot it not! *knows it not*  
 And she will quite it that thou shalt not feel, *requite*  
 Unknown, unkissed, and lost that is unsought.<sup>1</sup>  
 What! Many a man has love full dear y-bought  
 Twenty winters that his lady wist, *knew it*  
 And never yet his lady's mouth he kissed.

117. "What! Should he therefore fallen in despair  
 Or be recreant for his ownè teen, *cowardly in grief*  
 Or slay himself al be his lady fair? *even if his lady*  
 Nay, nay, but e'er in one be fresh and green *but constantly be eager*  
 To serve and love his dearè heartè's queen,  
 And think it is a guerdon her to serve *privilege*  
 A thousandfold more than he can deserve."

118. And of that word took heedè Troilus,  
 And thought anon what folly he was in  
 And how that sooth to him said Pándarus *truth*  
 That for to slay himself might he not win, *profit*  
 But bothè do unmanhood and a sin  
 And of his death his lady not to wite, *to blame*  
 For of his woe, God wot, she knew full lite. *G. knows / little*

119. And with that thought he gan full sorely sigh  
 And said: "Alas! What is me best to do?"  
 To whom Pandárus answered: "If thee like,  
 The best is that thou tell me all thy woe  
 And have my truth: but thou it findè so *my word / unless you*  
 I be thy boote ere that it be full long, *your relief before long*  
 To pieces do me draw and sithen hang." *have me drawn & hanged*

120. "Yea, so thou sayst," quod Troilus then. "Alas!  
 But God wot, it is not the rather so. *that does not make it so*  
 Full hard were it to helpen in this case  
 For well find I that Fortune is my foe,  
 Nor all the men that riden can or go *or walk*

---

<sup>1</sup> 116.2-7: "But if you love a woman who does not know it [because you have not told her], she will return your love in a way you cannot feel [i.e. not at all]. The woman who does not know that you love her, who remains unkissed and unpursued, is lost [as a lover]. Many a man has loved a lady who has known about his love, for 20 years, and has remained unrewarded even by a kiss from her mouth."

May of her cruel wheel the harm withstand,  
For as she list she plays with free and bond."<sup>1</sup>

*she pleases / & slave*

121. Quod Pandarus: "Then blamest thou Fortune  
For thou art wroth? Yea, now at erst I see.  
Wost thou not well that Fortune is commune  
To every manner wight in some degree?  
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo, pardee,  
That as her joyès musten overgone  
So must her sorrows passen, everyone.

*upset / at last  
Know you not / common  
e. kind of person  
by God  
fade*

122. "For if her wheel stints anything to turn,  
Then ceases she Fortuna for to be.  
Now since the wheel by no way may sojourn,  
What wost thou if her mutability  
Right as thyselfen list will do by thee,<sup>2</sup>  
Or that she be not far from thy helping?  
Paraunter thou hast causè for to sing.

*ceases at all*

*may pause  
How do you know  
Just as you wish*

*Perhaps*

123. "And therefore wost thou what I thee beseech?  
Let be thy woe and turning to the ground.  
For whoso list have helping of his leech,  
To him behoveth first unwry his wound.  
To Cerberus in Hell ay be I bound,  
Were it for my sister all thy sorrow,  
By my will she should all be thine tomorrow.

*do you know?*

*whoever wants / doctor  
he must first uncover  
let me be tied*

124. "Look up, I say, and tell us what she is  
Anon, that I may go about thy need.  
Know I her aught? For my love tell me this.  
Then would I hopen rather for to speed."  
Then gan the vein of Troilus to bleed  
For he was hit, and waxed all red for shame.  
"Aha!" quod Pándare. "Here beginneth game"

*At once  
for love of me  
to succeed quicker*

*and blushed*

125. And with that word he gan him for to shake

---

<sup>1</sup> 120.4-7: One of the standard ways of portraying Fortune was as a woman, sometimes with a blindfold, who spun a wheel at her whim. On the wheel were people who went to the top or were thrown down as it turned.

<sup>2</sup> 122.4-5: "How do you know whether her changeableness may not do for you just what you want?"

And said: "Thief, thou shalt her namè tell."  
 But then gan silly Troilus to quake  
 As though men should have led him into Hell  
 And said: "Alas! of all my woe the well !  
 Then is my sweetè foe callèd -- Criseyde."  
 And well nigh with that word for fear he died.

*the source*

*nearly*

126. And when that Pandare heard her namè neven,  
 Lord! he was glad, and saidè: "Friend so dear,  
 Now fare aright, for Jové's name in heaven,  
 Love has beset thee right. Be of good cheer,  
 For of good name and wisdom and mannér  
 She has enough, and eke of gentleness.  
 If she be fair, thou wost thyself, I guess.

*named*

*Love has blessed you*

*of good breeding*

127. "Ne never saw I a more bounteous  
 Of her estate, nor gladder, nor of speech  
 A friendlier, nor none more gracious  
 For to do well, nor less had need to seek  
 What for to do, and all this bet to eke  
 In honour, to as far as she may stretch:  
 A kingè heart seemeth by hers a wretch

*Of her rank? of her goods?*

*all the better to increase*

128. "And forthy look of good comfórt thou be  
 For certainly the firstè point is this  
 Of noble courage, and well ordainee <sup>1</sup>  
 A man t'have peacè with himself i-wis ;  
 So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is  
 To loven well and in a worthy place ;  
 Thee oughtè not to clepe it hap, but grace.

*And therefore  
 the first p. ... of n. courage is  
 & rightly understood*

*not call it luck*

129. "And also think, and therewith gladden thee,  
 That since thy lady virtuous is all,  
 So follows it that there is some pity  
 Amongst all these others in general.  
 And forthy see that thou, in specíal,  
 Requirè naught that is against her name,  
 For virtue stretcheth not itself to shame.

*her other virtues  
 And therefore  
 nothing / reputation*

130. "But well is me that ever I was born,

*But I'm glad*

---

<sup>1</sup> "The first point of noble courage, rightly understood (or well ordered), is for a man to have peace with himself indeed"

That thou beset art in so good a place;  
 For by my truth in love I durst have sworn  
 Thee never should have tid thus fair a grace.<sup>1</sup>  
 And wost thou why? For thou wert wont to chase  
 At Love in scorn, and for despite him call  
 ‘Saint Idiot, lord of these foolès all.’

*you have settled  
 I dared swear  
 to thee / happened  
 know you? / used to sneer*

131. “How often hast thou made thy nicè japes  
 And said that Lovès servants, every one  
 Of nicèty be very Godès apes  
 And somè wouldè munch their meat alone  
 Lying abed, and make them for to groan,  
 And some, thou saigest, had a blanchè fever  
 And praydest God he shouldè ne’er recover;

*silly jokes  
 From silliness  
 eat meals alone  
 pale with lovesickness*

132. “ And some of them took on them for the cold  
 More than enough -- so saigest thou full oft;  
 And some have feignèd often time, and told  
 How that they waken when they sleepen soft,  
 And thus they would have brought themselves aloft,  
 And natheless were under at the last:  
 Thus saigest thou, and japedest full fast.

*against fever chills  
 enough (clothes)  
 lay awake*

133. “Yet saigest thou that for the morè part  
 These lovers woulden speak in general,  
 And thoughten that it was a siker art  
 For failing, for t’assayen over all:  
 Now may I jape of thee if that I shall;  
 But natheless although that I shouldè die,  
 Thou now art none of those I durstè say.

*sure way  
 Against failure, to try all over  
 mock you  
 I dare*

134. "Now beat thy breast, and say to God of Love:  
 ‘Thy grace, O lord! For now I me repent  
 If I mis-spoke, for now myself, I love’ ;  
 Thus say with all thine heart in good intent."  
 Quod Troilus: "Ah, lord, I me consent,  
 And pray to thee my japès thou forgive,

*I myself am a lover  
 mockeries*

---

<sup>1</sup> 130:3-4: "On my word, I would have sworn that such good fortune in love would never have happened to you."

And I shall nevermore, while that I live." <sup>1</sup>

135. "Thou say'st well," quod Pandaré, "and now I hope  
That thou the goddè's wrath hast all appeased.  
And sithen thou hast weepen many a drop *since*  
And said such things wherewith thy god is pleased,  
Now wouldè never god but thou were eased, <sup>2</sup>  
And think well, she of whom rist all thy woe *for whom arises*  
Hereafter may thy comfort be also.

136. "For thilkè ground that bears the weedès wick *nasty*  
Bears eke those wholesome herbès, as full oft  
Next the foul nettle rough and thick  
The rosè waxeth sweet and smooth and soft, *grows*  
And next the valley is the hill aloft,  
And next the darkè night the gladdè morrow  
And also joy is next the fine of sorrow. *the end*

137. "Now lookè that attemper be thy bridle, *Be sure that moderation*  
And for the best, ay suffer to the tide, *wait for the time*  
Or elsè all our labour is on idle: *in vain*  
He hastens well who wisely can abide. *can wait*  
Be diligent and true and ay well hide. *always*  
Be lusty, free, perséver in thy service  
And all is well, if thou work in this wise.

138. "But he that parted is in every place  
Is nowhere whole, as writen clerkès wise;  
What wonder is though such one have no grace? *no luck*  
Eke wost thou how it fares of some service? *some courtships*  
As plant a tree or herb in sundry wise  
And on the morrow pull it up as blive, *as quickly*  
No wonder is though it may never thrive.

139. "And since that God of Love has thee bestowed  
In placè digne unto thy worthiness, *befitting your worth*  
Stand fastè, for to good port hast thou rowed,

---

<sup>1</sup> 134: This stanza and part of the next one contain a parody of Catholic sacramental confession with Pandarus the "priest" giving instructions on contrition to the "penitent" Troilus, who obediently complies and prays to the god for forgiveness.

<sup>2</sup> 135.5: "May god want nothing except to see you relieved"

And of thyself, for any heaviness  
 Hope always well, for but if dreariness  
 Or over-hastè, both our labour shend,  
 I hope of this to maken a good end.

*in spite of  
 but if = unless  
 ruin*

140. "And wost thou why I am the less afeared  
 Of this mattèrè with my niece to treat? <sup>1</sup>  
 For this have I heard said of wise y-lered  
 `Was never man nor woman yet begot  
 That was unapt to suffer lovè's heat  
 Celestial, or elsè love of kind.' <sup>2</sup>  
 Forthy some grace I hope in her to find.

*do you know?  
 to take up this matter  
 from learned wise men  
 begotten*

*Divine or human  
 Therefore*

141. "And for to speak of her in special:  
 Her beauty to bethinken and her youth  
 It sits her not to be celestial  
 As yet, though that her listè both and couth.  
 But truly, it sits her well right nouth  
 A worthy knight to loven and to cherish  
 And but she do, I hold it for a vice.

*to consider  
 It's not time for her  
 even if she wanted & could  
 now*

*And unless*

142. "Wherefore I am and will be ready ay  
 To painè me to do you this service,  
 For both of you to pleasen thus hope I  
 Hereafterward; for you be bothè wise  
 And can in counsel keep in such a wise  
 That no man shall the wiser of it be,  
 And so we may be gladdened allè three.

*always  
 To take pains*

*keep a secret so that*

143. "And by my truth, I have right now of thee  
 A good conceit in my wit, as I guess;  
 And what it is I will now that thou see.  
 I thinkè, since that Love, of his goddness  
 Has thee converted out of wickedness,  
 That thou shalt be the bestè post, I 'lieve,  
 Of all his law, and most his foes to grieve.

*a good opinion in m. mind*

*best support, I believe*

144. "Example why ? See how these wisè clerks  
 That erren aldermost against a law

*scholars  
 offend most*

---

<sup>1</sup> 140.2: Chaucer or Pandarus drops the news of this crucial relationship very casually.

<sup>2</sup> 140.4-6: "No man ever born has been incapable of love, either human or divine (**celestial**)."

And be converted from their wicked works  
 Through grace of God, that list them to Him draw. *who chooses*  
 Then are they folk that have most God in awe  
 And strongest faithéd be, I understand,  
 And can an error alderbest withstand.” *refute best of all*

145. When Troilus had heard Pandaré assented  
 To be his help in loving of Criseyde,  
 Waxed of his woe, as who says, untormented,<sup>1</sup>  
 But hotter waxed his love, and thus he said *hotter grew*  
 With sober cheer although his heartè played: *quiet way / was merry*  
 "Now blissful Venus, help ere that I starve. *before I die*  
 Of thee, Pandaré, I may some thank deserve.

146. "But dearè friend, how shall my woe be less  
 Till this be done? And good, eke tell me this *And, good (friend)*  
 How wilt thou say of me and my distress  
 Lest she be wroth? -- This dread I most, iwis -- *angry / indeed*  
 Or will not hear or trowen how it is. *Or (if she) / not believe*  
 All this dread I, and eke for the mannér  
 Of thee, her eem, she will no such thing hear."<sup>2</sup> *her uncle*

147. Quod Pandarus: "Thou hast a full great care  
 Lest that the churl may fall out of the moon! *man*  
 Why, Lord! I hate of thee thy nicè fare! *silly behavior*  
 Why intermit of what thou'st not to do?<sup>3</sup>  
 For God's love I biddè thee a boon: *ask a favor*  
 So let me alone and it shall be the best."  
 "Why, friend," quod he "now do right as thee lest. *as you please*

---

<sup>1</sup> 145.3: "Became, shall we say, 'untormented' by woe."

<sup>2</sup> 146.6-7: *for the manner / Of thee ...*: The meaning of this difficult phrase may be that because of her relationship to Pandarus she will be embarrassed (or incredulous) and so will not listen to love overtures from him on Troilus's behalf.

<sup>3</sup> 147.4: "Why interfere with what you are not concerned with? [since you have handed the matter over to me]." *Thou'st not* = "thou hast not".

148. "But hearken, Pándare, one word.<sup>1</sup> For I n'ould  
 That thou in me wendest so great folly,  
 That to my lady I desiren should  
 What toucheth harm or any villainy  
 For dreadèless me werè lever die  
 That she of me aught elsè understood  
 But what that mightè sounen unto good."

*I don't want  
 imagine  
 certainly I'd rather die  
 be honorably intended*

149. Then laughed this Pandare, and anon answered:  
 "And I thy borrow?<sup>2</sup> Fie! no wight does but so;  
 I roughtè not though that she stood and heard  
 How that thou sayst; but farewell I will go.  
 Adieu! Be glad! God speed us bothè two.  
 Give me this labour and this busyness  
 And of my speed be thine all the sweetness."

*I don't care  
 May God favor  
 of my success*

150. Then Troilus gan down on knees to fall  
 And Pandar in his arms he hentè fast  
 And said: "Now fie on Greekès all !  
 Yet, pardee, God shall help us at the last;  
 And dreadèless, if that my life may last,  
 And God toforn, lo, some of them shall smart  
 And yet m'athinks that this avaunt m' astart."<sup>3</sup>

*I swear to God*

151. "Now, Pandarus, I can no morè say  
 But thou wise, thou wost, thou mayst, thou art all!  
 My life, my death whole in thine hand I lay.  
 Help now." Quod he: "Yes, by my truth, I shall."  
 "God yield thee, friend, and thus in special,"  
 Quod Troilus, "that thou me recommend  
 To her that to the death me may command."

*knowest  
 "he" = P.  
 God reward*

---

<sup>1</sup> 148.2: Troilus does not want Pandarus to think that he, Troilus, is so insensitive that he wants anything wrong or unbecoming from Criseyde, asserting that he would rather die than have her think his intentions dishonorable.

<sup>2</sup> 149.1-4: The lines seems to mean: "Pandarus laughed and answered: 'With me as your surety! (chaperone?). Oh, nobody says anything else. I wouldn't mind if she stood here and heard what you say.' " This seems sardonic in Pandarus, but if so, it is at odds with his concern expressed earlier that Troilus should not do anything to dishonor Criseyde (129.6-7) and similar concerns later. *And I your borrow* occurs again in Pandarus's mouth at II.20.1, where it seems to mean "I assure you."

<sup>3</sup> "And yet I am sorry (*me athinks*) that this boast (*avaunt*) escaped me (*m'astart*).



152. This Pandare then, desirous for to serve  
 His fullè friend, then said in this mannér:  
 "Farewell, and think I will thy thanks deserve.  
 Have here my truth, and that thou shalt well hear."  
 And went his way, thinking on this mattér  
 And how he best might her beseech of grace,  
 And find a timè thereto, and a place.

*dear*

153. For every wight that has a house to found  
 Ne runneth not the work for to begin  
 With rakel hand, but he will bide a stound  
 And send his heart's line out from within  
 Alderfirst his purpose for to win.  
 All this Pandárus in his heartè thought  
 And cast his work full wisely ere he wrought.

*rash / wait a time  
 plumbline ?  
 First of all / to gauge*

*planned / before going to work*

154. But Troilus lay then no longer down  
 But up anon upon his steedè bay,<sup>1</sup>  
 And in the field he playèd the lion.  
 Woe was that Greek that with him met that day.  
 And in the town his manner thenceforth ay  
 So goodly was, and got him so in grace  
 That each him loved that lookèd in his face.

*promptly / warhorse  
 battlefield*

*always  
 favor*

155. For he became the friendliestè wight  
 The gentilest<sup>2</sup> and eke the mostè free,  
 The thriftiest and one the bestè knight  
 That in his timè was, or mightè be.  
 Dead were his japès and his cruelty,  
 His highè port and his mannér estrange,  
 And each of them gan for a virtue change.<sup>3</sup>

*person  
 most generous  
 worthiest*

*jibes  
 haughty & scornful manner  
 each of these (faults)*

156. Now let us stint of Troilus a stound  
 That fareth like a man that hurt is sore,  
 And is somedeal of aching of his wound

*stop (talking) / a while  
 acts  
 somewhat*

---

<sup>1</sup> 154.2: "he mounted" is understood after *bay*. Stanzas 154-5 expand on the medieval romance convention mentioned earlier that falling in love improved a man's military prowess and his social grace. See again later in book III.

<sup>2</sup> 155.2-3: *gentilest* means something more than modern "gentlest" and closer to "most noble".

<sup>3</sup> 155.7: "And began to exchange each of them (i.e. those faults) for a virtue."

Y-lisséd well, but healéd no deal more.  
And as an easy patient, the lore  
Abides of him that goes about his cure,<sup>1</sup>  
And thus he dryeth forth his áventure.

*Much relieved but not healed  
the instructions*

*accepts his fortune*

Here ends Book I

---

<sup>1</sup> 156.5-6: "Like a good patient, he pays attention to the instructions (*lore*) of him (i.e. the physician) who is trying to cure him."

# **TROILUS AND CRISEYDE**

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

## **Book II**

## Book II

## Proem

1. Out of these blackè wavès for to sail,  
 O wind, O wind, the weather 'ginneth clear,  
 For in this sea the boat hath such travail,  
 Of my cunning that unnethes I it steer.<sup>1</sup>  
 This sea clepe I the tempestuous matter  
 Of dis-espair that Troilus was in.  
 But now of hope the Kalendès begin.
- begins to  
difficulty*  
  
*I call  
despair  
Kalendes = first days*
2. O lady mine that callèd art Cleo,  
 Thou be my speed from this forth, and my muse  
 To rhymè well this book, till I have do.  
 Me needeth here no other art to use;  
 For-why to every lover I me excuse  
 That of no sentiment I this endite  
 But out of Latin in my tongue it write.<sup>2</sup>
- Cleo = muse of history  
(Be) thou my help  
finished*  
  
*Therefore  
no experience / compose*
3. Wherefore I will have neither thanks nor blame  
 Of all this work, but pray you meekèly,  
 Dis-blameth me if any word be lame;  
 For as my author said, so say I.  
 Eke, though I speak of love unfeelingly,  
 No wonder is, for it no thing of new's:  
 A blind man cannot judgen well in hues.
- Don't blame*  
  
*Also  
is nothing new  
colors*
4. You know eke that in form of speech is change  
 Within a thousand years, and wordès tho  
 That hadden price, now wonder nice and strange  
 Us thinketh them, and yet they spoke them so
- also  
then  
had value / now very odd  
They seem to us*

---

<sup>1</sup> 1.4: "That my skill (*cunning*) is scarcely (*unnethes*) sufficient to steer it." *that* belongs syntactically at the beginning of the line.

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer's source is, of course, Boccaccio's Italian.

And sped as well in love as men now do.<sup>1</sup>  
 Eke for to winnen love in sundry ages  
 In sundry landès, sundry been usages.

*And succeeded  
 And / various times  
 customs*

5. And for-thy if it hap in any wyse  
 That there be any lover in this place  
 That hearkens, as the story will devise,  
 How Troilus came to his lady's grac;  
 And thinketh: "So n'ould I nat love purcháse",  
 Or wonders on his speech and his doing,  
 I n'ot; but it is me no wondering.

*tell*

*I know not*

6. For every wight which that to Romé went  
 Held not one path, or always one mannér;  
 Eke in some lands were all the gamen shent,  
 If that they fared in love as men do here,  
 As thus, in open doing or in cheer,  
 In visiting, in form, or said their saws;  
 For-thy, men say, each country has its laws.

*every one*

*all the fun would be lost*

*public actions or looks  
 forms of courting / sayings  
 Because*

---

<sup>1</sup> 4.1-5: That the words of these five lines are true, not only for lovers' customs but for English generally, is evident in the grammar and word usage of the lines themselves, even in the present version with its modern spelling and letter forms, but the fact is more dramatically illustrated from the Chaucer manuscripts. Here is the version of these lines as recorded in the Corpus Manuscript:

3e knowe ek that in fourme of speche is chaunge  
 With-inne a thousand 3eer and wordes tho  
 That hadden pris now wonder nyce and straunge  
 Us thenketh hem and 3et thei spake hem so  
 And spedde as wel in loue as men now do

In the Campsall MS the first and fourth lines are:

1. Ye knowe ek þat in forme of speche is chaunge
4. Vs thenkeþ hem / and yet þay spak hem so.

It is now 600 years, not 1000, since Chaucer's time, but the reader can see how the language, not just the language of love, has changed significantly : in the use of written characters (e.g. **p** and **3**), in spelling, grammar, vocabulary, semantics, punctuation conventions and, less obviously, in pronunciation (notice that *so* and *do* no longer rhyme).

This edition is designed to make Chaucer's text more accessible to present-day readers, by modernizing most of the old spelling, and by adding punctuation and glosses to help readers with the syntax and obsolete words of Chaucer's language, which remains intact.

7. Eke scarcely been there in this placè three  
 That have in love said like and done in all;  
 For to thy purpose this may liken *thee*,  
 And *thee* right nought, yet all is said or shall.  
 Eke some men grave in tree, some in stone wall,  
 As it betides; but since I have begun,  
 Mine author shall I follow if I can.

*said or done the same  
 may please you  
 everything gets said  
 cut (names)  
 chances*

*End of the Proem*

8. In May that mother is of monthès glad  
 That freshè flowers blue and white and red  
 Be quick again, that winter deadè made,  
 And full of balm is floating every mead  
 When Phoebus doth his brightè beamès spread  
 Right in the whitè bull -- it so betid  
 As I shall sing, on Mayè's day the third

*Are alive  
 sweet smell / meadow  
 P = the sun  
 sign of Taurus / it happened*

9. That Pandarus, for all his wisè speech  
 Felt eke his part of Lovè's shottès keen  
 That, could he ne'er so well of loving preach,<sup>1</sup>  
 It made his hue a-day full often green;  
 So shope it that him fell that day a teen  
 In love, for which in woe to bed he went,  
 And made, ere it was day, full many a went.

*sharp arrows  
 color / many times a day  
 It happened / a pain  
 toss, turn*

10. The swallow Procnè with a sorrowful lay,  
 When morrow came gan make her waymenting,  
 Why she forshapen was; and ever lay  
 Pandàre a-bed, half in a slumbering,  
 Till she so nigh him made her chittering  
 How Tereus gan forth her sister take,  
 That with the noise of her he gan awake.

*song  
 lament  
 transformed  
 so near*

11. And gan to call and dress him up to rise  
 Remembering him his errand was to do  
 From Troilus, and eke his great emprise,  
 And cast, and knew in good plight was the moon  
 To do viage, and took his way full soon

*get ready to  
 enterprise  
 cast (a horoscope)  
 To start something*

---

<sup>1</sup> 9.3: "That no matter how good he was at *talking* about love ..." Pandarus has his occasional bout of lovesickness, a somewhat unconvincing and unnecessary element in the story.

Unto his niece's palace there beside.  
Now Janus, god of entry, thou him guide.

12. When he was come unto his niece's place,  
"Where is my lady?" to her folk said he;  
And they him told, and he forth in gan pace  
And found two other ladies set and she  
Within a pavèd parlor, and they three  
Heard a maiden read to them the geste  
Of the siege of Thebès, while them lest.<sup>1</sup>

*sitting*

*story  
while it pleased them*

13. Quod Pandarus: "Ma damè, God you see,  
With all your book and all the company!"  
"Eh, uncle mine, welcome i-wis," quod she;  
And up she rose, and by the hand in hie  
She took him fast, and saidè: "This night thrice —  
To goodè may it turn, — of you I mett."  
And with that word she down on bench him set.

*God bless you*

*indeed  
in haste  
Last night  
I dreamed*

14. "Yea, niece, you shall farè well the bet,  
If God will, all this year," quod Pandarus.  
"But I am sorry that I have you let  
To hearken of your book you praisen thus;  
For God's love, what says it? Tell it us.  
Is it of love? Oh, some good you me lere."  
"Uncle," quod she, "your mistress is not here."

*the better*

*hindered*

*may you teach me  
girlfriend, beloved*

15. With that they gonnen laugh, and then she said:<sup>2</sup>  
"This rómance is of Thebès that we read;  
And we have heard how that King Laius died  
Through Oedipus his son, and all that deed;  
And here we stenten at these letters red,<sup>3</sup>  
How that the bishop (as the book can tell)  
Amphiorax, fell through the ground to hell."

*romance = geste in 12.6*

*stopped  
[actually a soothsayer]*

---

<sup>1</sup> 12.4-8: In an age of few books it was common for one person to read to a group.

<sup>2</sup> 14.7: Troilus had remarked in Bk I that Pandarus had had no success in love. His unrequited love for some unspecified woman (*your mistress*) is, in spite of stanzas 9 & 10 above, something of a good-natured joke among family and friends.

<sup>3</sup> 15.5: Red letters (rubrics) marked the beginnings of sections in many medieval MSS.

16. Quod Pandarus: "All this I know myself.  
And all the siege of Thebès and the care;  
For hereof been there makèd bookès twelve.  
But let this be, and tell me how you fare.  
Do 'way your barb, and show your facè bare;  
Do 'way your book, rise up and let us dance  
And let us do to May some óbservance."

*"The Thebaid"*

*widow's headdress  
Put away*

17. "I? God forbid," quod she. "Be you mad?  
Is that a widow's life, so God you save?  
By God, you maken me right sore a-dread,  
You be so wild, it seemeth that you rave.  
It sits me wel bet' ay in a cave  
To bid, and read on holy saintès' lives.  
Let maidens go to dances, and young wives."

*would be more suitable  
To pray*

18. "As ever thrive I," quod this Pandarus,  
"Yet could I tell a thing to do you play."  
"Now, uncle dear," quod she, "tell it us  
For God's love. Is then the siege away?  
I am of Greeks so fearèd that I die."  
"Nay, nay," quod he, "as ever may I thrive  
It is a thing well better than such five."

*to delight you*

*5 times better*

19. "Yea, holy God!" quod she, "what thing is that?  
What? better than such five? Eh, nay, i-wis  
For all this world ne can I reden what  
It shoulde be: some jape, I trow, is this;  
And, but yourselfen tell us what it is,  
My wit is for t'arede it all too lean.<sup>1</sup>  
As help me God, I know not what you mean."

*Oh, surely not  
can't guess  
some joke I guess  
unless yourself  
interpret*

20. "And I your borrow, ne never shall, for me,  
This thing be told to you, as may I thrive."  
"And why so, uncle mine, why so?" quod she.  
"By God," quod he, "that will I tell as blive;  
For prouder woman were there none alive,  
An' you it wist, in all the town of Troy."<sup>2</sup>

*I guarantee you / my me*

*tell gladly  
would be  
If you knew*

---

<sup>1</sup> 19.5-6: "Unless you yourself tell us what it is, my mind is too weak to interpret it."

<sup>2</sup> 20.5-6: Pandarus, deliberately rousing and teasing Criseyde's curiosity, tells her that if she only knew, she would be the proudest woman in Troy.



I japè not, as ever have I joy."

*I'm not joking, honest*

21. Then gan she wonder morè than before  
A thousandfold, and down her eyèn cast  
For never, since the time that she was born,  
To know a thing desirèd she so fast;  
And with a sigh she said him at the last:  
"Now, uncle mine, I will you not displease,  
Nor asken more that may do you dis-ease."

*eyes*

*cause discomfort*

22. So after this, with many wordès glad  
And friendly tales and with a merry cheer,  
Of this and that they played and gonnèn wade  
In many an uncouth, glad, and deep matter,  
As friendès do when they be met i-fere,  
Till she gan asken him how Hector fared  
That was the townè's wall and Greekès' yard.

*joked & began talk  
unusual  
together*

*scourge of the Greeks*

23. "Full well, I thank it God," quod Pandarus,  
"Save in his arm he hath a little wound;  
And eke his freshè brother Troilus,  
The wisè, worthy Hector the secónd,  
In whom that every virtue list abound,  
As allè truth and allè gentleness,  
Wisdom, honor, freedom and worthiness."

*flourishes*

*freedom = generosity*

24. "In good faith, eme," quod she, "that liketh me;  
They faren well, God save them bothè two,  
For truly I hold it great dainty,  
A kingè's son in armès well to do,  
And be of good condition thereto;  
For great power and moral virtue here  
Is seldom seen in one person i-fere."

*uncle / pleases me*

*very proper*

*good behavior  
here = on earth  
together*

25. "In good faith, that is sooth," quod Pandarus;  
"But by my truth, the king has sons tway,  
That is to mean, Hector and Troilus,  
That certainly, though that I shouldè die  
They been as void of vices dare I say,  
As any men that live under the sun.  
Their might is wide y-known, and what they can.

*is true*

*two*

*to say*

*free of*

*they can do*

26. "Of Hector needeth nothing for to tell.

In all this world is not a better knight  
 Than he, that is of worthiness the well *the source*  
 And he well morè virtue has than might.<sup>1</sup>  
 This knoweth many a wise and worthy wight. *person*  
 The samè praise of Troilus I say.  
 God help me so, I know not suchè tway." *two such*

27. "By God," quod she, "of Hector that is sooth;  
 Of Troilus the samè thing trow I. *I think*  
 For dreadless, men tellen that he doth *without doubt*  
 In armès day by day so worthily,  
 And bears him here at home so gentilly *courteously*  
 To every wight, that all the praise hath he *every person*  
 Of them that me were levest praised be." *I'd rather be praised by*

28. "You say right sooth, y-wis," quod Pandarus, *truly indeed*  
 "For yesterday, whoso had with him been, *whoever*  
 He might have wondered upon Troilus.  
 For never yet so thick a swarm of been *bees*  
 Ne flew, as Greeks from him gan flee. *did flee*  
 And through the field, in every wightè's ear, *every person's*  
 There was no cry but `Troilus is there!'

29. "Now here, now there, he hunted them so fast  
 There n'as but Greekès' blood and Troilus, *was nothing but*  
 Now them he hurt, and them all down he cast. *them ... them = these ... those*  
 Anywhere he went it was arrayèd thus: *Wherever / happened*  
 He was their death, and shield and life for us,  
 That all that day there durst him none withstand *dared*  
 While that he held his bloody sword in hand.

30. "Thereto, he is the friendliestè man *Besides*  
 Of great estate that e'er I saw my life *Of high rank*  
 And where him list, best fellowshipè can *can (give)*  
 To such as him thinks able for to thrive." *to benefit from it*  
 And with that word then Pandarus, as blive, *promptly*  
 He took his leave and said: "I will go henne." *hence*  
 "Nay, blame have I, mine uncle," quod she then.

31. "What aileth you to be thus weary soon,

---

<sup>1</sup> 26.4: "He has even more honor than strength."

And namely of women? Will you so?  
 Nay, sitteth down; by God I have to do  
 With you, to speak of wisdom ere you go."  
 And every wight that was about them tho,  
 That heardè that, gan far away to stand  
 While they two had all that them list in hand.

*And especially*

*person / then*

*discussed all they wished*

32. When that their tale all brought was to an end  
 Of her estate and of her governance,  
 Quod Pandarus: "Now is it time I wend;  
 But yet, I say, ariseth, let us dance,  
 And cast your widow's habit to mischance:  
 What list you thus yourself to disfigure,  
 Since you is tid thus fair an aventure?"

*business  
 management*

*went away*

*discard your w's gown  
 Why do you want?  
 to you has happened*

33. "Ah! Well bethought, for love of God," quod she,  
 "Shall I not witen what you mean of this?"  
 "No. This thing asketh leisure," then quod he,  
 "And eke me wouldè muchè grieve, i-wis,  
 If I it told and you it took amiss.  
 Yet were it bet' my tonguè for to still  
 Than say a sooth that were against your will.

*Oh, yes indeed!  
 not know*

*indeed*

*better to keep quiet  
 truth*

34. "For, niece mine, by the goddess Minerve,  
 And Jupiter that makes the thunder ring,  
 And by the blisfull Venus that I serve,  
 You be the woman in this world living,  
 (Withouten paramours) to my witting,  
 That I best love, and loathest am to grieve;  
 And that you witen well yourself, I 'lieve."

*Except for lovers / knowledge  
 most reluctant  
 you know / I believe*

35. "I-wis, mine uncle," quod she, "grammercy;  
 Your friendship have I founden ever yet;  
 I am to no man holden, truly,  
 So much as you, and have so little quit;  
 And, with the grace of God, emforth my wit  
 As, in my guilt, I shall you ne'er offend,  
 And if I have ere this, I will amend.

*Indeed / many thanks  
 benefited from  
 beholden  
 repaid  
 as far as I know how  
 through my fault  
 before now*

36. "But for the love of God I you beseech  
 As you be he that I most love and trust,  
 Let be to me your fremèd manner speech  
 And say to me, your niece, what you list."

*Leave off / strange  
 what you please*

And with that word her uncle anon her kissed  
 And said: "Gladly, levè niece dear  
 Take it for good what I shall say you here."

*my beloved*

37. With that she gan her eyen down to cast  
 And Pandarus to coughen gan a lite,  
 And said: "Niece, always, lo, to the last,  
 How so it be that some men them delight  
 With subtle art their tales for to endite,  
 Yet, for all that, in their intention,  
 Their tale is all for some conclusion.

*a little*

*tell, embroider(?)*

38. "And since the end is every talè's strength,  
 And this matter is so bihovely,  
 What should I paint or drawen it on length  
 To you that be my friend so faithfully?"  
 And with that word he gan right inwardly  
 Beholden her, and looken on her face  
 And said: "On such a mirror, goodè grace!"

*appropriate*

*Why*

*intensely*

*God's blessing*

39. Then thought he thus: "If I my tale endite  
 Aught hard, or make a process any while,  
 She shall no savor have therein but lite,  
 And trow I would her in my will beguile.<sup>1</sup>  
 For tender wits weenen all be wile  
 Thereas they cannot plainly understand;  
 For-ty her wit to serven will I fond."<sup>2</sup>

*tell*

*or drag it out*

*but little satisfaction*

*She will think / deceive*

*think all is trickery*

*Where*

*Therefore / try*

40. And lookèd on her in a busy wise  
 And she was ware that he beheld her so,  
 And said: "Lord! so fast you me advise!  
 Saw you me ne'er ere now? What say you? No?"  
 "Yes, yes," quod he, "and bet' will ere I go;  
 But by my truth, I thought now if that ye  
 Be fortunate, for now men shall it see.

*an intent way*

*look at me so hard*

*never before now*

*better*

*if = how*

*how fortunate you are*

41. "For t' every wight some goodly aventure  
 Sometime is shape, if he it can receive;  
 And if that he will take of it no cure,

*good fortune*

*is prepared*

*no notice*

---

<sup>1</sup> 39.4-5: "And (she will) think (*trow*) that I deliberately (*in my will*) want to deceive (*beguile*) her."

<sup>2</sup> 39.7: "Therefore I will try (*fond*) to suit my message to her way of thinking."

When that it comes, but wilfully it waive.  
 Lo, neither case nor fortune him deceive,  
 But right his very sloth and wretchedness;  
 And such a wight is for to blame, I guess.

*ignore  
 chance  
 But simply  
 a person*

42. "Good aventure, O bellè niece, have ye  
 Full lightly founden, an you can it take;  
 And, for the love of God and eke of me,  
 Catch it anon lest aventure slake  
 What should I longer process of it make?  
 Give me your hand, for in this world is none,  
 If that you listè, wight so well bigon.<sup>1</sup>

*O lovely n.  
 easily / if you  
  
 fortune change  
 talk any longer*

43. "And since I speak of good intention,  
 As I to you have told well here befor  
 And love as well your honour and renown  
 As creature in all this world y-born;  
 By all the oathès that I have you sworn,  
 An you be wroth therfore, or weene I lie,  
 Ne shall I never see you eft with eye.

*with good  
  
  
 If you're angry / or think*

44. "Be not aghast, ne quaketh not. Whereto?  
 Ne changeth not for fearè so your hue  
 For hardily, the worst of this is do,  
 And though my tale as now be to you new  
 Yet trust always, you shall me findè true.  
 And were it thing that me thought unsitting,  
 To you would I no suchè thingè bring."

*Don't shake / Why?  
 color  
 certainly / is over  
  
 unsuitable*

45. "Now, my good eme, for God's love I you pray,  
 Quod she: "Come off, and tell me what it is;  
 For I am both aghast what you will say  
 And eke me longeth it to wit, i-wis.  
 For whether it be well or be amiss,  
 Say on, let me not in this fearè dwell."  
 "So will I do; now hearken, I shall tell.

*my good uncle  
  
 afraid  
 also I long to know  
  
 now listen*

46. "Now, niece mine, the kingè's dearè son,  
 The goodly, wisè, worthy, fresh and free,  
 Which always for to do well is his wone,  
 The noble Troilus, so loveth thee

*his custom*

---

<sup>1</sup> 42.6-7: "There is nobody (*none ... wight*) in the whole world, if you please, who is so fortunate."

That, but you help, it will his banè be.  
 Lo, here is all, what should I morè say?  
 Do what you list to make him live or die.

*unless you help / his death*

*what you like*

47. "But if you let him dien, I will starve:  
 Have here my trouthè, niece; I n'ill not lie,  
 Al should I with this knife my throatè carve."  
 With that the tearès burst out of his eye,  
 And said: " If that you do us bothè die,  
 Thus guiltèless, then have you fishèd fair.  
 What mendè you, though that we both apeyre? <sup>1</sup>

*kill myself*

*cause us both  
 you had a good haul!*

48. "Alas, he which that is my lord so dear,  
 That truè man, that noble gentil knight,  
 That nought desireth but your friendly cheer,  
 I see him die there he goes upright  
 And hasteth him, with all his fullè might,  
 For to be slain, if fortune will assent.  
 Alas that God you such a beauty sent!

*smile  
 dying on his feet  
 And is in a hurry*

49. "If it be so that you so cruel be  
 That of his death you listè not to reck,  
 That is so true and worthy, as you see,  
 No more than of a japer or a wretch --  
 If you be such, your beauty may not stretch  
 To make amends of so cruél a deed.  
 Avisèment is good before the need.

*don't care  
 (A man) who is so  
 joker*

*Thought*

50. "Woe worth the fairè gemmè virtueless!  
 Woe worth that herb also that does no bote!  
 Woe worth that beauty that is ruthèless  
 Woe worth that wight that treads each under foot!  
 And you, that be of beauty crop and root,  
 If therewithal in you there be no ruth,  
 Then is it harm you liven, by my truth. <sup>2</sup>

*Woe to  
 No good  
 without pity  
 flower & root  
 no pity*

51. "And also think well that this is no gaude.  
 For me were lever thou and I and he  
 Were hangèd, than that I should be his bawd,

*fraud  
 I'd rather  
 pimp*

---

<sup>1</sup> 47.7: "How does it help you if we both die?"

<sup>2</sup> 50.7: "It's a shame that your are alive."

As high as men might on us all y-see.  
 I am thine eme; the shamè were to me  
 As well as thee, if that I should assent  
 Through mine abet that he thine honor shent.

*uncle*

*my collusion / ruined*

52. "Now understand, for I you not require  
 To binden you to him through no behest,  
 But only that you make him better cheer  
 Than you have done ere this, and morè feast,  
 So that his life be savèd at the least.  
 This all and some, and plainly our intent.<sup>1</sup>  
 God help me so, I never other meant.

*promise  
 be pleasanter  
 more welcome*

53. "Lo, this request is not but skill, i-wis,  
 Nor doubt of reason, pardee, is there none.  
 I set the worstè that you dreaden -- this:  
 Men woulden wonder see him come or gon:  
 There-against I answer thus anon,  
 That every wight, but he be fool of kind,  
 Will deem it love of friendship in his mind.

*only reasonable*

*I set = Suppose ...  
 or go*

*by nature  
 Will judge*

54. "What? Who will deemè, though he see a man  
 To temple go, that he th' imáges eateth?  
 Think, eke, how well and wisely that he can  
 Govern himself, that he no thing forgeteth,  
 That, where he comes, he praise and thanks him geteth;  
 And eke thereto, he shall come here so seld,  
 What force were it though all the town beheld?

*Who w. think*

*he = Troilus*

*seldom  
 What matter?*

55. "Such love of friendès reigns in all this town  
 And wry you in that mantle evermo';  
 And, God so wise be my salvation  
 As I have said, your best is to do so,  
 But always, goodè niece, to stint his woe,  
 So let your daunger sugared be a lite,<sup>2</sup>  
 That of his death you be not for to wite."

*wrap yourself*

*to end*

*to blame*

56. Criseyde, which that heard him in this wise

---

<sup>1</sup> 52.6: "This is all I have to say, and that is our frank wish."

<sup>2</sup> 55.6: "Sweeten your attitude a little". *Daunger* was that aspect of the medieval lady that kept men at a distance. See next footnote.

Thought: "I shall feelen what he means i-wis."  
 "Now, eme," quod she, "what wouldè you devise  
 What is your rede that I should do of this?"  
 "That is well said," quod he; "certain best is  
 That you him love again for his loving  
 As love for love is skilfull guerdoning.

*feel out / indeed*  
*Now, uncle /advise*  
*your advice*

*proper return*

57. "Think, eke, how Eldè wasteth every hour  
 In each of you a party of beauty,  
 And therefore ere that Agè thee devour,  
 Go love; for, old, there will no wight of thee.  
 Let this provérb a lore unto you be:  
 `Too late aware,' quod Beauty, when it passed.  
 `And Eldè daunteth Daunger at the last.'<sup>1</sup>

*Age*  
*part*

*no one will want you*  
*a lesson*

*Age overtakes aloofness*

58. "The kingè's fool is wont to cry aloud,  
 When that he thinks a woman bears her high:  
 `So longè may you liven, and all proud,  
 Till crowè's feet be grown under your eye,  
 And send you then a mirror in to pry  
 In which that you may see your face a-morrow.'  
 Niece, I biddè wish you no more sorrow."<sup>2</sup>

*accustomed*  
*acts haughtily*  
*proud (women)*

*to look in*  
*in the morning*

59. With this he stint, and cast a-down the head,  
 And she began to burst a-weep anon,  
 And said: "Alas for woe! why n'ere I dead?  
 For of this world the faith is all agone:  
 Alas! what should a stranger to me don,  
 When he that for my bestè friend I wend  
 Redes me to love who should it me defend?

*stopped*  
*into tears*  
*Why am I not*

*do*  
*whom I took*  
*Advises / forbid it to me*

60. "Alas! I would have trusted doubtèless  
 That if that I through my disáventure  
 Had lovèd either him or Áchilles,  
 Hector, or any other creäture,  
 You would have had no mercy nor measúre

*bad fortune*

---

<sup>1</sup> 57.7: "Age overcomes aloofness at last." *Daunger* (Fr. *daungier*) meant literally "power", in romances the power a woman had over her lover, including the power to keep him waiting endlessly without any erotic satisfaction. If this attitude of hers prevails long enough, he says, Age will overtake it.

<sup>2</sup> 58.7: Perhaps the line should read "Niece, I bid and wish you no more sorrow", where `bid' and `wish' mean much the same as the modern phrase: 'I hope and pray (that your sorrow won't be any worse'.)



On me, but always had me in reprove.  
This falsè world, alas! who may it 'lieve?

*reproof  
believe, trust*

61. "What! is this all the joy and all the feast?  
Is this your red——e? is this my blissful case?  
Is this the very meed of your behest?  
Is all this painted process said, alas,  
Right for this fine? O lady mine Pallás,  
Thou in this dreadful case for me purvey,  
For so astonèd am I that I die."

*advice  
your promised reward  
elaborate yarn  
purpose / Athene  
look after me  
amazed*

62. With that she gan full sorrowfully to sigh.  
"Ah! may it be no bet?" quod Pandarus;  
"By God I shall no more come here this week,  
And God to-forn!— that am mistrusted thus;  
I see full well that you set light of us  
Or of our death. Alas! I, woeful wretch!  
Might he yet live, of me were naught to reck.<sup>1</sup>

*no better  
  
I swear to God  
  
If he could / to care*

63. "O cruel god, O despitousè Mars,  
O Furies three of hell, on you I cry  
So let me ne'er out of this house depart  
If that I meantè harm or villainy !  
But since I see my lord must needès die,  
And I with him, here I me shrive and say<sup>2</sup>  
That wickedly you do us both to die.

*fierce  
  
  
  
since  
absolve myself  
cause us both*

64. "But since it liketh you that I be dead  
By Neptunus, that god is of the sea  
From this forth shall I never eaten bread  
Till I mine ownè heartè's blood may see  
For certain I will die as soon as he."  
And up he start, and on his way he raught,  
Till she again him by the lappè caught.

*it pleases you  
  
  
  
set out  
sleeve*

65. Criseydè, which that well nigh starved for fear,  
So as she was the fearfulestè wight  
That mightè be, and heard eke with her ear

*died  
timidest person  
also*

---

<sup>1</sup> 62.7: "If only he could live, there would be no need to care about me," i.e. I don't really matter.

<sup>2</sup> 63.6-7: Since Pandarus is neither making nor hearing a confession, but accusing someone, *shrive* seems to mean "I absolve myself." Both of them are overplaying their hands.

And saw the sorrowful earnest of the knight,  
 And in his prayer saw ekè no un-right,  
 And for the harm that might eke fallen more,  
 She gan to rue and dread her wonder sore.

*seriousness*

*more harm  
to regret*

66. And thoughtè thus: "Unhappès fallen thick  
 Alday for love, and in such manner case  
 As men be cruel in themselves and wikke.  
 And if this man slay here himself, alas!  
 In my preséncé, it will be no soláce.  
 What men would of it deem I cannot say;  
 It needeth me full slyly for to play.

*misfortunes  
Every day  
wicked*

*judge*

67. And with a sorrowful sigh she saidè thrice:  
 "Ah, lord! What me is tid a sorry chance"<sup>1</sup>  
 For my estate now lies in jeopardy,  
 And eke mine emè's life lies in baláncé,  
 But natheless, with Goddès governance,  
 I shall so do: mine honour shall I keep,  
 And eke his life"; and stintè for to weep.

*three times*

*and stopped*

68. "Of harmès two, the less is for to choose  
 Yet have I lever maken him good cheer  
 In honour, than mine emè's life to lose.—  
 You say you nothing else of me require?"<sup>2</sup>  
 "No, 'wis," quod he, "mine ownè niecè dear."  
 "Now, well," quod she, "and I will do my pain.  
 I shall my heart against my lust constrain.

*I'd rather be pleasant  
honorably / my uncle's*

*no indeed  
my best  
a. my inclination*

69. "But that I will not holden him in hand:  
 Nor love a man ne can I not nor may  
 Against my will; but elsè will I fond  
 (Mine honour safe) please him from day to day.  
 Thereto would I not once have saidè nay  
 But that I dread, as in my fantasy.

*not deceive him*

*I'll try to*

*To that / no  
dreaded / imagination*

---

<sup>1</sup> 67.2: "What a sad fortune has befallen me."

<sup>2</sup> 68.1-4: It would appear that Criseyde is speaking stanza 67 and the first three lines of 68 to herself, the fourth line of 68 aloud to Pandarus. Criseyde's terrified timidity of 65 seems at odds with her shrewd assessment of the situation in 66.7 and 67, and with her firm, self confident declaration of 69 and 70.

But cease the cause, ay ceaseth malady.<sup>1</sup>

70. "And here I make a protestation:  
That in this process if you deeper go,  
That certainly for no salvation  
Of you, though that you starven bothè two,  
Though all the world on one day be my foe,  
Ne shall I ne'er on him have other ruth."  
"I grant it well," quod Pandare, "by my truth.

*even if you both die*

*pity*

71. "But may I trusten well thereto," quod he,  
"That of this thing that you have hight me here,  
You will it holden truly unto me?"  
"Yea, doubtèless," quod she, "mine uncle dear!"  
"Ne that I shall have cause in this mattér,"  
Quod he, "to 'plain or after you to preach?"  
"Why no, pardee; what needeth morè speech?"

*promised*

*complain  
by God*

72. Then fellen they in other talès glad,  
Till at the last: "O good eme!" quod she tho,  
"For love of God, which that us bothè made,  
Tell me how first you wisten of his woe;  
Wot none of it but you?" He saidè: "No."  
"Can he well speak of love?" quod she: "I pray?  
Tell me, for I the bet' me shall purvey."

*started talking  
uncle / then*

*you knew  
Knows anyone?*

*better prepare myself*

73. Then Pandarus a little gan to smile,  
And saidè: "By my truth I shall now tell.  
This other day, not gone full long a while,  
Within the palace garden by a well  
Gan he and I well half a day to dwell,  
Right for to speaken of an ordinance  
How we the Greeks might do a disadvantage.

*not long ago*

*plan  
inflict a defeat*

74. "Soon after that began we for to leap  
And casten with our dartès to and fro,  
Till at the last he said that he would sleep,  
And on the grass adown he laid him tho;  
And I afar gan roamen to and fro,  
Till that I heard, as that I walked alone,

*spears*

*then*

---

<sup>1</sup> 69.7: "When the cause of the illness is removed, the illness goes away." There is no fear when the cause of fear is removed.

How he began full woefully to groan.

75. "Tho gan I stalk full softly him behind,  
And sikerly, the soothè for to sayn,  
As I can clepe again now to my mind,  
Right thus to Love he gan him for to 'plain.  
He said: `O, Lord, have ruth upon my pain;  
All have I rebel been in mine intent,  
Now *mea culpa*, Lord, I me repent.<sup>1</sup>

*Then / creep  
certainly / truth  
recall  
complain  
have pity  
Although  
my fault*

76. "'O God ! that at thy disposition  
Leadest the fine by justè purveyance  
Of every wight, my low confessiõ  
Accept in gree, and send me such penáncè  
As liketh thee; but from disésperance  
That may my ghost depart away from thee,  
Thou be my shield for thy benignity.<sup>2</sup>

*at your will  
decides the end / providence*

*with favor  
As you please / despair*

77. "'For certès, Lord, so sore hath she me wounded  
That stood in black with looking of her eye,<sup>3</sup>  
That to mine heartè's bottom it is sounded,  
Through which I wot that I must needès die.  
This is the worst: I dare me not bewray,  
And well the hotter be the gleeedès red  
That men them wry with ashes pale and dead'<sup>4</sup>

*certainly  
  
I know  
give myself away  
coals  
Because / cover*

78. "With that he smote his head a-down anon,  
And gan to mutter I n'ot what truly,  
And I with that gan still away to gon,  
And let thereof as nothing wist had I,  
And came again anon and stood him by,

*I don't know  
quietly walked away  
pretended I knew nothing  
near him*

---

<sup>1</sup> 75.7: *mea culpa*, a Latin phrase meaning "through my fault", is from the Catholic confessional prayer called the "Confiteor" (I confess). Its use here is one of the more noticeable anachronisms of the poem. See also 63.6 & 72.3 above.

<sup>2</sup> 76: "Be my shield against the despair that might alienate my soul from you." This is presumably a mild parody of the Christian belief that despair of God's mercy is the ultimate sin.

<sup>3</sup> 77.2: "in black": a reference back to the temple scene in which Troilus first saw Criseyde: "Among these other folk was Cressida / In widow's habit black". (Bk. I, 25.1-2)

<sup>4</sup> 77.5-7: "The worst part is that I cannot betray myself (by declaring my love openly). So (I am like) the red coals (*gleeds*) which stay hotter when one covers them with dead ashes."

And said: `Awake, you sleepen all too long;  
It seems me not that Love doth you to long <sup>1</sup>

79. " `That sleepen so that no man may you wake;  
Who ever saw ere this so dull a man?'  
`Yea, friend,' quod he, `do you your headès ache  
For love, and let me liven as I can.'  
But though that he for woe was pale and wan,  
Yet made he then as fresh a countenance  
As though he should have led the newè dance.

*let you get headaches  
From being in love*

80. "This passèd forth, till now, this other day,  
It fell that I came roaming all alone  
Into his chamber, and found how that he lay  
Upon his bed; but man so sorely groan  
Ne heard I ne'er, and what that was his moan  
Ne wist I not, for as I was comíng  
All suddenly he left his cómplaining.

*I did not know*

81. "Of which I took somewhat suspiciòn  
And near I came, and found he weptè sore,  
And God so wise be my salvation,  
As ne'er of thing had I no ruthè more  
For neither with engine nor with no lore  
Unnethès might I from the death him keep,  
That yet I feel my heartè for him weep.

*God save me !  
greater pity  
ingenuity nor skill  
Scarcely*

82. "And, God wot, never since that I was born  
Was I so busy no man for to preach,  
Ne never was to wight so deepè sworn  
Ere he me told who might have been his leech.<sup>2</sup>  
But now to you rehearsen all his speech  
Or all his woeful wordès for to sound  
Ne bid me not but you will see me swoon.

*God knows  
  
to any person  
his physician  
to re-tell  
  
Don't ask me unless*

83. "But for to save his life, and elsè nought,

*no other reason*

---

<sup>1</sup> 78.7-64.1: "It does not seem to me that love causes you to yearn (*long*), because you sleep so soundly that one cannot wake you." *Doth you to long* (78.7) = "Causes you to long for (something)".

<sup>2</sup> 82.3-4: "No man was ever so deeply sworn to secrecy (as I was) before he told me -- the very man who might be his physician" i.e. I might be the one able to help cure him. Pandarus seems to have re-created this incident from the actual scene in Bk I where he squeezes the truth out of Troilus with difficulty.

And to no harm of you, thus am I driven;  
 And for the love of God that us hath wrought  
 Such cheer him do that he and I may liven.  
 Now have I plat to you my heartè shriven;  
 And since you wot that mine intent is clean,  
 Take heed thereof, for I no evil mean.

*has made us  
 Give him such hope  
 plainly / confessed  
 you know*

84. "And right good thrift, I pray to God, have ye  
 That have such one y-caught without a net,  
 An' you be wise as you be fair to see,<sup>1</sup>  
 Well in the ring then is the ruby set.  
 There were never two so well y-met  
 When you be his all whole, as he is yours,  
 There mighty God yet grant us see that hour."

*good fortune*

85. "Nay! Thereof spoke I not, aha!" quod she,  
 "As help me God, you shenden every deal."  
 "Oh, mercy, dearè niece," anon quod he,  
 "Whatso I spoke, I meantè not but well,  
 By Mars the god, that helmèd is of steel.  
 Now be not wroth, my blood, my niecè dear."  
 "Now, well," quod she, "forgiven be it here."

*you ruin everything*

*Whatever*

*angry / my kin*

86. With this he took his leave, and home he went  
 And, Lord, how he was glad and well begone!  
 Criseyde arose, no longer she ne stent,  
 But straight into her closet went anon,  
 And set her down as still as any stone,  
 And every word gan up and down to wind  
 That he had said as it came to her mind.

*pleased  
 delayed  
 her room*

87. And waxed somedeal astonished in her thought  
 Right for the newè case; but when that she  
 Was full avisèd, then found she right naught  
 Of peril why she ought afearèd be;  
 For man may love of possibility  
 A woman so his heartè may to-burst,  
 And she not love again, but if her lest.<sup>2</sup>

*And became  
 new situation  
 Had thought about it  
 nothing to be afraid of  
  
 to point of heartbreak  
 unless she please*

---

<sup>1</sup> 84.3: "If you are as wise as you are pretty to look at."

<sup>2</sup> 87.5-7: A.C. Spearing remarks astutely of these lines: "it is as though Chaucer's thoughts and ours mingle with hers: in this early instance of *style indirect libre* it is unclear who is offering the

88. But as she sat alone and thoughtè thus,  
 Ascry arose at skirmish all without,  
 And men cried in the street: "See! Troilus  
 Has right now put to flight the Greekès rout."  
 With that gan all her meinee for to shout:  
 "Ah! go we see; cast up the gatès wide,  
 For through this street he must to palace ride,

*A cry*

*Greek troops  
 her servants*

89. "For other way is from the gatè none  
 Of Dardanus where open is the chain."  
 With that came he and all his folk anon  
 An easy pacè riding in routes twain,  
 Right as his happy day was, sooth to sayn,  
 For which, men say, may not disturbèd be  
 What shall betiden of necessity.

*(a city gate)*

*two groups  
 truth to tell*

*What must happen*

90. This Troilus sat on his bayè steed  
 All armèd save his head full richèly,  
 And wounded was his horse, and gan to bleed,  
 On which he rode a pace full softèly;  
 But such a knightly sightè, truly  
 As was on him was not, withouten fail  
 To look on Mars, that god is of bataille.<sup>1</sup>

91. So like a man of armès and a knight  
 He was to see, fulfilled of high prowèss,  
 For both he had a body and a might  
 To do that thing, as well as hardiness,  
 And eke to see him in his gear him dress,  
 So fresh, so young, so wieldy, seemèd he,  
 It was a heaven on him for to see.

*to look at*

*courage  
 arm himself  
 athletic*

92. His helm to-hewen was in twenty places,  
 That by a tissue hung his back behind,  
 His shield to-dashèd was with swords and maces,  
 In which men mighten many an arrow find  
 That thirlèd had the horn and nerve and rind;  
 And ay the people cried: "Here comes our joy,  
 And, next his brother, holder up of Troy!"

*hacked  
 by a sliver it hung*

*pierced / sinew / hide  
 constantly  
 2nd only to (Hector)*

---

generalization." **The Medieval Poet as Voyeur**, p. 127.

<sup>1</sup> 90.6-7: He was better to look at than Mars, the god of war.

93. For which he waxed a little red for shame  
 When he the people heard upon him cry,  
 That, to behold, it was a noble game  
 How soberly he cast adown his eye.  
 Criseyde anon gan all his cheer espy,  
 And let so soft it in her hearté sink  
 That to herself she said: "Who gave me drink?"

*blushed w. embarrassment*

*pleasing sight  
 modestly  
 appearance*

*love potion? alcohol?*

94. For of her owné thought she waxed all red,  
 Remembering her right thus: "Lo! this is he  
 Which that mine uncle swears he must be dead  
 But I on him have mercy and pity."  
 And with that thought for pure ashaméd she  
 Gan in her head to pull, and that as fast,  
 While he and all the people forth by passed.

*blushed*

*he will die  
 Unless I  
 embarrassment*

95. And gan to cast and rollen up and down  
 Within her thought his excellent prowéss,  
 And his estate, and also his renown,  
 His wit, his shape, and eke his gentleness;  
 But most her favour was, for his distress  
 Was all for her, and thought it was a ruth  
 To slay such one, if that he meanté truth.

*[She] began to consider  
 achievements  
 rank / fame*

*because his d.  
 and (she) thought it a pity*

96. Now mighten some envious jangle thus:  
 `This was a sudden love; how might it be  
 That she so lightly lovéd Troilus?  
 Right for the firsté sighté, yea, pardee! '  
 Now whoso says so, may he never thee,<sup>1</sup>  
 For everything beginning has it need  
 Ere all be wrought withouten any dread.

*e. (person) complain*

*By God*

*needs a beginning  
 finished / doubtless*

97. For I say not that she so suddenly  
 Gave him her love, but that she gan incline  
 To like him first, and I have told you why;  
 And after that, his manhood and his pain  
 Made love within her hearté for to mine  
 For which, by process and by good service  
 He got her love, and in no sudden wise.

*to dig deep  
 by degrees*

---

<sup>1</sup> 96.5: "Now, whoever says so, may he never prosper." *thee* is the verb "to prosper", not a pronoun.



98. And also blissful Venus, well arrayed,<sup>1</sup>  
 Sat in her seventh house of heaven tho,  
 Disposèd well, and with aspectès paid,  
 To helpen sely Troilus of his woe.  
 And, sooth to say, she n'as not all a foe  
 To Troilus in his nativity.  
 God wot that well the sooner spedde he.

*then  
 & rightly placed  
 poor T.  
 she = Venus*

*G. knows / succeeded he*

99. Now let us stint of Troilus a throw,  
 That rideth forth, and let us turnen fast  
 Unto Criseyde that hung her head full low  
 There as she sat alone, and 'gan to cast  
 Whereon she would appoint her at the last,  
 If it so were her eme ne wouldè cease  
 For Troilus upon her for to press.

*stop / a while*

*to think  
 how she would act*

100. And, Lord! So she gan in her thought argúe  
 In this mattér of which I have you told,  
 And what to do best were, and what eschew,  
 That pleated she full oft in many folds;  
 Now was her heartè warm, now was it cold;  
 And what she thought of, somewhat shall I write  
 As to mine author listeth to indite.

*avoid*

*pleased my a. to write*

101. She thoughtè well that Troilus' person  
 She knew by sight, and eke his gentleness,  
 And thus she said: "All were it naught to do  
 To grant him love, yet for his worthiness  
 It were honoúr with play and with gladness<sup>2</sup>  
 In honesty with such a lord to deal  
 For mine estate, and also for his heal.

*his "gentle" birth  
 Even though it's impossible*

*honorably  
 my good & his health*

102. "Eke well wot I my kingè's son is he,  
 And since he has to see me such delight,  
 If I would utterly his sightè flee,  
 Paraunter he might have me in despite,  
 Through which I mightè standen in worse plight.

*Perhaps*

---

<sup>1</sup> 98: The planet Venus was in favorable position (for lovers). And her disposition at his birth (*nativity*) was also not bad. Hence he succeeded (*spedde*) sooner.

<sup>2</sup> 101.5-7: "It would be an honor for me to associate with such a lord, cheerfully and pleasantly and decently; and it would be for my good and for his health."

Now were I wise, me hate to purcháse  
 Withouten need, where I may stand in grace? <sup>1</sup>

*Now would I be?  
 in favor*

103. "In every thing I wot there lies measúre;  
 For though a man forbiddeth drunkenness,  
 He naught forbids that every crëatúre  
 Be drinkèless for always, as I guess;  
 Eke, since I wot for me is his distress,  
 I ne ought not for that thing him despise,  
 Since it is so he meaneth in good wise.

*he means well*

104. "And eke I know of longè time agone  
 His thewès good, and that he n'is not nice,  
 No vaunter, say men, certain he is none;  
 Too wise is he to do so great a vice.  
 Ne als' I n'll him never so cherice  
 That he shall make avaunt by justè cause; <sup>2</sup>  
 He shall me never bind in such a clause.

*habits / not silly  
 No braggart*

*Besides I won't cherish*

105. "Now set a case, the hardest is i-wis,  
 Men mighten deemen that he loveth me;  
 What dishonour were it to me this?  
 May I him let of that? Why nay, pardee;  
 I know also, and alday hear and see,  
 Men loven women all this town about.  
 Be they the worse? Why nay, without a doubt.

*even the worst  
 might think*

*Can I help that? / by God  
 every day*

106. "I think eke, how he able is to have  
 Of all this noble town the thriftiest  
 To be his love so she her honour save; <sup>3</sup>  
 For, out and out, he is the worthiest,  
 Save only Hector, which that is the best;  
 And yet his life lies all now in my cure,  
 But such is love, and eke mine áventure.

*the best  
 'so' = provided*

*fortune*

107. "Nor me to love a wonder is it naught,

---

<sup>1</sup> 102.6-7: "Would I be wise to invite hate needlessly, when I could have favor?"

<sup>2</sup> 104: "He won't have any genuine reason to boast (about his conquest); I won't give him the excuse." Notice the triple negative in line 5: *Ne, n'll, never*.

<sup>3</sup> 106.3: *so she* ....: "provided that she keep her reputation intact."

For well wot I myself (so God me speed,  
 Al' would I that none wisten of this thought),  
 I am one the fairest, out of dread,  
 And goodliest, whoso that taketh heed,  
 And so men say in all the town of Troy;  
 What wonder is though he of me have joy?

*I know as God's my judge  
 I'd prefer no one knew  
 without doubt*

108. "I am mine ownè woman, well at ease,  
 I thank it God, as after mine estate,  
 Right young, and stand untied in lushy leas,  
 Withouten jealousy or such debate.  
 Shall no husband say to me `Checkmate!'  
 For either they be full of jealousy,  
 Or masterfull, or loven novelty.

*well off  
 according to my rank  
 rich meadows*

*'they' = husbands  
 domineering*

109. "What shall I do? To what fine live I thus?  
 Shall I not love in case if that me lest?  
 What! pardee, I am not religious;  
 And though that I mine heartè set at rest  
 Upon this knight that is the worthiest,  
 And keep always mine honour and my name,  
 By allè rights it may do me no shame."

*to what purpose?  
 if I please  
 not a nun*

*(good) name*

110. But right as when the sunnè shineth bright  
 In March, that changeth oftentimes his face,  
 And that a cloud is put with wind to flight  
 Which overspread the sun as for a space,  
 A cloudy thought gan through her soulè pace,  
 That overspread her brightè thoughtès all  
 So that for fear almost she gan to fall.

*to move*

111. That thought was this: "Alas! since I am free,  
 Should I now love and put in jeopardy  
 My sikerness, and thrallen liberty?  
 Alas! how durst I thinken that folly?  
 May I not well in other folk espy  
 Their dreadful joy, their cónstraint and their pain?  
 There loveth none that she n'as why to 'plain.<sup>1</sup>

*security / give up  
 how dare I*

*reason to complain*

112. "For love is yet the mostè stormy life

---

<sup>1</sup> 111.5-7: "Can't I see in others the joy mixed with dread, their distress and pain? There is no woman in love who does not also have cause (*that she n'as why*) to complain."

Right of himself that ever was begun,  
 For ever some mistrust or nicè strife  
 There is in love; some cloud is o'er that sun;  
 Thereto we wretched women nothing can,  
 When us is woe, but weep, and sit, and think.  
 Our wrecche is this, our ownè woe to drink.

*itself  
 silly*

*can (do) nothing  
 When we're unhappy  
 unhappiness*

113. "Also these wicked tonguès be so prest  
 To speak us harm; eke men be so untrue,  
 That right anon as ceasèd is their lust  
 So ceaseth love, and forth to love anew:  
 But harm y-done is done, whoso it rue;  
 For though these men for love them first to-rend,  
 Full sharp beginning breaketh oft at end.

*eager*

*as soon as*

*whoever has to regret it  
 tear themselves*

114. "How often times hath it y-knownen be  
 The treason that to women has been done!  
 To what fine is such love I cannot see,  
 Or where becometh it when it is gone.  
 There is no wight that wot — I trowè so —  
 Where it becomes. Lo! No wight on it spurneth;<sup>1</sup>  
 What erst was nothing, into nought it turneth.

*To what purpose  
 where it goes  
 no one who knows, I guess*

*What first*

115. "How busy, if I love, eke must I be  
 To pleasen them that jangle of love and deem,  
 And coy them, that they say no harm of me!  
 For though there be no cause, yet them can seem  
 Al' be for harm that folk their friendès queme.<sup>2</sup>  
 And who may stoppen every wicked tongue,  
 Or sound of bellès while that they be rung?"

*chatter / judge  
 And cajole, persuade?  
 can seem to them  
 please*

116. And after that her thought gan for to clear,  
 And said: "He which that nothing undertaketh  
 Nothing achieveth, be him loth or dear;"  
 And with another thought her heartè quaketh;  
 Then sleepeth hope, and after dread awaketh;  
 Now hot, now cold; but thus betwixen tway,  
 She rose her up and went her for to play.

*like it or not*

*between the two  
 enjoy (the company)*

---

<sup>1</sup> 114.6: "Nobody falls over it." That is, it is not lying around in an obvious place.

<sup>2</sup> 115.4-5: "It can seem suspicious to them even when people are just doing something to please their friends."

117. Adown the stair anon right then she went  
 Into her garden with her nieces three,  
 And up and down they madè many a went,  
 Flexippè, she, Tharbe and Antigone  
 To playen, that it was joy to see,  
 And other of her women a great rout  
 Her followed in the garden all about.

*a turn*

*To socialize  
 a large number*

118. This yard was large, and railèd all the alleys,  
 And shadowed well with blossomy boughs green,  
 And benchèd new, and sanded all the ways,  
 In which she walketh arm in arm between,  
 Till at the last Antigone the sheen  
 Gan on a Trojan song to singen clear,  
 That it a heaven was her voice to hear.

*garden / w. railings*

*the walks*

*the beautiful*

### Antigone's Song <sup>1</sup>

119. She said: "O Love, to whom I have and shall  
 Be humble subject, true in my intent,  
 As I best can, to you, lord, give I all  
 For evermore, my heartè's lust to rent.  
 For never yet thy gracè no wight sent  
 So blissful cause as me, my life to lead  
 In allè joy and surety, out of dread.

*my h's joy in tribute  
 (to) no person  
 (to) me  
 without doubt*

120. "You, blissful god, have me so well beset  
 In love, i-wis, that all that beareth life  
 Imaginen ne could how to be bet.  
 For, lord, withouten jealousy or strife  
 I love one which that is most ententife  
 To serven well, unwearied or unfeigned  
 That ever was, and least with harm distrained,<sup>2</sup>

*better*

*attentive*

121. "As he that is the well of worthiness  
 Of truth the ground, mirror of goodlihead,  
 Of wit Apollo, stone of sikerness

*the source*

*rock of certainty*

---

<sup>1</sup> Antigone's Song is a literary device which articulates what Criseyde is beginning to feel.

<sup>2</sup> 120.7: *Distrained*: variously glossed by editors and lexicographers: "stained, sullied, misled, overcome, oppressed."

Of virtue root, of lust finder and head,  
Through which is allè sorrow from me dead.  
I-wis, I love him best, so does he me;  
Now good thrift have he, whereso that he be.

*of joy the source*

*Indeed  
good fortune*

122. "Whom should I thank but you, O god of love,  
Of all this bliss in which to bathe I 'gin  
And thankèd be you, lord, for that I love.  
This is the rightè life that I am in  
To flemen allè manner vice and sin.  
This does me so to virtue for t'intend  
That day by day I in my will amend.

*begin*

*put to flight  
to incline  
improve*

123. "And whoso says that for to love is vice  
Or thralldom, though he feel in it distress,  
He either is envious or right nice.  
Or is unmighty for his shrewèdness  
To lovè, for such manner folk, I guess,  
Defamen Love, as nothing of him know;  
They spoken, but they never bent his bow.

*slavery  
very silly  
from vice is unable*

*i.e. never felt love*

124. "What is the sunnè worse, of kindè right,  
Though that a man for feebleness of eye  
May not endure on it to see for bright?  
Or love the worse, though wretches on it cry?  
No weal is worth that may no sorrow dry.<sup>1</sup>  
And therefore who that has a head of ver  
From cast of stones beware him in the war.

*of its nature*

*to look / brightness  
decry it  
happiness / endure  
of glass*

125. "But I with all my heart and all my might,  
As I have said, will love unto my last  
My dearè heart, and all my ownè knight,  
In which my heartè growèn is so fast,  
And his in me that it shall ever last.  
Al' dread I first to love him to begin,  
Now wot I well there is no peril in."

*dreaded  
Now I know*

126. And of her song right with that word she stent,  
And therewithal: "Now niecè," quod Criseyde,  
"Who made this song now with so good intent?"  
Antigone answered anon, and said:

*stopped*

---

<sup>1</sup> 124.5: "No happiness (or good fortune) is worth anything that has not cost some sorrow."

"Madame, i-wis the goodliest maid  
Of great estate in all the town of Troy,  
And leads her life in most honour and joy."

127. "Forsoothè so it seemeth by her song,"  
Quod then Criseyde, and gan therewith to sigh,  
And saidè: "Lord! is there such bliss among  
These lovers, as they can fair endite?"  
"Yea, 'wis," quod fresh Antigone the white,  
For all the folk that have or be alive  
Ne could not well the bliss of love describe.

*In truth*

*compose, write  
certainly  
have (lived)*

128. "But weenen you that every wretchè wot  
The perfect bliss of love? Why nay, i-wis.  
They weenen all be love if one be hot;  
Do 'way, do 'way! they wot nothing of this:  
Men must ask at saintès if it is  
Aught fair in heaven. And why? For they can tell;  
And asken fiends if it be foul in hell"

*think you / knows  
indeed  
They think it's love*

*'at' = of*

*devils*

129. Criseyde unto the purpose naught answered,  
But said: "I-wis it will be night as fast."  
But every word which that she of her heard  
She gan to printen in her heartè fast,  
And ay gan love her less for to aghast  
Than it did erst,<sup>1</sup> and sinken in her heart,  
That she waxed somewhat able to convert.

*nothing  
certainly / soon*

*to terrify  
at first  
she grew capable of change*

130. The day's honour and the heaven's eye,  
The night's foe, — all this clepe I the sun,  
'Gan western fast, and downward for to wrie,  
As he that had his dayè's course y-run,  
And whitè thingès waxen dim and dun  
For lack of light, and stars for to appear,  
That she and all her folk in went i-fere.

*I call  
to sink*

*become dim & dark*

*together*

131. So when it likèd her to go to rest,  
And voided weren they that voiden ought,  
She saidè that to sleepen well her lest;  
Her women soon unto her bed her brought.

*departed  
she wanted to sleep*

---

<sup>1</sup> 129.5-6: The syntactic word order is "and ay love gan to aghast her less than it did erst," meaning "And always (i.e. more and more) love began to terrify her less than it had at first."

When all was hushed, then lay she still and thought  
 Of all this thing the manner and the wise;  
 Rehearse it needeth not, for you be wise.

*Repeat*

132. A nightingale upon a cedar green  
 Under the chamber wall there as she lay,  
 Full loudè sang against the moonè sheen,  
 Paraunter, in his birdè's wise, a lay<sup>1</sup>  
 Of love, that made her heartè fresh and gay;  
 That hearkened she so long in good intent  
 Till at the last the deadè sleep her hent.

*bright*

*took*

133. And as she slept, anon right then she mett  
 How that an eagle, feathered white as bone,  
 Under her breast his longè clawès set,  
 And out her heart he rent, and that anon;  
 And did his heart into her breast to gon.  
 Of which she naught agrose, ne nothing smart,  
 And forth he flew, with heartè left for heart.

*she dreamt*

*he tore at once  
 and caused  
 wasn't afraid or hurt*

134. Now let her sleep, and we our talè hold  
 Of Troilus, that is to palace riden  
 From the skirmish of the which I told,  
 And in his chamber sat and hath abiden  
 Till two or three of his messengers yeden  
 For Pandarus, and soughten him full fast  
 Till they him found, and brought him at the last.

*went*

135. This Pandarus came leaping in at once,  
 And saidè thus: "Who hath been well y-beat  
 Today with swordès and with slingè-stones  
 But Troilus, that hath caught him a heat?"  
 And gan to jape, and said: "Lord so you sweat!  
 But rise and let us sup and go to rest,"  
 And he him answered: "Do we as thee lest."

*fever  
 joke*

*as you please*

136. With all the hastè goodly that they might,  
 They sped them from the supper unto bed;  
 And every wight out at the door him dight,  
 And where him list upon his way he sped;  
 But Troilus thought that his heartè bled

*mannerly*

*person / went  
 where he pleased*

---

<sup>1</sup> 132.4: "By chance, in his bird's fashion, a song of love."



For woe till that he heardè some tiding.  
He saidè: "Friend, shall I now weep or sing?"

137. Quod Pandarus: "Lie still, and let me sleep,  
And don thy hood; thy needès spedde be,<sup>1</sup>  
And choose if thou wilt sing or dance or leap:  
At shortè wordès, thou shalt trowen me,  
Sir, my niece will do well by thee  
And love thee best, by God and by my troth,  
But lack of púrsuit mar it in thy sloth.<sup>2</sup>

*put on / have been met*

*believe me*

*Unless*

138. "For thus far forth I have thy work begun  
From day to day, till this day by the morrow  
Her love of friendship have I to thee won,  
And thereto has she laid her faith to borrow;  
Algate a foot is hameled of thy sorrow."<sup>3</sup>  
What should I longer sermon of it hold?  
As you have heard before, all he him told.

*in the morning*

*pledged herself*

*make a long story of it*

139. But right as flowers, through the cold of night  
Y-closèd, stoopen in their stalkès low,  
Redressen them against the sunnè bright,  
And spreaden, in their kindè, course by row,  
Right so gan then his eyèn up to throw  
This Troilus, and said: "O Venus dear!  
Thy might, thy grace, y-heried be it here."

*recover in the bright sun  
their nature / row by r.*

*praised*

140 And to Pandáre he held up both his hands,  
And said: "Lord, all thine be that I have,  
For I am whole; all bursten be my bands,  
A thousand Troyès whoso that me gave  
Each after other (God so wise me save)

*I am healthy*

---

<sup>1</sup> 137.2: *don thy hood; thy needès spedde be* may mean "put your hat back on, i.e. you don't have to beg any more; your wishes have been met." Or "keep your hat on" i.e. "don't get excited; your wishes have been met."

<sup>2</sup> 137.7: The meaning seems to be: "Unless your lazy failure to pursue the matter spoils things."

<sup>3</sup> 138.5: An odd expression which appears to say: "At least one foot of your sorrow is lamed," and therefore sorrow will not be able to pursue you so fast. Hence: your problem is half solved.

Ne might not me so gladden.<sup>1</sup> Lo! my heart  
It spreadeth so for joy it will to-start.

*burst*

141. "But, Lord, how shall I do? How shall I liven?  
When shall I next my dearè heartè see?  
How shall this longè time away be driven  
Till that thou be again at her from me?  
Thou mayst answer: `Abide, abide'; but he  
That hangeth by the neck, the sooth to sayn,  
In great dis-ease abideth for the pain."

*at her (house)  
Wait, wait  
to tell truth  
great distress*

142. "All easily now, for the love of Mart,"  
Quod Pandarus, "for everything hath time;  
So long abide till that the night depart.  
For all so siker as thou liest here by me,  
And, God to-forn, I will be there at prime,  
And forthy, work somewhat as I shall say,  
Or on some other wight this chargè lay.

*Mars*

*As sure  
as G. is my witness / in the a.m.  
And therefore  
person / duty*

143. "For pardee, God wot, I have ever yet  
Been ready thee to serve, and to this night  
Have I nought feignèd, but emforth my wit  
Done all thy lust, and shall with all my might.  
Do now as I shall say and fare aright;  
But if thou n'ilt, wite all thyself thy care,<sup>2</sup>  
On me is not along thine evil fare.

*G. knows*

*as far as I could  
your will  
and succeed  
blame yourself*

144. "I wot well that thou wiser art than I  
A thousand fold; but if I were as thou,  
God help me so, as I would utterly  
Of mine own hand write her right now  
A letter, in which I would her tellen how  
I fared amiss, and her beseech of ruth.  
Now help thyself, and leave it not for sloth.

*I know*

*I felt bad / her pity*

145. "And I myself shall therewith to her go  
And when thou wost that I am with her there,  
Worth thou upon a courser right anon

*you know  
Mount a horse*

---

<sup>1</sup> 140.4-6: "Anyone giving me a thousand Troys one after the other, I declare to God, could not make me so glad."

<sup>2</sup> 143: "But if you won't do so, blame yourself for your problems; your failure will not be my fault."

Yea, hardily right in thy bestè gear  
 And ride forth by the place, as naught ne were,  
 And thou shalt find us, if I may, sitting  
 At some window into the street looking.

*certainly  
 as if by accident*

146. "And if thee list, then mayst thou us salue  
 And upon me make thy countenance;  
 But by thy life, beware and fast eschew  
 To tarry aught, God shield us from mischance.  
 Ride forth thy way, and hold thy governance.  
 And we will speak of thee somewhat, I trow,  
 When thou art gone, to do thine earès glow.

*If you like / greet  
 look at me  
 carefully avoid  
 To delay at all  
 control your behavior  
 I guess  
 to make*

147. "Touching thy letter, thou art wise enough.  
 I wot thou wilt it not dignely endite.<sup>1</sup>  
 As make it with these argumentès tough;  
 Nor scrivenish nor crafty thou it write.  
 Be-blot it with thy tears also a lite;  
 And if thou write a goodly word all soft,  
 Though it be good, rehearse it not too oft.

*About  
 full of dry reasoning  
 like professional letter writers  
 a little*

148. "For though the bestè harper upon live  
 Would, on the bestè sounèd jolly harp  
 That ever was, with all his fingers five,  
 Touch ay one string or ay one warble harp,  
 Were his nailès pointed ne'er so sharp,  
 It shouldè maken every wight to dull,  
 To hear his glee, and of his strokès full.

*alive  
 best-tuned lovely h  
 always 1 s. / play only 1 tune  
 make everyone bored  
 his music / weary*

149. "Nor jumper no discordant thing i-fere,<sup>2</sup>  
 As thus, to usen termès of physic  
 In lovè's termès. Hold of thy mattér  
 The form always, and do that it be like;  
 For if a painter wouldè paint a pike  
 With ass's feet, and head it as an ape,  
 It 'cordeth not, so n'ere it but a jape."

*Don't jumble / together  
 of medicine  
 Keep to the point  
 & be consistent  
 a fish*

---

<sup>1</sup> 147.2: "I know you will not write it over-elaborately."

<sup>2</sup> 149: "Don't jumble discordant things together, like using medical terms to make love; keep to the point of your subject; and keep it consistent (*do that it be like*). It would be incongruous for a painter to put a donkey's feet or an ape's head on a fish; it would not fit (*'cordeth not*); it would be nothing (*n'ere it*) but a joke."

150. This counsel likèd well to Troilus,  
 But, as a dreadful lover, said he this:  
 "Alas! my dearè brother Pandarus!  
 I am ashamèd for to write i-wis,  
 Lest of mine innocence I said amiss,  
 Or that she n'ould it for despite receive;  
 Then were I dead, there might it nothing waive."

*pleased  
 dread-filled*

*indeed  
 my ignorance  
 wouldn't, out of disdain  
 avert*

151. To that Pandárus answered: "If thee lest,  
 Do what I say, and let me therewith gon,  
 For by that Lord that formèd east and west,  
 I hope of it to bring answer anon  
 Right of her hand; and if that thou wilt none,  
 Let be, and sorry may he be his life,  
 Against thy lust that helpeth thee to thrive." <sup>1</sup>

*if you please  
 go with it*

*Direct from / don't want to  
 all his life*

152. Quod Troilus: "Depardieu, I assent;  
 Since that thee list, I will arise and write,  
 And, blissful God, I pray with good intent  
 The voyage and the letter I shall endite  
 So speed it; and thou Minerva white,  
 Give thou me wit my letter to devise."  
 And set him down, and wrote right in this wise.

*By God  
 Since you wish*

*write  
 Make it succeed  
 skill / to compose*

153. First he gan her his rightè lady call,  
 His heartè 's life, his lust, his sorrow's leech,  
 His bliss, and eke those other termès all  
 That in such cases all these lovers seek,  
 And in full humble wise, as in his speech,  
 He gan him recommend unto her grace.  
 To tell all how, it asketh muchel space.

*his own  
 desire / doctor*

154. And after this full lowly he her prayed  
 To be not wroth though he of his folly  
 So hardy was to write to her and said  
 That love it made, or elsè must he die,  
 And piteously gan mercy for to cry;  
 And after that he said ( and lied full loud),  
 Himself was little worth, and less he could,

*not angry  
 So bold  
 made him do it*

*lied blatantly  
 & knew even less*

---

<sup>1</sup> 151.5-7: *And if ...*: "But if you want none of my advice, forget it, and may anyone who helps you to succeed be sorry as long as he lives."

155. And that she would have his cunning excused,  
 That little was; and eke he dread her so,  
 And his unworthiness ay he accused;  
 And after that then gan he tell his woe;  
 But that was endèless withouten ho;  
 And said he would in truth always him hold;  
 And read it o'er and gan the letter fold.

*ability  
 dreaded  
 repeatedly*

*without end  
 always be true*

156. And with his saltè tearès gan he bathe  
 The ruby in his signet, and it set  
 Upon the wax deliverly and rathe,  
 Therewith a thousand timès ere he let  
 He kissèd then the letter that he shut,  
 And said: "Letter, a blissful destiny  
 Thee shapen is: my lady shall thee see!"

*expertly & fast  
 let (it go)*

*a happy fate ...  
 Is prepared for you*

157. This Pandare took the letter, and betime  
 A-morrow to his niece's palace start,  
 And fast he swore that it was passèd prime,  
 And gan to jape, and said: "I-wis mine heart  
 So fresh it is (although it sorè smart)  
 I may not sleepè never a May's morrow,  
 I have a jolly woe, a lusty sorrow." <sup>1</sup>

*early  
 hurried (or started)  
 about 9 am  
 to joke / indeed  
 it hurts sharply  
 a May morning*

158. Criseyde, when that she her uncle heard,  
 With dreadful heart, and désirous to hear <sup>2</sup>  
 The cause of his coming, right thus answered;  
 "Now by your faith, mine uncle," quod she, "dear!  
 What manner windè guideth you now here?  
 Tell us your jolly woe and your penáncé;  
 How far forth be you put in lovè's dance?"

*agony  
 What's your position in*

159. "By God," quod he, "I hop always behind."  
 And she to-laughed it thought her heartè burst. <sup>3</sup>

*laughed so hard*

---

<sup>1</sup> 157.7: These are the oxymorons of love applied jokingly by Pandarus to himself.

<sup>2</sup> 158.2: *Dreadful* cannot here mean "filled with dread" in our sense of the word "dread." The tag phrase *without dread* generally means "without doubt" so here *dreadful* would mean "filled with doubt," or, in view of the self-mockery of Pandarus's opening remark and Criseyde's own lighthearted response, something more like "bursting with curiosity."

<sup>3</sup> 159.2: "until she thought her heart would burst."

Quod Pandarus: "Look always that you find  
Game in my hood, but hearken if you lest;  
There is right now come to the town a guest,  
A Greek espy, and telleth newè things,  
For which I come to tellen you tidings.

*something to laugh at /listen / please*

160. "Into the garden go we, and you'll hear  
All privily of this a long sermón."  
With that they wenten arm in arm i-fere  
Into the garden from the chamber down;  
And when that he so far was, that the sound  
Of what he spoke no man it hearen might,  
He said her thus, and out the letter plight:

*story  
together*

*pulled*

161. "Lo! he that is all wholly yourès free,  
Him recommedeth lowly to your grace,  
And sends to you this letter here by me;  
Aviseth you on it when you have space,  
And of some goodly answer you purcháse,  
Or, help me God so, plainly for to sayn,  
He may not longè liven for his pain."

*totally & completely*

*Study it  
provide*

162. Full dreadfully then gan she standen still,<sup>1</sup>  
And took it not, but all her humble cheer  
Gan for to change, and saidè: "Scrip nor bill,  
For love of God, that toucheth such mattér,  
Ne bring me none; and also, uncle dear!  
To mine estate have more regard, I pray,  
Than to his lust: what should I morè say?

*manner  
writing nor letter  
deals with*

*my position  
his desires*

163. "And looketh now if this be reasonáble,  
And letteth not for favour nor for sloth:  
To say a sooth. Now is it covenáble  
To mine estate, by God and by my truth,  
To take it, or of him to havè ruth  
In harming of myself or in repreve?  
Bear it again for him that you on 'lieve."<sup>2</sup>

*don't hold back  
the truth / suitable  
my position  
pity  
in reproach*

---

<sup>1</sup> 162.1: As with 158.2, *dreadfully* here can hardly mean "full of dread", but neither can it mean "full of curiosity" in the context. "With uncertainty? apprehension? offended modesty? "

<sup>2</sup> 163: "Take it back to him you believe in " (to him you represent?).

164. This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,  
 And said: "Now is this the greatest wonder  
 That e'er I saw; let be this nicè fare:  
 To deathè may I smitten be with thunder  
 If for the city which that standeth yonder  
 Would I a letter to you bring or take  
 To harm of you! What list you thus it make?

*stop this foolishness*

*to gain the city*

*why do you take it so?*

165. "But thus you faren — well nigh all and some,  
 That he that most desireth you to serve,  
 Of him you reckon least where he become,  
 And whether that he live or elsè starve;  
 But for all that, that e'er I may deserve,  
 Refuse it not," quod he, and hent her fast,  
 And in her bosom down the letter thrust,

*you = women*

*care least what happens  
die*

*grabbed her hard*

166. And said [to] her: "Now cast it away anon  
 That folk may see and garen on us tway."  
 Quod she: "I can abide till they be gone,"  
 And gan to smile, and said him: "Eme, I pray,  
 Such answer as you list, yourself purvey,  
 For truly I will no letter write."  
 "No! then will I," quod he, "so you endite."

*stare at us both*

*I can wait*

*Uncle*

*as you please, carry*

*provided you dictate*

167. Therewith she laughed, and saidè: "Go we dine;"  
 And he gan at himself to jopen fast,  
 And said: "Niece, I have so great a pine  
 For love, that every other day I fast;"  
 And gan his bestè japès forth to cast,  
 And made her so to laugh at his folly  
 That she for laughter weened for to die.

*have lunch*

*to joke*

*pining*

*jokes*

*expected*

168. And when that she was come into the hall,  
 "Now eme," quod she, "we will go dine anon  
 And gan some of her women to her call,  
 And straight into her chamber gan she gon;  
 But of her busynesses this was one  
 Amongèst other thingès, out of dread,  
 Full privily this letter for to read.

*uncle*

*proceeded to go*

*without question*

169. Avisèd word by word in every line,  
 And found no lack, she thought he couldè good;  
 And put it up, and went her in to dine;

*having read*

*knew how to act properly  
to lunch*

And Pandarus, that in a study stood,  
 Ere he was 'ware she took him by the hood,  
 And saidè: "You were caught ere that you wist."  
 "I vouchèsafe," quod he; "do what you list."

*stood abstractedly*

*before you knew  
 I agree / what you like*

170. Then washen they, and set them down to eat;  
 And after noon full slily Pandarus  
 Gan draw him to the window nigh the street,  
 And saidè: "Niece, who hath arrayèd thus  
 The yonder house that stands afore-gainst us?"  
 "Which house?" quod she, and gan for to behold,  
 And knew it well, and whose it was him told.

*near  
 fixed  
 opposite*

171. And fellen forth in speech of thingès small,  
 And saten in the window bothè tway.  
 When Pandarus saw time unto his tale,  
 And saw well that her folk were all away,  
 "Now, niece mine, tell on," quod he, "I pray;  
 How liketh you the letter that you wot?  
 Can he thereon? for by my truth I n'ot." <sup>1</sup>

*made small talk*

*you know about*

172. Therewith all rosy hued then waxèd she,  
 And gan to hum, and saidè: "So I trow."  
 "Acquit him well for God's love," quod he,  
 Myself to-meedès will the letter sew;"  
 And held his handès up, and fell on knee.  
 "Now, goodè niece, be it ne'er so lite,  
 Give me the labor it to sew and plite." <sup>2</sup>

*she blushed  
 I guess so  
 Reward  
 as reward (to me/you?)*

*little  
 fold*

173. "Yea, for I can so writè," quod she tho,  
 "And eke I n'ot what I should to him say."  
 "Nay, niece," quod Pandarus, "say you not so,  
 Yet, at the leastè, thanketh him I pray  
 Of his good will. O do him not to die!  
 Now for the love of me, my niece dear  
 Refuseth not at this time my prayér."

*I can indeed / then  
 But I don't know*

*cause him not*

174. "Depardieu!" quod she, "God leve all be well;  
 God help me so, this is the firstè letter

*Indeed / God grant*

---

<sup>1</sup> 171.7: "Does he know how to write well, for, on my word, I don't know".

<sup>2</sup> 172.7: A parchment letter would have been sewn shut.



That e'er I wrote, yea all or any deal,"  
 And into a closet for t'avise her better  
 She went alone, and gan her heart unfetter  
 Out of Dísdain's prison but a lite,  
 And set her down and gan a letter write.

*all or part  
 private room  
 to unbind  
 a little*

175. Of which to tell in short is mine intent  
 Th' effect as far as I can understand:  
 She thankèd him of all that he well meant  
 Towardès her, but holden him in hand  
 She would not, ne make herselfen bound  
 In love, but as his sister him to please  
 She would ay fain, to do his heart an ease.

*deceive him  
 nor bind herself  
 would always gladly*

176. She shut it, and to Pandare in gan gon  
 There as he sat and looked into the street,  
 And down she sat her by him on a stone  
 Of jasper on a cushion gold y-beat,  
 And said: "As wisly help me God the great,  
 I never did a thing with morè pain  
 Than writè this, to the which you me constrain."

*gold-embroidered  
 As surely / great G.  
 pressure*

177. And took it him. He thankèd her and said:  
 "God wot, of thing full often loth begun  
 Cometh end good; and, niecè mine, Criseyde,  
 That you to him of hard now been y-won<sup>1</sup>  
 Ought he be glad, by God and yonder sun!  
 For-why men say, impressionès light  
 Full lightly been ay ready to the flight.

*reluctantly begun  
 good result*

178. "But you have played the tyrant nigh too long,  
 And hard was it your heartè for to grave.  
 Now stint, that you no longer on it hong,<sup>2</sup>  
 Al wouldè you the form of daunger save.  
 But hasteth you to do him joyè have;  
 For trusteth well, too long y-done hardness

*just about too l.  
 to impress  
 the appearance of "daunger"  
 to give him joy*

---

<sup>1</sup> 177. 4-7: He ought to be glad that it was difficult for him to win you. Because, they say, impressions easily made just as easily take flight.

<sup>2</sup> 178.3-4: "Now cease and do not persist in it any longer -- even if you want to keep up the appearance of "daunger" (see above 57.7).

Causeth despite full often, for distress.”<sup>1</sup>

179. And right as they declarèd this mattér,  
Lo! Troilus right at the streetè's end  
Came riding with his tenthè some i-fere<sup>2</sup>  
All softly, and thitherward gan bend  
There as they sat, as was his way to wend  
To palace-ward, and Pandare him espied,  
And said: "Niece! See who comes herè ride!

*in a group of 10  
moved towards  
to travel  
towards the palace*

180. "O fly not in! He sees us, I suppose,  
Lest he may thinken that you him eschew."  
"Nay, nay," quod she, and waxed as red as rose.  
With that he gan her humbly to salue  
With dreadful cheer, and oft his huès mue,<sup>3</sup>  
And up his look he debonairly cast,  
And beckèd on Pandàre, and forth he passed.

*avoid  
and became  
he = T / salute, greet  
his color changed  
graciously  
nodded to*

181. God wot if he sat on his horse aright,  
Or goodly was beseen that ilkè day!  
God wot whe'r he were like a manly knight!  
What should I dretch, or tell of his array?  
Criseyde, which that all these thingès saw,  
To tell in short, her likèd all i-fere,  
His person, his array, his look, his cheer,

*God knows  
was good looking  
God knows whether  
delay / clothes  
everything pleased her  
dress / attitude*

182. His goodly manner and his gentleness,  
So well, that never since that she was born  
Ne haddè she such ruth of his distress;  
And how so she had hard been here-beforn,  
To God hope I she hath now caught a thorn  
She shall not pull it out this nextè week;  
God send her more such thornès on to pick!

*such pity on  
And however much*

---

<sup>1</sup> 178.6-7: Hardness persisted in too long induces contempt because of the pain (it causes).

<sup>2</sup> 179.3: *with his tenthè sum i-fere*: *tenthè sum* is probably a relic of an OE idiom meaning "one of ten," i.e. he and nine others.

<sup>3</sup> 180.5: Once again the precise connotation of *dreadful* is difficult to pin down. (See 158 & 162 above). It might have a range of meaning from 'courteous' to 'apprehensive'. *and oft his hues (gan) mue*: 'and his color changed often' implies shyness and apprehension.

183. Pandárus, which that stood her fastè by,  
 Felt iron hot, and he began to smite, *strike*  
 And saidè: "Niece, I pray you heartily  
 Tell me what I shall asken you a lite; *(the answer to) what / a little*  
 A woman that were of his death to wite, *to blame*  
 Without his guilt, but for her lack of ruth, *pity*  
 Were it well done?" Quod she: "Nay, by my truth."

184. "God help me so," quod he, "you say me sooth, *tell truth*  
 You feelen well yourself that I naught lie.  
 Lo! yond he rides." Quod she: "Yea, so he doth." *yonder*  
 "Well," quod Pandáre, "as I have told you thrice, *3 times*  
 Let be your nicèty and your follý, *squeamishness*  
 And speak with him in easing of his heart:  
 Let nicèty not do you both to smart." *cause you pain*

185. But thereon was to heaven and to don, *there was humming & hawing*  
 "Considering all things, it may not be."  
 "And why?" "For shame. And it were eke too soon *For modesty*  
 To granted him so great a liberty."  
 For plainly her intent, as saidè she,  
 Was, for to love him únwist if she might, *unknown*  
 And guerdon him with nothing but with sight. <sup>1</sup> *And reward*

186. But Pandarus thought: "It shall not be so;  
 If that I may, this nice opinïon *squeamish attitude*  
 Shall not be holden fully yearès two."  
 What should I make of this a long sermón? *long story*  
 He must assent on that conclusion *agree to this result*  
 As for the time, and when that it was eve, *evening*  
 And all was well, he rose and took his leave.

187. And on his way full fast he homeward sped,  
 And right for joy he felt his heartè dance,  
 And Troilus he found alone a-bed, *in bed*

---

<sup>1</sup> 185: Many editions have no quotation marks in this stanza. They would seem to regard it all as authorial comment. If they are right, the stanza is an interesting example of a technique many of us regard as very modern, especially joycean, where the narrator is "speaking" in the "voice" of one or more of his characters, the *style indirect libre* referred to by Spearing in an earlier passage. ( See above, II.87.5-7). My quotation marks and punctuation could easily be changed in a number of ways. In 185.3 Riverside has *speche* for *shame*, and glosses it as '(fear of) malicious speech.'

That lay, as do those lovers, in a trance,  
 Betwixen hope and dark dis-éperance.  
 But Pandarus right at his in-coming  
 He sang, as who saith: "Lo! somewhat I bring."

*despair*

188. And said: "Who is in his bed so soon  
 Y-buried thus?" "It am I, friend," quod he.  
 "Who? Troilus! nay, help me so the moon,"  
 Quod Pandarus, "Thou shalt up rise and see  
 A charm that was y-sent right now to thee,  
 The which can healen thee of thine access,  
 If thou forthwith do all thy busyness."

*attack*

189. "Yea, through the might of God," quod Troilus.  
 And Pandarus gan him the letter take,  
 And said: "Pardee, God hath holpen us.  
 Have here a light, and look on all these black."  
 But often gan the heartè glad and quake  
 Of Troilus while he it gan to read,  
 So as the wordès gave him hope or dread.

*to him*

*I declare / helped  
 black [letters]*

*According as*

190. But, finally, he took all for the best  
 That she him wrote, for somewhat he beheld  
 On which he thought he might his heartè rest,  
 Al' covered she the wordès under shield;<sup>1</sup>  
 Thus to the morè worthy part he held,  
 That what for hope, and Pandarus' behest,  
 His greatè woe foryede he at the least.

*gave up*

191. But, as we may all day ourselven see,  
 Through morè wood or coal, the morè fire;  
 Right so increase of hope of what it be,  
 Therewith full oft encreaseth eke desire;  
 Or, as an oak comes of a little spire,  
 So through this letter which that she him sent  
 Increasesn 'gan desire, of which he brent.

*whatever*

*shoot*

*burned*

192. Wherefore I say always, that day and night  
 This Troilus gan to desiren more  
 Than he did erst through hope, and did his might  
 To pressen on, as by Pandárus' lore,

*did before  
 advice*

---

<sup>1</sup> 190. 4-5: She disguised her feelings somewhat; but he concentrated on the more hopeful parts.

And writen to her of his sorrows sore  
 From day to day: he let it naught refreid  
 That by Pandáre he somewhat wrote or said.

*grow cold*

193. And did also his other observánces  
 That to a lover 'longeth in this case;  
 And after that these dicé turned on chances,  
 So was he either glad or said 'Alas!'  
 And held after his gistès ay his pace;<sup>1</sup>  
 And after such answers as he had,  
 So were his days sorry, other glad.

*belong  
 as the dice came up*

*Or glad*

194. But to Pandáre always was his recourse,  
 And piteously gan ay to him to 'plain,  
 And him besought of redde and some succourse;<sup>2</sup>  
 And Pándarus, that saw his woodè pain,  
 Waxed well nigh dead for ruthè, sooth to sayn,  
 And busily with all his heartè cast  
 Some of his woe to slay, and that as fast;

*advice & help  
 bitter  
 Grew / for pity  
 determined  
 to relieve / quickly*

195. And saidè: "Lord and friend and brother dear,  
 God wot that thy dis-easè doth me woe.  
 But wilt thou stinten all this woeful cheer,  
 And, by my truth, ere it be dayès two,  
 And God to-forn, yet shall I shape it so  
 That thou shalt come into a certain place  
 Thereas thou may'st thyself her pray of grace.

*causes me pain  
 If you would stop / behavior*

*With God's help*

*ask her favor*

196. "And certainly, I n'ot if thou it wost,  
 But those that been expért in love it say,  
 It is one of the things that furthers most,  
 A man to have a leisure for to pray,  
 And siker place his woe for to bewray;  
 For in good heart it must some ruth impress,  
 To hear and see the guiltless in distress.

*I don't know if you know it*

*helps  
 to plead  
 And a secure p. / reveal  
 pity*

---

<sup>1</sup> And adapted his pace to his resting spots. i.e. presumably, he didn't rush things, but accepted what he could get as it came.

<sup>2</sup> 194.2-3: "And [Troilus] constantly to him [Pandarus] made his complaint and begged him for advice and help."

197. "Paraunter thinkest thou: <sup>1</sup> 'though it be so  
 That Kinde wouldè do her to begin  
 To have a manner ruth upon my woe,  
 Says Daunger: 'Nay, thou shalt me never win'  
 So ruleth her her heartè's ghost within,  
 That, though she bendè, yet she stands on root;  
 What in effect is this unto my boote?"

*Perhaps  
 Nature w. cause her  
 some pity  
  
 heart of hearts  
 firmly rooted  
 What good is it to me?*

198. "Think here-against, when that the sturdy oak,  
 On which men hacketh often for the nones,  
 Received hath the happy falling stroke,  
 The greatè sway doth it come all at once,  
 As do these rockès or these millè-stones.  
 For swifter course comes thing that is of weight  
 When it descendeth, than do thingès light.

*against that  
 one after the other  
  
 come down*

199. "And reed that boweth down for every blast,  
 Full lightly, ceasè wind, it will arise;  
 But so n'ill not an oak when it is cast;  
 It needs me not thee longè to forbyse.  
 Men shall rejoicen of a great emprise  
 Achievèd well that stands withouten doubt,  
 Al' have men been the longer thereabout.

*when wind stops  
 felled  
 give many examples  
 undertaking  
  
 Even though men*

200. "But, Troilus, yet tell me, if thee lest,  
 A thing now which that I shall asken thee:  
 Which is the brother that thou lovest best,  
 As in thy very heartè's privity?"  
 "I-wis my brother Deiphebe," quod he.  
 "Now," quod Pandaré, "ere hourès twicè twelve  
 He shall thee ease, unwist of it himself.

*if you will  
  
 privacy  
 Indeed  
  
 unaware*

201. "Now let me alone and worken as I may,"  
 Quod he, and to Deiphebus went he tho,  
 Which had his lord and greatè friend been ay;  
 Save Troilus, no man he lovèd so.  
 To tell in short, withouten wordès mo',  
 Quod Pandarus: "I pray you that you be  
 Friend to a causè which that toucheth me."

*then  
 always  
  
 more  
  
 concerns*

---

<sup>1</sup> 197: There are three "voices" in this stanza: 1. Pandarus, who says it all : "Paraunter thinkest thou ..." 2. conjectured Troilus: 'though it ..' to the end 3. Daunger : 'Nay ...win ' within Troilus's imagined speech.

202. "Yes, pardee," quod Deiphebus, "well thou wost,  
 In all that e'er I may, and God to-fore,  
 Al n'ere it but for the man that I love most,  
 My brother Troilus.<sup>1</sup> But say wherefore  
 It is; for since that I was bore,  
 I n'as, ne nevermore to be, I think,<sup>2</sup>  
 Against a thing that mightè thee for-think."

*you know  
 before God*

*displease you*

203. Pandárus gan him thank, and to him said:  
 "Lo, sir, I have a lady in this town,  
 That is my niece and callèd is Criseyde,  
 Which some men woulden do oppression,  
 And wrongfully have her possessions.  
 Wherefore I of your lordship you beseech  
 To be our friend, withouten morè speech."

204. Deiphebus answered him: "Oh, is not this  
 That thou speak'st of to me thus strangely,  
 Criséydè, my friend?" He saidè: "Yes."  
 "Then needeth," quod Deiphebus, "hardily,  
 "No more to speak; for trusteth well that I  
 Will be her champion with spur and yard:  
 I roughtè not though all her foes it heard.

*as a stranger  
 C. has 4 syllables*

*whip  
 I care not*

205. "But tell me, thou that wost all this mattér,  
 How I might best availen." "Now let's see,"  
 Quod Pandarus. "If you, my lord so dear,  
 Would as now do this honoúr unto me,  
 To prayen her to-morrow, lo, that she  
 Come unto you her 'plaintès to devise,  
 Her adversaries would of it agrise.

*you who know  
 help best*

*complaints to tell  
 Be frightened*

206. "And if I morè durstè pray as now,  
 And chargen you to have so great travail,  
 To have some of your brothers here with you,  
 That mighten to her causè bet' avail,  
 Then wot I well she mightè never fail

*dare ask at present  
 ask you / trouble*

*better*

---

<sup>1</sup> 202.1-4: "Yes indeed," said Deiphebus. "You know well that [I will help you] in any way I can, I swear to God, [sooner than I would help any other man] except for the man I love most in the world, my brother Troilus."

<sup>2</sup> 202.6: "I wasn't and I will never be, I hope"

For to be helpèd, what at your instáncè,  
What with her other friendès' governance."

*support  
management*

207. Deiphebus, which that comen was of kind  
To all honoúr and bounty to consent,  
Answered: "It shall be done, and I can find  
Yet greater help to this in mine intent.  
What wilt thou say if I for Helen sent  
To speak of this? I trow it be the best,  
For she may leaden Paris as her lest.

*was by nature inclined...  
... to consent to*

*I think  
as she likes*

208. "Of Hector, which that is my lord, my brother,  
It needeth not to pray him friend to be;  
For I have heard him, one time and eke other,  
Speak of Criseyde honour such that he  
May say no bet', such hap to him has she.  
It needeth not his helpè for to crave;  
He shall be such right as we will him have.

*more than once*

*better / favor with him*

209. "Speak thou thyself also to Troilus  
On my behalf, and pray him with us dine."  
"Sir, all this shall be done," quod Pandarus,  
And took his leave, and never gan to fine,  
But to his niece's house as straight as line  
He came, and found her from the meat arise,  
And set him down, and spoke right in this wise.

*stop*

*risen f. her meal*

210. He said: "O very God! so have I run,  
Lo! nicè mine, see you not how I sweat?  
I n'ot whether you morè thank me can;  
Be you not 'ware how falsè Poliphèt  
Is now about eftsoonès for to plead,  
And bringen on you advocacies new?"  
"I? No," quod she, and changèd all her hue.

*don't know*

*immediately  
legal claims  
color*

211. "What! Is he more about me for to dretch,<sup>1</sup>  
And do me wrong? What shall I do? alas!  
Yet of himselfen nothing would I reck  
N'ere it for Antenor and Aeneas,

*to vex*

*wouldn't care  
Were it not*

---

<sup>1</sup> 211.1: "Is he about to annoy me again?"



That be his friends in such a manner case;<sup>1</sup>  
 But for the love of God, mine uncle dear!  
 No force of that, let him have all i-fere;

*No matter / everything*

212. "Withouten that I have enough for us."  
 "Nay," quod Pandáre, "it shall be no thing so,  
 For I have been right now at Deiphibus,  
 At Hector, and mine other lordès mo',  
 And shortly makèd each of them his foe,  
 That, by my thrift, he shall it never win  
 For aught he can, when so that he begin."

*if I can help it  
 whenever he begins*

213. And as they casten what was best to don,  
 Deiphebus, of his ownè courtesy,  
 Came her to pray — in his proper persón —  
 To hold him on the morrow company  
 At dinner, which she wouldè not deny,  
 But goodly gan his prayer to obey.  
 He thankèd her, and went upon his way.

*planned / to do*

*in person  
 to be his guest*

*politely*

214. When this was done this Pándare up anon,  
 (To tell in short) and forth gan for to wend  
 To Troilus as still as any stone,  
 And all this thing he told him ord and end,  
 And how that he Deiphebus gan to blend,  
 And said him: "Now is time, if that you can,  
 To bear thee well to-morrow, and all is won.

*(got) up  
 to go*

*from start to finish  
 deceive*

*do your part*

215. "Now speak, now pray, now piteously complain:  
 Let not for nicè shame or dread or sloth.  
 Some time a man must tell his ownè pain:  
 Believe it, and she shall have on thee ruth;  
 Thou shalt be savèd by thy faith, in truth.  
 But well wot I, thou art now in a dread,  
 And what it is I lay I can arede.

*Shrink not w. foolish s.*

*have pity*

*I bet I c. tell*

216. "Thou thinkest now, 'How should I do all this?"

---

<sup>1</sup> 211.4-5: Benoit de Saint-Maure and Guido delle Colonne (sources for Chaucer's story) wrote that Antenor and Aeneas were both involved in the treacherous act of removing the Palladium, a holy relic on which depended the safety of Troy. As we shall see later in this poem, Antenor, taken prisoner by the Greeks, is exchanged for Criseyde, and then betrays Troy. See Bk IV, st. 19-31 below.

For by my cheerè mustè folk espy  
 That for her love is that I fare amiss;  
 Yet had I lever unwist for sorrow die.  
 Now think not so, for thou dost great folly.  
 For right now have I founden a mannér  
 Of sleightè for to cover all thy cheer.

*my behavior  
 act oddly  
 I'd rather die unknown*

*a kind ...  
 ... Of guile*

217. "Thou shalt go overnight, and that as blive,  
 To Deiphebus' house, as thee to play,  
 Thy malady away the bet' to drive;  
 For why thou seemest sick, the sooth to say;  
 Soon after that, down in thy bed thee lay,  
 And say thou may'st no longer up endure,  
 And lie right there and bide thine áventure.

*quickly  
 as if to relax  
 the better  
 Because  
 lie down in bed  
 await your destiny*

218. "Say that the fever is wont thee for to take  
 The samè time, and lasten till a-morrow;  
 And let see now how well thou canst it make,  
 For pardee, sick is he that is in sorrow:  
 Go now, farewell, and Venus here to borrow,  
 I hope, an' thou this purpose holdè firm,  
 Thy gracè shall she fully there confirm."

*usually hits you  
 carry it off  
 with V. on our side  
 an' = if  
 your good fortune*

219. Quod Troilus: "I-wis, thou needèless  
 Counselest me that sickly I me feign,  
 For I am sick in earnest, doubtèless,  
 So that well nigh I starvè for the pain."  
 Quod Pandarus: "Thou shalt thee better 'plain,  
 And hast the lessè need to counterfeit,  
 For him men deemen hot that men see sweat.

*pretend to be sick  
 almost dying  
 think*

220. "Lo, hold thee at thy tristè close, and I  
 Shall well the deer unto thy bowè drive."  
 Therewith he took his leave all softèly,  
 And Troilus to palace wentè blive.  
 So glad ne was he never in all his life,  
 And to Pandárus' redde gan all assent,  
 And to Deiphebus' house at night he went.

*(hunting) station  
 at once  
 took all P's advice*

221. What needeth it to tellen all the cheer  
 That Deiphebus to his brother made,  
 Or his access, or his sickly mannér,  
 How men go him with clothès for to lade,

*the welcome  
 Or his (T's) attack  
 bedclothes to load*

When he was laid, and how men would him glad?  
But all for naught; he held forth ay the wise  
That you have heard Pandaré ere this devise.

*laid (on bed) / cheer up  
he held to the plan*

222. But certain is ere Troilus him laid,  
Deiphebus had him prayèd overnight  
To be a friend and helping to Criseyde  
God wot that he it granted anonright  
To be her fullè friend with all his might:  
But such a need was it to pray him then  
As for to bid a wood man for to run.

*lay down*

*at once*

*madman*

223. The morrow came, and nighen gan the time  
Of mealtide, that the fairè Queen Elaine  
Shope her to be an hour after prime  
With Deiphebe, to whom she would not feign,  
But as his sister, homely, sooth to sayn,  
She came to dinner in her plain intent;  
But God and Pándare wist all what this meant.

*approach  
Helen  
Prepared / about 10 a.m.*

*like family, to tell truth*

*knew*

224. Came eke Criseyde all innocent of this,  
Antigone her niece and Tarbe also:  
But fly we now prolixity best is,<sup>1</sup>  
For love of God, and let us fast y-go  
Right to th' effect withouten talès mo',  
Why all this folk assembled in this place,  
And let us of their saluingès pace.

*to the point / words*

*pass up their greetings*

225. Great honour did them Deíphebe certáin,  
And fed them well with all that might them like,  
But evermore, "Alas!" was his refrain:  
"My goodè brother, Troilus the sick,  
Lies yet;" and therewithal he gan to sigh,  
And after that he painèd him to glad  
Them as he might, and cheerè good he made.

*Is confined to bed  
took pains to entertain*

226. Complained eke Elaine of his sickness  
So faithfully, that pity was to hear,  
And every wight gan waxen for access  
A leech anon, and said: "In this mannér

*physician*

---

<sup>1</sup> 224.3: "The best thing for us now is to avoid wordiness."

Men curen folk; this charm I will thee lere." <sup>1</sup>  
 But there sat one, al' list her not to teach,  
 That thought: "Best could I be his leech."

*teach*  
*although she didn't choose to*  
*his physician*

227. After complaint, him 'gonnen they to praise,  
 As folk do yet when some wight has begun  
 To praise a man, and up with praise him raise  
 A thousand fold yet higher than the sun;  
 "He is, he can, what fewè lordès can;"  
 And Pandarus, of that they would affirm,  
 He naught forgot their praising to confirm.

*they began*

*that = that which*

228. Heard all this thing Criseyde well enough,  
 And every word gan for to notify,  
 For which with sober cheer her heartè laughed;  
 For who is that ne would her glorify  
 To mowen such a knight do live or die? <sup>2</sup>  
 But all pass I, lest you too longè dwell;  
 But for one fine is all that e'er I tell.

*to take note of*  
*w. serious face*  
*be proud*  
*enable*

*one purpose*

229. The timè came from dinner for to rise,  
 And as them ought, arisen every one,  
 And gan awhile of this and that devise;  
 But Pandarus broke all this speech anon,  
 And said to Deiphebus: "Will you go on,  
 If it your willè be, as I you prayed,  
 To speak here of the needès of Criseyde?"

*chat*

230 Elainè, which that by the hand her held,  
 Took first the tale, and saidè: "Go we blive;  
 And goodly on Criseyde she beheld,  
 And saidè: "Jovè never let him thrive  
 That does you harm, and bring him soon of live,

*Helen who*  
*Spoke first / at once*  
*looked kindly*  
*(May) Jove*  
*and (may J) take his life*

---

<sup>1</sup> 226.3-5: "Everyone began to turn into a doctor (*leech*) of fevers: 'This is the way to cure people. I'll show you a charm.' " *Access* is fever or sudden illness.

<sup>2</sup> 228.4-5: "Who is [she] who would not glorify her[self] to be able to make (*mowen ... do*) such a knight live or die?" i.e. What woman would not be proud to be in a position to decide whether such a knight live or die?" 228.6: *But all ... dwell* : "But I pass over this lest you be delayed too long."

And give me sorrow but he shall it rue <sup>1</sup>  
If that I may, and allè folk be true."

231. "Tell thou thy niece's case," quod Deiphebus  
To Pandarus, "for thou canst best it tell."  
"My lordès and my ladies, it stands thus;  
What should I longer," quod he, "do you dwell?"  
He rung them out a process like a bell  
Upon her foe that hight was Polyphete,  
So heinous that men mighten on it spit.

*why should I delay you  
rattled off a case  
Against / was called*

232. Answered of this each worse of them than other,  
And Polyphete they gannen thus to wary,  
"A-hangèd be such one, were he my brother,  
And so he shall, for it ne may not vary."<sup>2</sup>  
What should I longer in this talè tarry?  
Plainly all at oncè they her hight  
To be her help in all that e'er they might.

*more vehemently  
to curse*

*promised*

233. Spoke then Elaine, and said to Pandarus:  
"Wot aught my lord my brother of this mattér,  
I mean Hectór, or wot it Troilus?"  
He said: "Yea, but will you now me hear?  
Methinketh this, since Troilus is here,  
It werè good, if that you would assent,  
She told herself him all this ere she went;

*Does my b. know anything?  
does T. know?*

234. "For he will have the more her grief at heart,  
Because, lo! she a worthy lady is;  
And by your leave I will but in right start,  
And do you wit, and that anon i-wis,<sup>3</sup>  
If that he sleep or will aught hear of this;"  
And in he leaped and said him in his ear:  
"God have thy soul! for brought have I thy bier."

*just nip in  
let you know & promptly indeed*

*hearse*

235. To smilen of this then gan Troilus;  
And Pandarus, withouten reckoning,

*delay*

---

<sup>1</sup> 230: "May God punish me, if I don't make him regret it, if I can help it and if everyone is loyal."

<sup>2</sup> 232.3: "for it (the law) cannot vary for anyone" (?).

<sup>3</sup> 234.4: "And let you know (*do you wit*), and that promptly indeed."

Out wentè to Elaine and Deiphebus,  
 And said them: "So there be no tarrying,  
 No morè press, he will well that you bring  
 Criséydè, my lady that is here,  
 And as he may endure, he will hear.

*Provided there's no delay  
 No crowding / he agrees  
 C. has 4 syllables  
 as far as he is able*

236. "But well you wot the chamber is but lite,  
 And fewè folk may lightly make it warm;  
 Now looketh ye — for I will have no wite <sup>1</sup>  
 To bring in press that mightè do him harm,  
 Or him dis-easen, (for my better arm!) —  
 Whe'er it be best she bidè till eftsoonès,  
 Now looketh you, that knowen what to do is.

*you know / little*

*no blame  
 a crowd that*

*wait until later*

237. "I say for me, best is as I can know,  
 That no wight in ne wentè but you tway,  
 But it were I, for I can in a throw  
 Rehearse her case unlike what she can say,  
 And after this she may him oncè pray  
 To be good lord, in short, and take her leave;  
 This may not muchel of his ease him rieve.

*It's my opinion  
 nobody but you 2  
 Except me / in a minute  
 Go over*

*deprive*

238. "And eke, for she is strange, he will forbear  
 His easè, which that him thar not for you;  
 Eke other thing that toucheth not to hear <sup>2</sup>  
 He will it tell, I wot it well right now,  
 That secret is, and for the townè's prow."  
 And they, that nothing knew of his intent,  
 Withouten more to Troilus in they went.

*she is not related  
 need not do for you*

*I know  
 benefit*

239. Elaine in all her goodly softè wise  
 Gan him salute and womanly to play,  
 And said: "I-wis you must algate arise;  
 Now, fairè brother, be all whole I pray;"  
 And gan her arm right o'er his shoulder lay,

*greet & joke with  
 Indeed / at once*

---

<sup>1</sup> 236 : "Now take heed whether (*looketh ...whe'er*) it may be better for her to wait until later (*eftsoones*), for I will not take the blame for bringing in a crowd that may harm him or distress (*dis-ease*) him, not for my right arm! Take heed you who know what to do." Pandarus the puppet master is pretending to defer to the opinions of others while in the very act of manipulating them.

<sup>2</sup> 238.3-5: "Other things that should not be discussed publicly (*toucheth not to hear*) he wants to talk about (I know that well) -- state secrets that are for the city's welfare."

And him with all her wit to recomfórt;  
As she best could, she gan him to disport.

*her ability  
entertain*

240. So after this quod she: "We you beseech,  
My dearè brother Deíphebe and I,  
For love of God, and so does Pándare eke,  
To be good lord and friend right heartily  
Unto Criseydè, which that certainly  
Receivèd wrong, as wot well here Pandáre,  
That can her case well bet' than I declare."

*brother-in-law*

*far better*

241. This Pándarus gan new his tongue affile  
And all her case rehearse, and that anon.  
When it was said, soon after in a while  
Quod Troilus: "As soon as I may gon,  
I will right fain with all my might be one,  
(Have God my truth), her causè to sustain."  
"Good thrift have you," then quod the Queen Elaine.

*sharpen  
at once*

*walk  
I'll be glad*

*Good fortune*

242. Quod Pandarus: "An' it your willè be  
That she may take her leave ere that she go?"  
"O, elsè God forbid it," then quod he,  
"If that she vouchèsafe for to do so."  
And with that word quod Troilus: "You two,  
Deiphebus and my sister lief and dear,  
To you have I to speak of one mattér,

*If  
say goodbye before*

*If she wants*

243. "To be avisèd by your redde the better;"  
And found, as hap was, at his bed's head  
The copy of a treatise and a letter  
That Hector had him sent to asken redde  
If such a man was worthy to be dead.  
Wot I not who, but in a grisly wise  
He prayèd them anon on it avise.

*your advice  
luck would have it  
document  
advice  
w. grim countenance  
consider*

244. Deiphebus gan this letter to unfold  
In earnest great, so did Elaine the Queen,  
And roaming outward fast it gan behold,  
Downward a stair, into an arbour green;  
This ilkè thing they readen them between,  
And largely the mountance of an hour  
They gan on it to readen and to pore.

*intently  
shaded garden*

*full length*

245. Now let them read, and turnè we anon  
 To Pandarus, that gan full fast to pry  
 That all was well, and out he gan to gon  
 Into the greatè chamber, and that in hie,  
 And said: "God save all this company!  
 Come, niece mine, my lady Queen Elaine  
 Abideth you, and eke my lordès twain.

*look to see  
 he went  
 in haste*

*Awaits / two*

246. "Rise. Take with you yourè niece Antigone,  
 Or whom you list, or, no force hardily;<sup>1</sup>  
 The lessè press the better. Come forth with me,  
 And looketh that you thanken humbly  
 Them allè three, and when you may goodly  
 Your time y-see, taketh of them your leave,  
 Lest we too long him of his rest bereave."

*When you ...  
 ... see that it's time  
 deprive*

247. All innocent of Pandarus' intent  
 Quod then Criseydé: "Go we, uncle dear!"  
 And arm in arm inward with him she went,  
 Avising well her wordès and her cheer;  
 And Pandarus in earnestful mannér  
 Said: "Allè folk, for God's love I pray,  
 Stinteth right here, and softèly you play."<sup>2</sup>

*inside  
 considering*

248. "Aviseth you what folk be here within,  
 And in what plight one is, God him amend!"  
 And inward thus : "Full softèly begin,  
 Niece, I conjúre and highly you defend,  
 On his behalf which that soul all us sends,  
 And in the virtue of the crownès twain,<sup>3</sup>  
 Slay not this man that has for you this pain.

*Consider  
 God cure him  
 And privately (he said):  
 I ask and firmly charge you  
 i.e. in God's name*

249. "Fie on the devil! Think which one he is,  
 And in what plight he lies; come off anon;  
 Think all such tarried tide but lost it n'is,

*come on now!  
 time*

---

<sup>1</sup> 246.2: "Or whomever you want. Oh, it doesn't matter really."

<sup>2</sup> 247.7: "Stay right here and entertain yourselves quietly."

<sup>3</sup> 248.6: All annotators agree that the phrase *in virtue of the crowns twain* is obscure and not adequately explained. I add one more guess to the others: "for the sake of two heads," i.e. two lives, his and mine. Pandarus had said earlier that her obdurate refusal would kill both of them.



That will you bothè say when you be one;  
 And secondly, there yet divineth none  
 Upon you two; come off now, if you con.  
 While folk is blent, lo! all the time is won.

*w. you're united  
 nobody guesses yet  
 if y. know (what's best)  
 blinded*

250. "In teetering and pursuit and delays  
 The folk divine at wagging of a stree,  
 And though you would have after merry days,  
 Then dare you not. And why? For she and she  
 Spoke such a word; thus lookèd he and he:  
 Lest time be lost I dare not with you deal,  
 Come off therefore, and bringeth him to heal."

*people guess / straw  
 afterwards*

*deal (at length)  
 to health*

251. But now to you, you lovers that be here,  
 Was Troilus not in a cankédort,  
 That lay and might the whispering of them hear?  
 And thought: "O Lord! right now runneth my sort  
 Fully to die or have anon comfórt;"  
 And was the firstè time he should her pray  
 Of love; O mighty God! what shall he say?

*on the spot  
 approaches my fate  
 or promptly have  
 ask her ...  
 ... For her love*

Here ends Book II

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

1

**TROILUS AND CRISEYDE**

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

**Book III**

### BOOK III (61 pp)

#### Invocation to Love <sup>1</sup>

1. O blissful light, of which the beamès clear  
Adorneth all the thirdè heaven fair;  
O Sun's lief, O Jovè's daughter dear,  
Pleasance of love, O goodly debonair,  
In gentle hearts ay ready to repair,  
O very cause of heal and of gladness,  
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodness.

*beloved of the Sun  
Pleasure / benign (one)  
always ready to dwell  
health  
praised*

2. In heaven and hell, in earth and saltè sea  
Is felt thy might, if that I well discern,  
As man, bird, beast, fish, herb and greenè tree  
Thee feel in timès with vapour etern. <sup>2</sup>  
God loveth, and to lovè will not wern;  
And in this world no livè creäture  
Withouten love is worth or may endure.

*influence, power  
won't forbid  
is worth [anything]*

3. You Jovè first to thilk affectès glad,  
(Through which that thingès liven all and be),  
Commeveden <sup>3</sup> and amorous him made

*You = Love  
Impelled*

---

<sup>1</sup> In medieval astronomy Venus, to whom this invocation is addressed, occupied the third of the seven spheres. She is also, of course, the lover of Mars and goddess of love, the spirit of love that affects all things in Nature. Confusingly she is daughter of Jove and also the force that impels even him, in different disguises, to amorous adventures with mortals. The Christian God seems to be invoked also at 2.5. Taken in part from Boccaccio, the invocation is ultimately derived from Boethius, the late classical / early medieval Christian philosopher who celebrated the power of Love (though not Venus) which holds all of God's creation together. Here Chaucer includes the good effects of venereal love.

<sup>2</sup> 2.3-4: "As man, bird etc... feel you in the seasons (*times*) with your eternal power (*vapour*)."

<sup>3</sup> *You* is Love, and *Jove* is the grammatical object of *commeveden*: "You impelled Jove ...."

On mortal thing, and, as you list, ay ye  
 Gave him in love ease or adversity,  
 And in a thousand formès down him sent  
 For love in earth, and whom you list he hent.

*mortals / pleased / always  
 success or failure*

*he took whomever you pleased*

4. You fiercé Mars appeasen of his ire,  
 And as you list you maken heartès digne;  
 Algatès them that you will set a-fire  
 They dreaden shame, and vices they resign;  
 You do them courteous be, fresh and benign,  
 And high or low, after a wight entends,  
 The joyè that he hath, your might it sends.

*You placate M.  
 as you wish / worthy  
 Always*

*You make them  
 as a person inclines*

5. You holden regne and house in unity;  
 You soothfast cause of friendship be also;  
 You know all th'ilkè covered quality  
 Of thingès which that folk on wonder so,  
 When they cannot construe how it may jo  
*She* loveth *him*, or why he loveth *her*,  
 As why this fish, and not that, comes to weir.

*kingdom  
 true cause  
 hidden nature  
 wonder about  
 how it happens that  
 to fishtrap*

6. You folk a law have set in universe,<sup>1</sup>  
 (And this know I by them that lovers be),  
 That whoso striveth with you has the worse.  
 Now, lady bright, for thy benignity,  
 At reverence of them that serven thee,  
 Whose clerk I am, so teacheth me devise  
 Some joy of that is felt in thy service.

*lady b. = Venus  
 On behalf of  
 to tell  
 that which*

7. You in my naked hertè sentiment  
 Inhiel'd, and do me show of thy sweetness.  
 Calliope, thy voice be now présent,  
 For now is need: see'st thou not my distress,

*(May) you / feeling  
 Infuse & let me show  
 C = Muse of epic*

---

<sup>1</sup> 6.1: "You have made a law in the world for people (*folk*)"

How I must tell anon-right the gladness  
 Of Troilus, to Venus' herying?  
 To which gladness, who need hath, God him bring.<sup>1</sup>

*right now  
 to the glory  
 (may) God*

*End of the Proem*

8. Lay all this meanwhile this sad Troilus  
 Recording his lesson in this mannér,  
 "My fay," thought he, "thus will I say and thus,  
 Thus will I 'plain unto my lady dear,  
 That word is good, and this shall be my cheer,  
 This will I not forgetten in no wise."  
 God leave him worken as he can devise.

*On my faith  
 complain  
 behavior  
 as best he can*

9. And, Lord ! so that his heart began to quappe  
 Hearing her come, and short gan for to sigh;  
 And Pandarus, that led her by the lap,  
 Came near, and gan in at the curtain peek,  
 And said: "God do boot on all the sick!  
 See who is here you comen to visit;  
 Lo! here is she that is your death to wit."

*flutter  
 sleeve  
 May God heal  
 to blame for*

10. Therewith it seemèd as he wept almost.  
 "Ah! Ah!" quod Troilus, so ruefully,  
 "Whe'r me be woe, O mighty God, thou wost: <sup>2</sup>  
 Who is all there I see not truly."  
 "Sir," quod Criseyde, " 'tis Pandarus and I."  
 "Yea, sweetè heart, alas! I may not rise  
 To kneel, and do you honour in some wise."

---

<sup>1</sup> 7.7: The syntax is: "To which gladness may God bring him who has need"

<sup>2</sup> 10.3: "Whether I am sorrowful, O mighty God, thou knowest."

11. And dressed him upward; and she right tho  
Gan both her handès soft upon him lay.

*lifted himself up / then*

"O, for the love of God do you not so  
To me!" quod she. "Eh! what is this to see!  
Sir, come am I to you for causes tway,  
First you to thank, and of your lordship eke  
Continuance I wouldè you beseech."

*two  
y. protection also*

12. This Troilus, that heard his lady pray  
Of lordship him, waxed neither quick nor dead,  
Nor might one word for shame unto it say,  
Although men shouldè smiten off his head,  
But Lord! so waxed he suddenly all red;  
And, sir, his lesson that he wend to con  
To prayen her, is through his wit y-run.

*became n. alive nor  
embarrassment*

*blushed  
intended to recite  
out of his head*

13. Criseyde all this espièd well enough,  
For she was wise, and loved him ne'er the less,  
All n'ere he malapert nor made it tough,<sup>1</sup>  
Or was too bold to sing a fool a mass;  
But when his shame began somewhat to pass  
His reasons, as I may my rhymès hold,  
I will you tell as teachen bookès old.

*too grossly flattering ?  
embarrassment*

14. In changèd voice, right for his very dread,  
Which voice eke quoke, and thereto his mannér  
Goodly abashed, and now his huè red,  
Now pale, unto Criseyde his lady dear,  
With look downcast and humbly yolden cheer,  
Lo th'alderfirstè word that him astart,  
Was twicè: "Mercy, mercy, my dear heart!"

*also shook  
nicely modest / color*

*submissive manner  
very first / escaped*

15. And stint awhile, and when he might out bring,

*stopped*

---

<sup>1</sup> 13.3: "Because he was not over-aggressive or overpowering".

The nextè word was: "God wot for I have  
 As farforthly as I have had conning  
 Been yourès all, God so my soulè save,  
 And shall, till that I, woeful wight, be grave,<sup>1</sup>  
 And though I dare nor can unto you 'plain,  
 I-wis I suffer not the lessè pain.

*God knows  
 as far as I knew how*

*complain  
 Indeed*

16. "Thus much as now, ah womanlikè wife!<sup>2</sup>  
 I may out bring, and if this you displease  
 That shall I wreak upon mine ownè life  
 Right soon I trow, and do your heart an ease,  
 If with my death your heart I may appease;  
 But since that you have heard me something say,  
 Now reck I never how soonè that I die."<sup>3</sup>

*wife = woman*

17. Therewith his manly sorrow to behold  
 It might have made a heart of stone to rue,  
 And Pándare wept as he to water would,  
 And pokèd ever his niecè new and new,  
 And saidè: "Woe-begone be heartès true!";<sup>4</sup>  
 For love of God make of this thing an end,  
 Or slay us both at once ere that you wend."

*to pity  
 would (turn)  
 again & again*

*before you go*

18. "I? What?" quod she, "By God and by my truth  
 I wot not what you willè that I say."

*I don't know*

---

<sup>1</sup> 15.5: "until I, unhappy man, am buried".

<sup>2</sup> 16.1: the manuscripts have "*wommanliche wif*" which would mean something like "very feminine woman" with *wif* retaining its old sense of "woman" rather than "spouse." The spousal claim may be stronger in 186 below where he uses the same expression again as they are making love.

<sup>3</sup> 16: Troilus's takes the abject attitude of a "servant," a courtly lover, to the point of offering to kill himself.

<sup>4</sup> 17.5: "True hearts are woebegone" i.e. afflicted with sorrow.

"I, what!" quod he;<sup>1</sup> "that you have on him ruth  
For God's love, and do him not to die."

*pity  
don't cause him*

"Now then thus," quod she, "I would him pray  
To tellen me the fine of his intent;  
Yet wist I never well what that he meant."

*the goal  
knew I never*

19. "What that I mean, O sweetè heartè dear!"  
Quod Troilus, "O goodly fresh and free !  
That with the streamès of your eyen clear  
You wouldè sometimes friendly on me see,  
And then agreën that I may be he,  
Withouten branch of vice in any wise,  
In truth always, to do you my servíce

*noble*

*look*

*taint*

20 "As to my lady right, and chief resort,<sup>2</sup>  
With all my wit and all my diligence,  
And I to have, right as you list, comfórt,  
Under your yard equal to mine offence,  
As death, if that I broken your defence,  
And that you deigné me so much honoúr  
Me to commanden aught in any hour,

*sentence  
your rule  
your prohibition*

*anything*

21. "And I to be yours, very humble, true,  
Secret, and in my painès patient,  
And ever to desiren freshly new  
To serven, and be ay like diligent,  
And with good heart all wholly your talént  
Receiven well, how sorè that me smart –  
Lo, this mean I, mine ownè sweetè heart!"

*be always equally d.  
your decision  
however much it hurts*

22. Quod Pandarus: "Lo, here a hard request

---

<sup>1</sup> 18.3: Pandarus is repeating Criseyde's exclamation apparently in exasperated mockery.

<sup>2</sup> 20.1: " my supreme mistress & main interest. "



And reasonable a lady for to wern! <sup>1</sup> *refuse*  
 Now niecè mine, by natal Jovè's feast,  
 Were I a god you shouldè starve as yern *die at once*  
 That hearen well this man will nothing yern *desire*  
 But your honoúr and see him almost starve *die*  
 And be so loth to suffer him you serve." <sup>2</sup>

23. With that she gan her eyen on him cast  
 Full easily and full debónairly, *graciously*  
 Avising her, and hièd not too fast *Reflecting & not hurrying*  
 With ne'er a word, but said him softely: *(to) him = Pandarus*  
 "Mine honour safe, I will well truly, *(Provided that m.h.)*  
 And in such form as he gan now devise, *as he just now said*  
 Receiven him fully to my servíce; *him = Troilus*

24. "Beseeching him, for Godè's love, that he  
 Would in honoúr of truth and gentleness,  
 As I well mean, eke meanen well to me,  
 And mine honoúr with wit and busyness *intelligence & care*  
 Aye keep; and if I may do him gladness *Always guard*  
 From hencéforth, i-wis I n'ill not feign:  
 Now be all whole; no longer you ne 'plain. <sup>3</sup>

25. "But natheless this warn I you" quod she,  
 "A kingè's son although you be i-wis, *indeed*  
 Yet you shall have no more sovereignty  
 Of me in love than right in that case is; *than is proper*

---

<sup>1</sup> 22.1-2: As in 18.3 above Pandarus is being mildly sarcastic: "This is a hard request and it would be reasonable for a lady to refuse it !"

<sup>2</sup> 22.3-7: "By Jupiter, if I were a god, you would die at once, for you hear clearly this man who wants nothing but your honor, and you see him almost dying, and yet you are reluctant to let him serve you." Notice the persistent use of "serve" and "service" for the man's relationship to the woman.

<sup>3</sup> 24.7: At this last line she seems to turn from Pandarus to address Troilus directly : "Be well; no need to complain further."

Ne will I not forbear if you do amiss  
 To wrathen you, and while that you me serve  
 Cherish you right after you deserve.

*I won't hesitate  
 To get angry with  
 according as you*

26. "And shortly, dearest heart, and all my knight!  
 Be glad, and draweth you to lustiness,  
 And I shall truly, with all my fullè might,  
 Your bitter turnen all into sweetness.  
 If I be she that may do you gladness;  
 For every woe you shall recover a bliss."  
 And him in arms she took and gan him kiss.

*good health(?), joy (?)*

27. Fell Pandarus on knees, and up his eye  
 To heaven threw, and held his handès high.  
 "Immortal God," quod he, "that mayst not die  
 (Cupid, I mean) of this mayst glorify;  
 And Venus, thou mayst maken melody.  
 Withouten hand, meseemeth that in town  
 For this marvél I hear each bellè sound. <sup>1</sup>

*hand (to pull rope)  
 bell*

28. "But, ho! No more as now of this mattér,  
 For why these folk will comen up anon  
 That have the letter read. Lo! I them hear.  
 But I conjúre thee, Créssida, and one  
 And two, thou Troilus, when thou mayest gon  
 That at my house you be at my warning  
 For I full well shall shapen your coming.

*soon*

*I call on  
 both of you / can walk  
 when I say*

29. "And easeth there your heartès right enough  
 And let's see which of you shall bear the bell  
 To speak of love aright." Therewith he laughed:  
 "For there you may have leisure for to tell."

*win the prize*

---

<sup>1</sup> 27.7: Stories of bells that rang out of their own accord at some remarkable event are known in medieval stories. (See Riverside edition, note to l. 188-9 for references). Pandarus is here clowning again.

Quod Troilus: "How longè shall I dwell  
 Ere this be done?" Quod he: "When thou mayst rise  
 This thing shall be right as I you devise."

30. With that Elaine and also Deiphebus  
 Then upward came right at the stair's end,  
 And, Lord! so then gan groanen Troilus,  
 His brother and his sister for to blend.  
 Quod Pandarus: "It time is that we wend;  
 Take, niece mine, your leave at them all three,  
 And let them speak, and cometh forth with me."

*to blind*  
*we should go*  
*speak (in private)*

31. She took her leave at them full thriftily,  
 As she well could, and they her reverence  
 Unto the fullè diden heartily,  
 And spoken wonder well in her abséncé  
 Of her, in praising of her excellence,  
 Her governance, her wit, and her mannér  
 Commendedén, that it joy was to hear.

*politely*

32. Now let her wend unto her ownè place,  
 And turnè we to Troilus again,  
 That gan full lightly of the letter pace  
 That Deíphebus had in the garden seen;  
 And of Elaine and him he wouldè fain  
 Delivered be, and saidè that him lest  
 To sleep, and after tales have rest.

*go*  
*pass over*  
*would gladly*  
*Be free of / he wanted*  
*talk*

33. Elaine him kissed, and took her leavè blive,  
 Deiphebus eke, and home went every wight,  
 And Pandarus as fast as he may drive  
 To Troilus then came as line aright,  
 And on a pallet all that gladdè night  
 By Troilus he lay with merry cheer

*quickly*  
*person*  
*direct*  
*straw bed*

To tale, and well was them they were y-fere.<sup>1</sup>

*To talk / together*

34. When every wight was voided but they two,  
And all the doorès weren fast y-shut,  
To tell in short, withouten wordès more,  
This Pandarus withouten any let  
Up rose, and on his bed's side him set,  
And gan to speaken in a sober wise  
To Troilus as I shall you devise.

*e. person was gone*

*delay*

*describe*

35. "Mine alderlevest lord and brother dear,  
God wot and thou, that it sat me so sore<sup>2</sup>  
When I thee saw so languishing to-year,  
For love, for which thy woe waxed always more,  
That I with all my might and all my lore  
Have ever sithen done my busyness  
To bringen thee to joy out of distress.

*most dear*

*this year*

*grew*

*skill*

*since then*

36. "And have it brought to such plight as thou wost  
So that through me thou standest now in way  
To farè well — I say it for no boast —  
And wost thou why? — For shame it is to say —  
For thee have I begun a gamè play  
Which that I never do shall eft for other  
Although he were a thousandfold my brother.<sup>3</sup>

*point / knowest*

*in a position*

*do you know why?*

*to play a game*

*again*

37. "That is to say, for thee I am become  
(Betwixen game and earnest) such a mean  
As maken women unto men to come

*a go-between*

---

<sup>1</sup> 33.7: "They were glad to be together."

<sup>2</sup> 35.2: "God and you know I was so upset." *Brother* in line 1 is not to be taken literally.

<sup>3</sup> 36.7: In this and in the following stanzas Pandarus shows considerable unease at the role he has chosen to play. He fears for his own reputation (the noun and verb "pander" do come from his name), and he fears especially for Criseyde's reputation.

Al' say I nought — thou wost well what I mean —  
 For thee have I my niece (of vices clean)  
 So fully made thy gentleness to trust  
 That all shall be right as thyselfen list.

*you know well  
 my innocent niece*

*you wish*

38 "But God that all wot, take I to witness  
 That ne'er I this for covetisè wrought  
 But only for t'abridgè that distress  
 For which well nigh thou dièdst as me thought.<sup>1</sup>  
 But, goodè brother, do now as thee ought  
 For God's love, and keep her out of blame  
 Since thou art wise, and save always her name.

*who knows all  
 didn't work for profit  
 to lessen  
 were dying*

39. "For well thou wost the name as yet of her  
 Among the people, as who saith, hallowed is;  
 For that man is unborn, I dare well swear,  
 That ever wistè that she did amiss:<sup>2</sup>  
 But woe is me that I that cause all this  
 May thinken that she is my nicè dear,  
 And I her eme, and traitor eke, y-fere.<sup>3</sup>

*you know  
 is honored*

*knew / did wrong*

40. "And were it wist that I, through my engine,  
 Had in my niece y-put this fantasy  
 To do thy lust and wholly to be thine,  
 Why, all the worldè would upon it cry  
 And say that I the worstè treachery

*known / management*

*do thy will*

---

<sup>1</sup> 38.1-4: "But I take to witness God, who knows all, that I have not done this out of love of gain (*covetise*), but only to help your distress from which I thought you were going to die."

<sup>2</sup> 39.1-4: "For you know well that everyone agrees (*who saith*) she has an honorable name (*name of her hallowed is.*) There is no man alive who has ever known her to do wrong."

<sup>3</sup> 39.7: "And I her uncle and betrayer at the same time." "Traitor" makes sense here, as Pandarus has some serious doubts about what he is doing to his niece. But Barney in *Riverside* (III, 273, n.) suggests that it is Chaucer's mistranslation of an Italian word meaning "procurer", "pimp", a pander in fact. .

Did, in this case, that ever was begun,  
And she for-lost, and thou right nought y-won.

*for- = totally*

41. "Wherefore, ere I will further go a pace,  
Yet eft I thee beseech and fully say  
That privity go with us in this case  
That is to say, that thou us never 'wray.  
And be not wroth though I thee often pray  
To holden secret such a high matter.  
For skillful is, thou wost it well, my prayer.<sup>1</sup>

*go a step further  
once again  
secrecy  
betray*

*reasonable*

42. "And think what woe there hath betid ere this  
For making of avauntès as men read  
And what mischance in this world yet there is  
From day to day, right for that wicked deed.  
For which these wisè clerkès that be dead  
Have ever yet proverbèd to us young  
That firstè virtue is to keepè tongue.<sup>2</sup>

*has happened  
boasts*

43. "And n'ere it that I will as now t'abridge  
Diffusion of speech,<sup>3</sup> I could almost  
A thousand oldè stories thee allege  
Of women lost through false and foolish boast.  
Proverbs can't thyself enough and wost  
Against that vice, for to ben a labbe,  
Al' said men sooth as often as they gab.

*you know  
to prevent you being a blabber  
Even if*

44. "O tongue, alas, so often herebefore  
Hast thou made many a lady bright of hue  
Say: `Welaway the day that I was born!"

*before this*

*Alas!*

---

<sup>1</sup> 41.7: "You know well that my request (*prayer*) is reasonable (*skillful*)".

<sup>2</sup> 42.7: The first requirement is to watch your tongue.

<sup>3</sup> 43.1-2: "Were it not for the fact that I wish to reduce diffuseness of speech ..."

And many a maiden's sorrow to renew  
 And for the morè part, all is untrue  
 That men of yelp an' it were brought to preeve.<sup>1</sup>  
 Of kindè, no avaunter is to 'lieve.

*An' = if*

45. "A vaunter and a liar is all one,  
 As thus: I pose a woman grantè me  
 Her love, and says that other will she none,  
 And I am sworn to holden it secree,  
 And after I go tell it two or three.  
 I-wis I am a vaunter at the least,  
 And liar, for I breakè my behest.

*Boaster  
 I put the case*

*Indeed / a boaster  
 promise*

46. "Now lookè, then, if they be not to blame,  
 Such manner folk: what shall I clepe them, what? —  
 That them avaunt of women, and by name,  
 That never yet behight them this nor that  
 Nor knew them morè than mine oldè hat?  
 No wonder is, so God me sendè heal,  
 Though women dreaden with us men to deal.

*call them*

*promised them*

*. G. help me*

47. "I say this not for no mistrust of you,  
 Ne for no wise man, but for foolès nice,  
 And for the harm that in the world is now,  
 As well for folly oft as for malice.  
 For well wot I, in wisè folk, that vice  
 No woman dreads, if she be well advised,  
 For wisè be by foolès' harm chastised.<sup>2</sup>

*stupid fools*

*wise people*

---

<sup>1</sup> 44.5-7: *all is untrue ... 'lieve*: "and all is untrue that men boast (*yelp*) of, if (*an*) it were brought to the proof. In the nature of things (*of kinde*), no boaster is to be believed (*to 'lieve*)."  
 Pandarus is here referring to the tendency of some men to exaggerate and boast of their sexual conquests and thus embarrass the women who trust them.

<sup>2</sup> 47.7: "For wise people learn from the harm that comes to fools"

48. "But now to purpose: levè brother dear  
 Have all this thing that I have said in mind,  
 And keep thee close, and be now of good cheer,  
 For at thy day thou shalt me true find.  
 I shall thy process set in such a kind,  
 And God to-forn, that it shall thee suffice.  
 For it shall be right as thou wilt devise.

*my dear brother*

*be discreet*

*start y. business  
 before God  
 wish*

49. "For well I wot thou meanest well, pardee.  
 Therefore I dare this fully undertake;  
 Thou wost eke what thy lady granted thee  
 And day is set thy charters up to make.  
 Have now good night, I may no longer wake;  
 And bid for me, since thou art now in bliss,  
 That God me sendè death or soonè liss."

*I know / by God*

*You know also  
 to settle the contract*

*And pray  
 comfort soon*

50. Who mightè tellen half the joy and feast  
 Which that the soul of Troilus then felt  
 Hearing the faith of Pandarus' behest,  
 His oldè woe that made his heartè swelt  
 Gan then for joy to wasten and to melt,  
 And all the riches of his sighès sore  
 At oncè fled, he felt of them no more.

*force of P's promise  
 faint*

51. But right so as these holtès and these hayes,  
 That have in winter deadè been and dry,  
 Revesten them in greenè when that May is,  
 When every lusty liketh best to play:  
 Right in that selfè wise, sooth for to say,  
 Waxed suddenly his heartè full of joy,  
 That gladder was there never man in Troy.

*woods & hedges*

*Re-clothe  
 lively (person)*

*Grew*

52. And gan his look on Pandarus up cast  
 Full soberly, and friendly on to see,  
 And saidè: "Friend, in Aprilis the last,  
 As well thou wost, if it remember thee,

*you know*



How nigh the death for woe thou foundest me,  
 And how thou didest all thy busyness  
 To know of me the cause of my distress;

*How near*

53. "Thou wost how long I it forbore to say  
 To thee that art the man that I best trust,  
 And peril was it none to thee bewray,  
 That wist I well; but tell me if thee list,  
 Since I so loth was that thyself it wist,<sup>1</sup>  
 How durst I morè tell of this mattér  
 That quakè now and no wight may us hear?

*You know / hesitated to  
 no danger in telling you  
 That I know / please  
 would I dare  
 tremble / nobody*

54. "But natheless, by that God I thee swear,  
 That as Him list may all this world govèrn,  
 And, if I lie, Achilles with his spear  
 Myn heartè cleave, al' were my life etern,  
 As I am mortal, if I late or yern  
 Would it betray, or durst, or shouldè con,  
 For all the good that God made under sun

*as he pleases  
 even if  
 early or late  
 dare or know how to*

55. "That rather die I would and détermine,  
 As thinketh me, now stockéd in prison,  
 In wretchedness, in filth, and in vermin,  
 Captive to cruel King Agámemnon:  
 And this in all the temples of this town,  
 Upon the goddès all, I will thee swear;  
 To-morrow day, if that it liketh her.<sup>2</sup>

*end my life  
 chained up  
 Captive*

56. "And that thou hast so muchè done for me,  
 That I ne may it never more deserve,  
 This know I well, al' might I now for thee

---

<sup>1</sup> 53.5: "Since I was so reluctant that you should know."

<sup>2</sup> 55.7: Or "if it likes thee here" or "(to) hear." All MSS agree in spelling the last word *here*, which can mean *her*, *hear*, or *here*. The difference is minimal.

A thousand timès in a morning starve: *die*  
 I can no morè, but that I will thee serve  
 Right as thy knave, whither so thou wend, *slave / you go*  
 For evermore unto my life's end.

57. "But here with all my heart I thee beseech  
 That never in me thou deemè such folly *expect*  
 As I shall say: methoughtè by thy speech,  
 That this which thou me dost for company *out of friendship*  
 I shoulde ween it were a bawdery. *think / pimping*  
 I am not wood, al-if I lewèd be:<sup>1</sup> *not mad / stupid*  
 It is not so! That wot I well, pardee. *know I*

58. "But he that goes for gold or for richesse, *wealth*  
 On such messágè, call him what thee list; *errand / you please*  
 And this that *thou* dost, call it gentillesse,  
 Compassïon, and fellowship, and trust.  
 Depart it so, for widè-where is wist *Distinguish / widely known*  
 How that there is diversity required  
 Betwixen thingès like, as I have lered.<sup>2</sup> *learned*

59. "And, that thou know I thinkè not, nor ween, *or suppose*  
 That this service a shamè be or a jape, *or joke*  
 I have my fairè sister Polyxene,  
 Cassandra, Elaine, or any of the frape: *group*  
 Be she ne'er so fair or well y-shape,  
 Tell me which thou wilt of every one  
 To have for thine, and let me then alone. *alone (to arrange it)*

60. "But since that thou hast done me this service  
 My life to save, and for no hope of meed, *reward*  
 So for the love of God this great emprise *enterprise*  
 Perform it out, for now is the most need; *Finish it*  
 For high and low, withouten any dread, *big & small*

---

<sup>1</sup> 57.6: "I am not mad even if I am stupid."

<sup>2</sup> 58: Troilus is making the distinction between things that are different but look similar.

I will always all thine hestès keep.  
Have now good night, and let us bothè sleep."

*wishes, instructions*

61. Thus held them each of other well apaid,  
That all the world ne might it bet' amend,  
And on the morrow, when they were arrayed  
Each to his ownè needès gan attend;  
But Troilus, though as the fire he brend  
For sharp desire of hope and of pleasáncé,  
He not forgot his goodè governance;

*pleased  
make it better  
dressed*

*burned*

*self-control*

62 But in himself with manhood gan restrain  
Each rakel deed and each unbridled cheer,  
That allè those that livèd, sooth to sayn,  
Ne should have wist by word or by mannér  
What that he meant as touching this mattér,  
From every wight as far as is the cloud  
He was, so well dissimulen he could.

*rash d. & uninhibited glance  
truth to tell  
couldn't know*

*every person  
pretend*

63. And all the while which that I you devise  
That was his life, with all his fullè might,  
By day he was in Mars's high service,  
That is to say, in armès as a knight,  
And for the mostè part the longè night  
He lay and thought how that he mightè serve  
His lady best, her thank for to deserve.

*tell you about*

64. N'ill I not swear, although he lay full soft,  
That in his thought he n'as somewhat dis-eased,  
Nor that he turnèd on his pillows oft,  
And would of that him missèd have been seised;<sup>1</sup>  
But in such case men be not always pleased  
For aught I wot no morè than was he,  
That can I deem of possibility.

65. But certain is (to purpose for to go)

*to get on with it*

---

64.4: "and would rather have been in possession (*seised*) of what he lacked (*missed*)"

That in this while, as written is in geste,  
 He saw his lady sometimes, and also  
 She with him spoke when that she durst and lest,  
 And by their both advice, as was the best,  
 Appointeden full warily in this need,  
 So as they durst, how that they would proceed.

*story*

*dared & wished*

*Decided cautiously  
 as much as t. dared*

66. But it was spoken in so short a wise,  
 In such await always, and in such fear,  
 Lest any wight divinen or devise  
 Would of them two, or to it lay an ear,  
 That all this world so lief to them ne were  
 As that Cupido would them grace send  
 To maken of their speech aright an end.<sup>1</sup>

*it = their conversation  
 secrecy  
 figure out or suspect  
 eavesdrop  
 so dear*

*to complete properly*

67. But thilkè little that they spoke or wrought  
 His wisè ghost took ay of all such heed,  
 It seemèd her he wistè what she thought  
 Withouten word, so that it was no need  
 To bid him aught to do or aught forbid,  
 For which she thought that love, al' come it late,  
 Of allè joy had opened her the gate.

*that little / did  
 spirit / always  
 (to) her he knew*

*anything  
 although*

68. And shortly of this process for to pace,  
 So well his work and wordès he beset,  
 That he so full stood in his lady's grace  
 That twenty thousand timès ere she let  
 She thankèd God she ever with him met;  
 So could he govern him in such servíce  
 That all the world ne might it bet' devise;

*this story finish  
 managed*

*finished*

*conduct himself  
 manage better*

69. For why? She found him so discreet in all,  
 So secret, and eke of such obeisáncè,  
 That well she felt he was to her a wall  
 Of steel, and shield from every displeasáncè,

*respect*

---

<sup>1</sup> 66. 5-7: "There was nothing in the world they would rather have than that the god of love would graciously give them an opportunity to complete a proper conversation."

That to be in his goodè governance,  
 So wise he was, she was no more afeared.  
 I mean as far as aught to be required.

*in his benign power  
 afraid  
 no more than necessary*

70. And Pandarus to quick always the fire  
 Was e'er alikè prest and diligent;  
 To ease his friend was set all his desire;  
 He shoved ay on; he to and fro was sent,  
 He letters bore when Troilus was absént,  
 That never man as in his friendè's need  
 Ne bore him bet' than he withouten dread.

*to fan  
 constantly eager  
 Was always pushing  
 behaved better w'out doubt*

71. But now paraunter some man weenè would  
 That every word, or sound, or look, or cheer  
 Of Troilus that I rehearsen should  
 In all this while unto his lady dear.  
 I trow it were a long thing for to hear;  
 Or of what wight that stands in such disjoint  
 His wordès all, or every look, to point.

*perhaps / w think  
 repeat  
 I think  
 such distress  
 to relate*

72. Forsooth, I have not heard it done ere this,  
 In story none, nor no man here, I ween;  
 And though I would, I couldè not, y-wis  
 For there was some epistle them between  
 That would, as says mine author, well contain  
 Nigh half this book, of which him list not write:  
 How should I then a line of it endite? <sup>1</sup>

*I think  
 he didn't want to*

73. But to the great effect: then say I thus  
 That standing in concórd and in quiet  
 These ilkè two, Criseyde and Troilus  
 As I have told, and in this timè sweet  
 Save only often mightè they not meet  
 Ne leisure have their speeches to fulfill,  
 That it befell right as I shall you tell,

*To get on with story  
 peace & q.*

---

<sup>1</sup> 71-72: These two stanzas are a good example of the "prolixity" in this poem that Chaucer says at one point he ought to shun.

74. That Pandarus that ever did his might  
 Right for the fine that I shall speak of here  
 And for to bringen to his house some night  
 His fairè niece and Troilus y-fere  
 Thereas at leisure all this high mattér  
 Touching their love were at the full upbound,  
 Had, out of doubt, a time unto it found,

*for the goal*  
*together*  
*Where*  
*would be completed*  
*Pandarus ... had ...found*

75. For he with great deliberation  
 Had everything that hereto might avail  
 Forecast and put in execution,  
 And neither left for cost nor for travail;  
 Come if them lest, them shoulde nothing fail;<sup>1</sup>  
 And for to be in aught espiéd there,  
 That, wist he well, an impossíble were.

*spotted*  
*he knew*

76. Dreadless it clear was in the wind  
 Of every 'pie and every lettè-game: <sup>2</sup>  
 Now all is well, for all the world is blind  
 In this mattérè, bothè wild and tame.  
 This timber is all ready up to frame:  
 Us lacketh not but that we witen would <sup>3</sup>  
 A certain hour in which she comen should.

*w&t = everyone*  
*r. for building*  
*know*

77. And Troilus, that all this purveyance  
 Knew at the full and waited on it ay,  
 Had hereupon eke made great ordinance  
 And found his cause, and thereto his array,  
 If that he were missèd night or day  
 There-while he was aboutè this service —

*planning*  
*constantly*  
*careful preparations*  
*arranged an excuse*

---

<sup>1</sup> 75.4-7: "and he spared neither cost nor trouble; let them come; nothing would be wanting. He knew well that it was impossible for them to be discovered there". *Impossíble* (1.7) seems to have a French stress..

<sup>2</sup> 76.1-2: "The coast was absolutely clear of every gossip (*mag*)*pie*) and spoil sport (*lette game*)."

<sup>3</sup> 76.6: *we* and *us* are presumably Chaucer and his audience.

That he was gone to do his sacrifice,<sup>1</sup>

78. And must at such a temple alone wake,  
 Answered of Apollo for to be;  
 And first to see the holy laurel quake  
 Ere that Apollo speak out of the tree,  
 To tell him when the Greekès shouldeñ flee.  
 And for-thy let him no man, God forbid,  
 But pray Apollo helpen in this need.

*keep vigil  
 by Apollo*

*lift the siege  
 let = hinder*

79. Now is there little more for to be done  
 But Pandare up and, shortly for to sayn,  
 Right soon upon the changing of the moon,  
 When lightless is the world a night or twain,  
 And that the welkin shope him for to rain,  
 He straight a-morrow to his niecè went;<sup>2</sup>  
 You have well heard the fine of his intent.

*or two  
 sky gave signs of*

*the point*

80. When he was come he gan anon to play,  
 As he was wont, and of himself to jape,  
 And finally he swore, and gan her say  
 By this and that, she should him not escape,  
 Nor longer do him after her to gape,  
 But certainly that she must, by her leave,  
 Come suppen in his house with him at eve.

*at once to jest  
 accustomed / joke*

*make him run after her*

81. At which she laughed, and gan her fast excuse,  
 And said: "It raineth, lo! how should I gon?"  
 "Let be," quod he, "nor stand not thus to muse;  
 This must be done, ye shall come there anon."  
 So at the last hereof they fell at one,  
 Or elsè soft he swore her in her ear —  
 He wouldè never comen where she were.

*go*

*promptly  
 they agreed*

---

<sup>1</sup> 77: Troilus's cover story is that he has gone to pray to Apollo (in the public interest) and he should not be disturbed at his devotions.

<sup>2</sup> 79.2 &.6: *But Pandare up and ... went* This is an early instance of what became, as the OED puts it, "colloquial and dialectal" usage.

82. Soon after this she unto him gan rown,  
 And asked him if Troilus were there.  
 He swore her nay, for he was out of town,  
 And saidè: "Niece, I posè that he were,  
 You durstè never have the morè fear.  
 For rather than men might him there espy  
 Me lever were a thousandfold to die."

*whisper*

*let's suppose  
 You don't need to*

*I'd rather*

83. Naught list mine author fully to declare <sup>1</sup>  
 What that she thought when that he said her so,  
 That Troilus was out of town y-fare,  
 And if he saidè thereof sooth or no;  
 But that without await with him to go  
 She granted him, sith he her that besought,  
 And as his niece obeyèd as her ought.

*gone  
 truth  
 delay  
 since he asked her*

84. But natheless yet gan she him beseech,  
 Although with him to go it was no fear,  
 For to beware of goosish people's speech,  
 That dreamen thingès which that never were,  
 And well avisen him whom he brought there;  
 And said him: "Eme, since I must on you trist  
 Look all be well; I do now as you list."

*foolish, goose-like  
  
 And be careful  
 Uncle / trust  
 See that all /as you wish*

85. He swore her "Yes" by stockès and by stones,  
 And by the godès that in heaven dwell,  
 Or elsè were him lever soul and bones  
 With Pluto, King, as deepè be in hell  
 As Tantalus; what should I morè tell?  
 When all was well he rose and took his leave,  
 And she to supper came when it was eve <sup>2</sup>

*he would rather*

*evening*

86. With a certain of her ownè men,  
 And with her fairè niece Antigone,

*certain (number)*

---

<sup>1</sup> 83.1: "My source (*author*) doesn't choose to say."

<sup>2</sup> 85.6-7: These two lines are a fine example of the deft narrative speed Chaucer is capable of when he chooses.



And other of her women nine or ten;  
 But who was glad now, who, as trowen ye *do you think*  
 But Troilus? that stood and might it see  
 Throughout a little window in a stew, *in a small room*  
 Where he be-shut since midnight was, in mew, *cooped up*

87. Unwist of every wight but of Pandare. *Unknown to everyone*  
 But to the point. Now when that she was come  
 With allè joy and allè friendès fare, *in friendly fashion*  
 Her eme anon in armès hath her nome, *Her uncle / taken*  
 And after to the supper all and some,  
 When as time was, full softly they them set.  
 God wot there was no dainty fare to fet.<sup>1</sup>

88. And after supper gonnen they to rise,  
 At easè well, with hearts full fresh and glad,  
 And well was him that couldè best devise *found a way*  
 To liken her, or that her laughen made:<sup>2</sup> *To please*  
 He sang, she played; he told a tale of Wade;  
 But at the last, as every thing hath end,  
 She took her leave, and needès wouldè wend.<sup>3</sup>

89. But, O Fortúne! executrix of wyrd, *minister of destinies*  
 O influénces of these heavens high!  
 Sooth is that under God you be our hirds, *Truth / shepherds*  
 Though to us beastès be the causes wry; *unclear*  
 This mean I now, for she gan homeward hie; *prepared to go*  
 But execute was all beside her leave *done / without her leave*  
 The godès' will, for which she mustè bleve.<sup>4</sup> *remain*

---

<sup>1</sup> 87.7: "God knows there was no dainty food lacking."

<sup>2</sup> 88.3-7: "And he was glad he knew the best way to please her or make her laugh. ... He told a story about Wade", a character, mentioned occasionally in medieval literature but about whom almost nothing is now known. There is an obscure reference to his boat in the *Merchant's Tale*, 1424.

<sup>3</sup> 88.7: "She said goodbye; she had to be on her way."

<sup>4</sup> 89.6-7: "The will of the gods was done without her leave, and so she had to stay."

90. The bentè moonè with her hornès pale,  
 Saturn and Jove in Cancer joinèd were,<sup>1</sup>  
 That such a rain from heaven gan avale  
 That every manner woman that was there  
 Had of that smoky rain a very fear;  
 At which Pandare then laughed, and saidè then:  
 "Now were it time a lady to go hence?"

*crescent moon*  
*Jupiter*  
*pour*

*What a time for!*

91. "But goodè niece, if I might ever please  
 You any thing, then pray I you," quod he,  
 "To do mine heart as now so great an ease  
 As for to dwell here all this night with me;  
 For why? This is your ownè house pardee,  
 For by my truth, I say it not in game,  
 To wend as now it were to me a shame."

*by God*

*(for you) to go*

92. Criseyde, which that could as muchè good  
 As half a world, took heed of his prayér,  
 And since it rained, and all was in a flood,  
 She thought: "As good cheap may I dwellen here,  
 And grant it gladly with a friendly cheer  
 And have a thank, as grouch and then abide;  
 For home to go it may not well betide."

*had as much sense*

*I might as well*

*grumble & then stay*  
*not really possible*

93. "I will," quod she, "mine uncle lief and dear!  
 Since that you list; it skill is to be so.  
 I am right glad with you to dwellen here;  
 I saidè but in game that I would go."  
 "I-wis, grand mercy, niecè," quod he tho;  
 Were it in game or no, thee sooth to tell,  
 Now am I glad since that you list to dwell."

*beloved*

*S. you wish / it's reasonable*  
*stay*

*Indeed, thanks / then*  
*truth*  
*you're pleased to stay*

94. Thus all is well; but then began aright  
 The newè joy, and all the feast again;  
 But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,

*if he'd had his way*

---

<sup>1</sup> 90.1-5: The torrential rain was supposedly caused by this particular planetary conjunction of the moon, Saturn and Jupiter in Cancer.

He would have hiéd her to bed full fain,  
 And said; "O Lord! this is a hugè rain,  
 This were a weather for to sleepen in,  
 And that I rede us soonè to begin.

*hurried her / gladly*

*advise*

95. "And, niece, wot you where I will you lay?  
 For that we shall not lien far asunder,  
 And, for you neither shall, dare I say,  
 Hearen the noise of rainè nor of thunder,  
 By God right in my little closet yonder,  
 And I will in that outer house alone  
 Be warden of your women every one;

*lodge you  
 So that*

*outer room*

96. "And in this middle chamber that you see  
 Shall all your women sleepen well and soft,  
 And there I said [you] shall yourselven be,  
 And if you lien well to-night, come oft,  
 And careth not what weather is aloft.  
 The wine anon, and when so that you lest,<sup>1</sup>  
 So go we sleep, I trow it be the best."

*if you sleep well*

*We'll drink & when you wish  
 I think*

97. There is no morè, but hereafter soon  
 The voidè drunk and travers drawn anon,<sup>2</sup>  
 Gan every wight that haddè naught to do  
 More in the place out of the chamber gone;  
 And evermore so sternly it ron  
 And blew therewith so wonderfully loud,  
 That well nigh no man hearen other could.<sup>3</sup>

*no more (to say)*

*rained*

98. Then Pandarus, her eme, right as him ought,  
 With women such as were her most about,

*uncle*

---

<sup>1</sup> 96.6: "We'll drink the wine now and go to sleep when you're ready." It was a medieval custom to have a nightcap (the *voide*) of wine and spices & perhaps a small snack.

<sup>2</sup> 97.2-4: "When the nightcap (*voide*) had been drunk and the curtain (*travers*) drawn, everyone who had no more business there left the room."

<sup>3</sup> 97.6-7: "The wind blew so extraordinarily loud that people could hardly hear each other speak."

Full glad unto her beddè's side her brought,  
 And took his leave, and gan full low to lout,  
 And said: "Here at this closet door without,  
 Right overthwart, your women lien all,  
 That whom you list of them you may her call."

*bow  
 outside the room door  
 across / all will lie  
 So that / wish*

99. So when that she was in the closet laid,  
 And all her women forth by ordinance  
 A-beddè weren, there as I have said,  
 There was no more to skippen nor to dance,  
 But bidden go to beddè, with mischance,<sup>1</sup>  
 If any wight were stirring anywhere,  
 And let them sleepen that a-beddè were.

*in the room in bed  
 in an orderly way  
 in bed*

*anyone*

100. But Pandarus, that well could each a deal  
 The oldè dance, and every point therein,  
 When that he saw that allè thing was well,  
 He thought he would upon his work begin,  
 And gan the stewè door all soft unpin,<sup>2</sup>  
 And still as stone, withouten longer let,  
 By Troilus adown right he him set.

*knew every bit of  
 The old game (of love)*

*little room / unlock  
 delay*

101. And, shortly to the point right for to gon,  
 Of all this work he told him ord and end,  
 And saidè: "Make thee ready right anon,  
 For thou shalt into heaven's blissè wend."  
 "Now blissful Venus! thou me gracè send,"  
 Quod Troilus, "for never yet no need  
 Had I ere now, ne halfendeal the dread."

*to get to the point  
 beginning & end*

*go*

*nor half*

102. Quod Pandarus: "Ne dread thee ne'er a deal,  
 For it shall be right as thou wilt desire;  
 So thrive I, this night I'll make it well,  
 Or casten all the gruel in the fire."

*not a bit*

*I'm betting  
 or ruin everything*

---

<sup>1</sup> 99: Anyone making noise "was told to go to bed, for heaven's sake (*with mischance*) ... and let people sleep!"

<sup>2</sup> 100.5: We left Troilus in the *stew* (a little room) at 86.4-7.

"Yet, blissful Venus! this night me inspire,"  
 Quod Troilus, "as wis as I thee serve,  
 And ever bet' and bet' shall till I starve.

*surely  
 better & better / die*

103. "And if I had, O Venus full of mirth!  
 Aspéctès bad of Mars or of Satúrn,<sup>1</sup>  
 Or thou combust or let were in my birth,  
 Thy father pray all thilkè harm disturn  
 Of grace, and that I glad again may turn,  
 For love of him thou lovedest in the shaw,  
 I mean Adon, that with the bore was slaw.

*in the wood  
 Adonis / slain by boar*

104 "Jove, ekè for the love of fair Europe,<sup>2</sup>  
 The which, in form of bull, away thou fet;  
 Now help, O Mars, thou with thy bloody cope,  
 For love of Cypris thou me not ne let.  
 O Phoebus, think when Dane herselfen shut  
 Under the bark, and laurel waxed for dread,  
 Yet for her love, O help now at this need!

*took, fetched  
 cape  
 C = Venus / don't hinder  
 Daphne*

105. "Mercúry, for the love of Hersè eke,  
 For which Pallas was with Aglauros wroth,  
 Now help, and eke Diane, I thee beseech,  
 That this viagé be not to thee loth,  
 O fatal sisters, which, ere any cloth  
 Me shapen was, my destiny me spun:  
 So helpeth to this work that is begun."

*angry  
 this adventure / hateful  
 the Fates*

106. Quod Pandarus: "Thou wretched mouse's heart,  
 Art thou aghast so that she will thee bite?  
 Why, don this furréd cloak upon thy shirt,

---

<sup>1</sup> 103: The substance of this stanza is to ask Venus to undo any possible bad astrological influences directed at Troilus. The longwinded prayer shows off Chaucer's control here, if not of narrative, of mythology and astronomy (all the planets/gods are mentioned). Troilus's ineptitude is also on show.

<sup>2</sup> 104: In this stanza T. prays to various lover gods to help him: Jove, who loved Europa; Mars who loved Venus, Phoebus Apollo who chased Daphne (Dane) until she turned into a laurel to escape him.

And follow me, for I will have the wite;  
 But bide, and let me go before a lite;"  
 And with that word he gan undo a trap,  
 And Troilus he brought in by the lap.

*the blame (for what?)  
 a little  
 trapdoor  
 sleeve (?)*

107. The sternè wind so loud began to rout  
 That no wight other's noisè mighten hear,  
 And they that layen at the door without  
 Full sikerly they slepten all i-fere;  
 And Pandarus with a full sober cheer  
 Goes to the door anon withouten let  
 There as they lay, and softly he it shut;

*strong / sound*

*certainly / together*

*quickly / w/o delay*

108. And as he came againward privily  
 His niece awoke, and asketh: "Who goes there?"  
 "Mine own dear niecè," quod he, "it am I,  
 Ne wonder not, ne have of it no fear."  
 And near he came, and said her in her ear:  
 "No word, for love of God, I you beseech,  
 Let no wight rise and hearken of our speech."

*again quietly*

*Not a word*

109. "What! which way be you come? Ben'dícitee!"  
 Quod she. "And how, thus unwist of them all?"  
 "Here at this secret trappè-door," quod he.  
 Quod then Criseydè: "Let me some wight call."  
 "Eh! God forbid that it should so befall,"  
 Quod then Pandaré, "that you such folly wrought  
 They mighten deemen thing they never thought."

*Bless me!*

*unknown to*

*Let me call someone*

*guess at*

110. "It is not good a sleeping hound to wake,  
 Nor give a wight a cause for to divine.  
 Your women sleepen all, I undertake,  
 So that for them the house men mighten mine,<sup>1</sup>  
 And sleepen will till that the sunnè shine,  
 And when my tale y-brought is to an end,

*person / to suspect*

*I assure you*

*(under)mine*

---

<sup>1</sup> 110:4-5: "So that, as far as they are concerned, you could put mines under the house, and they would still sleep till sunup."

Unwist right as I came so will I wend.

*Unnoticed / leave*

111. "Now, niece mine, you shall well understand,"  
 Quod he, "so as you women deemen all,  
 That for to hold in love a man in hand,  
 And him her lief and her dear heart to call,  
 And maken him a hoove above a caul —  
 I mean, as love another in meanwhile —  
 She doth herself a shame, and him a guile.<sup>1</sup>

*judge, think  
 deceive  
 her beloved  
 make a fool of him  
 a deception*

112. "Now whereby that I tellen you all this  
 You wot yourself as well as any wight,  
 How that your love all fully granted is  
 To Troilus, that is the worthiest knight,  
 One of this world, and thereto truth y-plight,  
 That but it were on him along,<sup>2</sup> you n'ould  
 Him never falsen while you liven should.

*The reason why  
 You know / person  
 Unique / & given your word  
 his fault  
 betray*

113. "Now stands it thus, that since I from you went  
 This Troilus, right platly for to sayn,  
 Is through a gutter by a privy went  
 Into my chamber come in all this rain,  
 Unwist of every manner wight certáin<sup>3</sup>  
 Save of myself, as wisly have I joy,  
 And by the faith I owe Priam of Troy.

*bluntly  
 by a private passage  
 Unknown / person  
 As surely*

114. "And he is come in such pain and distress,  
 That but he be all fully wood by this,  
 He suddenly must fall into woodness  
 But if God help; and causè why is this:

*If he isn't fully mad  
 madness  
 Unless*

---

<sup>1</sup> 111: This stanza says roughly: "All you women agree that it is a shameful trick in love to deceive a man, and call him your beloved and sweetheart, making a fool of him while loving another."

<sup>2</sup> 112.3-7: "that your love is fully granted and your word pledged (*truth y-plight*) to Troilus, the worthiest knight in the world, that unless he does something wrong (*but it were on him along*), you will never be unfaithful to him while you live."

<sup>3</sup> 113.5: "Unknown to any person certainly."

He says he told is of a friend of his,  
 How that you should love one that hatte Horaste,<sup>1</sup>  
 For sorrow of which this night shall be his last."

*he's told by a friend  
 a man called*

115. Criseyde which that all this wonder heard,  
 Gan suddenly about her heartè cold,  
 And with a sigh she sorrowfully answered:  
 "Alas! I weened, who so that talès told,  
 My dearè heartè wouldè me not hold  
 So lightly false. Alas! conceitès wrong!  
 What harm they do! for now live I too long.

*grow cold*

*I thought that whoever  
 not think me  
 wrong thoughts*

116. "Horaste, alas! And falsen Troilus?  
 I know him not, God help me so," quod she.  
 "Alas! what wicked spirit told him thus?  
 Now certès, eme, to-morrow an I him see,  
 I shall thereof as full excusen me  
 As ever woman did, if that him like."  
 And with that word she gan full sore to sigh.

*and betray T?*

*certainly uncle / if I  
 exonerate*

117. "O God," quod she, "that worldly seliness,  
 Which clerkès callen false felicity,  
 Y-medled is with many a bitterness!  
 Full anguishous than is, God wot," quod she,  
 "Condition of vain prosperity;  
 For either joyès comen not y-fere,  
 Or elsè no wight has them always here."<sup>2</sup>

*happiness  
 clerics, scholars  
 mingled  
 painful*

*together  
 nobody*

118. "O brittle weal of man's joy, unstable,  
 With what wight so thou be or how thou play,  
 Either he wot that thou, Joy, art mutáble,  
 Or wot it not—it must be one of tway.  
 Now, if he wot it not, how may he say

*O fleeting state*

*he knows / changeable  
 of two*

---

<sup>1</sup> 114.5-6: "He's been told by a friend that you are reputed to be in love with a man called Horaste."

<sup>2</sup> For several stanzas Criseyde turns scholastic philosopher, out of tune with the moment and with her character. Troilus does the same later at even more length.



That he hath very joy and seliness,  
That is of ignorance ay in darkness?

*true joy and happiness  
(he) who is*

119. "Now, if he wot that joy is transitory,  
As every joy of worldly thing must flee,  
Then every time he has that in memóry,  
The dread of losing maketh him that he  
May in no perfect selinessè be.  
And if to lose his joy he sets a mite,  
Then seemeth it that joy is worth but lite.

*happiness  
low value  
little*

120. "Wherefore I will define in this mannér  
That truly, for aught I can espy,  
There is no very weal in this world here.  
But, O thou wicked serpent jealousy,  
Thou misbelieved and envious follý,  
Why hast thou made Troilus to me untriste,  
That never yet a-guilt him that I wist."

*distrustful  
offended him that I know of*

121. Quod Pandarus: "Thus fallen is this case."  
"Why, uncle mine," quod she, "who told him this?  
Why does my dearè heartè thus, alas?"  
"You wot, yea, niece mine," quod he, "what is.  
I hope all shall be well that is amiss,  
For you may quench all this if that you lest  
And do right so, for I it hold the best."

*This is the situation*

*You know how it is*

*please*

122. "So shall I do tomorrow, i-wis," quod she  
"And God to-forn, so that it shall suffice."  
"Tomorrow! Alas, that were a fair!" quod he,  
"Nay, nay! It may not standen in this wise.  
For, niece mine, thus writen clerkès wise  
That peril is with drecching in y-draw.<sup>1</sup>  
Nay, such abodès be not worth a haw.

*indeed  
before God  
a fine thing!*

*hesitations / straw*

123. "Niece, allè thing hath time, I dare avow,

---

<sup>1</sup> 122.6: "that danger is by delaying drawn in", i.e. that delay involves danger.

For when a chamber afire is, or a hall,  
 More need is it suddenly to rescue  
 Than to dispute and ask amongst all  
 How this candle in the straw is fall.  
 Ah! ben'citee! for all among that fare  
 The harm is done, and farewell fieldfare!

*did fall  
 bless us / to-do  
 bye-bye birdie!*

124. "And, niece mine (ne take it not agrief),<sup>1</sup>  
 If that you suffer him all night in this woe,  
 God help me so, you had him never lief,  
 That dare I say, now there is but we two.  
 But well I wot that you will not do so.  
 You be too wise to do so great folly  
 To put his life all night in jeopardy."

*If you allow  
 you never held him dear  
 now only 2 of us are here  
 I know*

125. "Had I him never lief! By God, I ween <sup>2</sup>  
 You had never thing so lief," quod she.  
 "Now by my thrift," quod he, "that shall be seen;  
 For since you makè this example of me  
 If I all night would him in sorrow see  
 For all the treasure in the town of Troy,  
 I pray to God I never may have joy."

*so dear  
 Upon my word*

126. "Now look then, if you that be his love  
 Shall put all night his life in jeopardy  
 For thing of nought, now by that God above  
 Not only this delay comes of folly  
 But of malice, if that I shall not lie.  
 What! platly, an you suffer him in distress,  
 You neither bounty do nor gentleness."

*For no good reason*

*bluntly, if you leave  
 kindness nor*

127. Quod then Criseyde: "Will you do one thing,  
 And you therewith shall stint all his dis-ease?  
 Have here and beareth him this blue ring

*stop his distress*

---

<sup>1</sup> 124.1: ("Don't take this the wrong way".)

<sup>2</sup> 125.1-2: "I never loved him! By God, I am sure *you* never held anything so dear."

For there is nothing might him better please  
 Save I myself, nor more his heart appease;  
 And say to my dear heart that all his sorrow  
 Is causeless; that shall be seen tomorrow."

128. "A ring!" quod he; "Yea! hazel woods you shake! <sup>1</sup>  
 Yea, niece mine, that ring must have a stone  
 That mighten a dead man alive make.<sup>2</sup>  
 And such a ring, I trow, that you have none.  
 Discretion out of your head is gone;  
 That feel I now," quod he, "and that is ruth.  
 Oh, time lost! well mayst thou cursen sloth.

*Im sure*

*pity*

129. "Wot you not well that noble and high corage  
 Ne sorrows not nor stinteth eke for lite?  
 But if a fool were in a jealous rage,  
 I would not set his sorrow at a mite,  
 But fief him with a few wordes white  
 Another day, when that I might him find,  
 But this thing stands all in another kind:

*Don't y. know / spirit  
 nor stops for little (things)*

*placate him / nice words*

130 "This is so gentle and so tender of heart,  
 That with his death he will his sorrows wreak.  
 For trusteth well how sore that him smart,  
 He will to you no jealous wordes speak.  
 And for-ty, niece, ere that his hearte break,  
 To speak yourself to him of this matter;  
 For with one word you may his hearte steer.

*This (man)  
 avenge  
 no matter how badly he hurts*

*And therefore*

131. "Now have I told what peril he is in  
 And his coming unwist to every wight

*unknown*

---

<sup>1</sup> 128.1: "Hazel woods" is a favorite dismissive expression of Pandarus, and seems to mean something like "Nuts!" See also V.73.1 and V. 168.5.

<sup>2</sup> 128.2-3: "The ring would have to have a (magic) stone that could make dead men come alive." Precious stones were supposed to have various magical powers. Books called "lapidaries" were devoted to the topic.

Ne (pardee) harm may there be none, nor sin.  
 I will myself be with you all this night.  
 You know eke how he is your ownè knight  
 And that by right you must upon him trist  
 And I all prest to fetch him when you list."

*Nor, by God*

*also  
 trust  
 ready / you wish*

132. This accident so piteous was to hear  
 And eke so like a sooth at primè face  
 And Troilus her knight to her so dear,  
 His privy coming and the siker place,  
 That though that she did him as then a grace,  
 Considerèd all thingès as they stood,  
 No wonder is, since she did all for good.

*plausible story  
 truth on the face of it*

*secret / safe*

133. Criseyde answered: "As wisly God to rest  
 My soulè bring, so me is for him woe.  
 And, eme, y-wis fain would I do the best  
 If that I haddè grace for to do so:  
 But whether that you dwell or for him go,  
 I am, till God me better mindè send,  
 At dulcarnon, right at my wittès end.<sup>1</sup>

*As surely*

*indeed gladly*

*stay or*

*In a dilemma*

134. Quod Pandarus: "Yea, niece, will you hear?  
 Dulcarnon callèd is "fleming of wretches";  
 It seemeth hard, for wretches will not lere  
 For very sloth and other willful tecches:  
 This said by him that is not worth two fetches.  
 But you be wise, and that we have on hand  
 N'is neither hard nor skillful to withstand."

*learn  
 faults  
 weeds*

135. "Then, eme," quod she, "do hereof as you list,<sup>2</sup>  
 But ere he come I will up first arise,  
 And for the love of God, since all my trist

*uncle / wish  
 But before  
 trust*

---

<sup>1</sup> 133.7 & 134.2: *dulcarnon* was the word for a notorious problem in Euclid which Pandarus or Chaucer confuses with still another one called *fuga miserorum*: putting the miserable (schoolboys) to flight, "fleming of wretches . "

<sup>2</sup> 135.1: "Then, uncle," she said, "do as you wish about this."

Is on you two, and you be bothè wise,  
 So worketh now, in so discreet a wise,  
 That I may honour have and he pleasánce,  
 For I am here all in your governance."

136. "That is well said," quod he, "my niecè dear!  
 There good thrift on that wisè gentle heart!  
 But lieth still, and taketh him right here,  
 It needeth not no farther for him start;  
 And each of you ease other's sorrows smart,  
 For love of God, (and, Venus, I thee hery)  
 For soon hope I that we shall all be merry."

*Good fortune  
 receive him  
 move  
 sharp  
 I praise thee*

137. This Troilus full soon on knees him set  
 Full soberly right by her beddè's head,  
 And in his bestè wise his lady gret;  
 But Lord! so she waxed suddenly all red,  
 Nay, though men shoulde smiten off her head  
 She couldè not a word aright outbring  
 So suddenly, for his sudden coming.

*greeted  
 blushed  
 coherent*

138. But Pandarus that so well couldè feel  
 In everything, to play anon began  
 And saidè: "Niece, see how this lord can kneel.  
 Now for your truthè see this gentle man."  
 And with that word he for a cushion ran  
 And saidè: "Kneeleth now while that you lest  
 Where God your heartès bringè soon at rest."

*to joke*

139. Can I not say, for she bad him not rise,  
 If sorrow it put out of her rémembrance,  
 Or elsè that she took it in the wise  
 Of duèty as for his óbservance;  
 But well find I she did him this pleasánce,  
 That she him kissed, although she sighèd sore,  
 And bade him sit adown withouten more.

*in the way ...  
 ...of doing his lover's duty*

*w/o. more ado*

140. Quod Pandarus: "Now will you well begin  
 Now do him sittè, goodè niecè dear,

*Now make him sit*

Upon your beddè's sidè there within  
 That each of you the bet' may other hear."  
 And with that word he drew him to the fire  
 And took a light and found his countenance  
 As for to look upon an old romance.

*better*

*made a pretence*

141. Criseyde that was Troilus' lady right,  
 And clear stood in a ground of sikerness,  
 Al' thought she that her servant and her knight  
 Ne should of right no úntruth in her guess,<sup>1</sup>  
 Yet natheless, considered his distress,  
 And that love is in cause of such folly,  
 Thus spoke she to him of his jealousy:

*certainty*

*Al(though)*

*suspect*

*considering*

*is the cause*

142. "Lo, heartè mine! as would the excellence  
 Of love, against the which that no man may,  
 Ne ought eke, goodly maken résistance,<sup>2</sup>  
 And eke because I feltè well and saw  
 Your greatè truth and service every day,  
 And that your heart all mine was, sooth to sayn,—  
 This drove me for to rue upon your pain;

*nor, indeed, ought*

*truly felt*

*to take pity*

143. "And your goodness have I found always yet,  
 Of which, my dearè heart, and all my knight,  
 I thank it you, as far as I have wit,  
 Al' can I not as much as it were right;<sup>3</sup>  
 And I, emforth my cunning and my might,  
 Have, and ay shall, how sorè that me smart,  
 Be to you true and whole with all my heart;

*ability*

*Al(though) / as I should*

*according to my ability*

*always / however / hurt*

---

<sup>1</sup> 141.3-6: "Although she thought that her 'servant', her knight, should not even suspect her of unfaithfulness, yet nevertheless, considering that he was distressed and that love causes such follies, she spoke to him about his jealousy."

<sup>2</sup> 142.1-3: The syntax is a little unsatisfactory, but the meaning is reasonably clear: "because of the excellence of love which no one should resist ..."

<sup>3</sup> 143:3 ff: "I thank you as far as I know how, although I cannot as much as I should; and I, according to my ability and strength, have been and always will be, however much it hurts me, true to you ..."

144. "And dredèless that shall be found at preve:  
 But, heartè mine! what all this is to sayn  
 Shall well be told, so that you naught you grieve,  
 Though I to you right on yourself complain,  
 For therewith mean I finally the pain  
 That holds your heart and mine in heaviness  
 Fully to slay, and every wrong redress.

*doubtless / in trial*

145. "My good heart mine, n'ot I for why ne how  
 That Jealousy, alas! that wicked wiver,  
 Thus causeless is copen into you,  
 The harm of which I wouldè fain deliver:  
 Alas! that he all whole or of him sliver  
 Should have his refuge in so digne a place!  
 There Jove him soon out of your heart erase!

*I don't know  
 snake  
 has crept  
 remove  
 a piece of him  
 so worthy  
 (may) Jove*

146 "But O thou Jove! O author of Natúre!  
 Is this an honour to thy deity  
 That folk unguilty suffer here injúre,  
 And who that guilty is all quit goes he?  
 O were it lawful for to 'plain of thee,  
 That undeservèd sufferest jealousy,  
 Of that I would upon thee 'plain and cry.

*injury  
 complain  
 Who allow undeserved jealousy*

147. "Eke all my woe is this, that folk now use  
 To say right thus; 'Yea, jealousy is love',  
 And would a bushel venom all excuse,  
 For that a grain of love is on it shove,  
 But that wot highè God that sits above  
 If it be liker love or hate or grame,  
 And after that it ought to bear its name.

*bushel of  
 God ... knows  
 anger*

148. "But certain is, some manner jealousy  
 Is éxcusáble more than some i-wis,<sup>1</sup>

*than others indeed*

---

<sup>1</sup> 148: She says that some kinds of jealousy are more excusable than others: first, when there seems to be real cause; and second, when such unwarranted feeling is repressed so that it rarely leads to inappropriate act or words, but swallows its pain; that is excusable because of the self-control.

As when cause is, and some such fantasy  
 With piety so well repressèd is,  
 That it unnethès does or says amiss,  
 But goodly drinketh up all his distress;  
 And that excuse I for the gentleness.

*sense of right  
 scarcely  
 his = its (?)*

149. "And some's so full of fury and despite  
 That it surmounteth his repression;  
 But, heartè mine! you be not in that plight,  
 That thank I God, for which your passion  
 I will not call it, but illusion  
 Of abundance of love and busy cure,  
 That doth your heartè this dis-ease endure.

*some (jealousy) is / hatred  
 overpowers his restraint*

*& great concern  
 that causes*

150. "Of which I am right sorry but not wroth,  
 But for my devoir and your heartès rest  
 Whereso you list, by ordeal or by oath,<sup>1</sup>  
 By sort or in what wisè so you lest,  
 For love of God let prove it for the best,  
 And if that I be guilty, do me die;  
 Alas! what might I morè do or say?"

*not angry  
 out of duty  
 Whatever you want  
 By drawing lots  
 have me killed*

151. With that a fewè brightè tearès new  
 Out of her eyen fell, and thus she said:  
 "Now God, thou wost, in thought nor deed, untrue  
 To Troilus was never yet Criseyde."  
 With that her head down in the bed she laid,  
 And with the sheet it wry, and sighèd sore,  
 And held her peace; not one word spoke she more.

*thou knowest*

*covered*

152. But now help God to quenchen all this sorrow:  
 So hope I that He shall, for He best may;  
 For I have seen, on a full misty morrow  
 Follow full oft a merry summer's day,  
 And after winter followeth green May.

*(May) God help*

---

<sup>1</sup> 150: She offers to prove her fidelity by any of the usual methods: "ordeal" -- by enduring some terrible experience like carrying a red hot iron without harm, or by judicial oath, or drawing of lots.



Men see alday, and readen eke in stories,  
That after sharpè showers been victóries.<sup>1</sup>

*every day*

153. This Troilus, when he her wordès heard,  
Have you no care, him listè not to sleep,<sup>2</sup>  
For it thought him no strokès of a yard  
To hear or see Criseyde his lady weep,<sup>3</sup>  
But well he felt about his heartè creep,  
For every tear which that Criseyde astart,  
The cramp of death to strain him by the heart.

*that escaped C.*

154. And in his mind he gan the time a-curse  
That he came there, and that he was y-born,  
For now is wicked turnèd into worse,  
And all that labour he had done befor  
He wend it lost; he thought he n'as but lorn.  
"O Pandarus!" thought he, "alas! thy wile  
Serveth of naught, so welaway the while!"

*bad into*

*considered / he was finished  
trick  
Is no good / Alas!*

155. And therewithal he hung adown his head,  
And fell on knees, and sorrowfully sighed.  
What might he say? he felt he n'as but dead,  
For wroth was she that should his sorrows light;<sup>4</sup>  
But natheless when that he speaken might,  
Then said he thus: "God wot that of this game  
When all is wist, then am I not to blame."

*as good as dead  
angry / lighten*

*God knows  
known*

156. Therewith the sorrow so his heartè shut  
That from his eyen fell there not a tear,

---

<sup>1</sup> 152: Another example of a stanza that might better have been omitted so that 153 could follow 151 immediately and effectively.

<sup>2</sup> 153.2: "You can be sure he did not want to sleep."

<sup>3</sup> 153.3-4: These lines appear to mean "It seemed to him that hearing Criseyde weep was not just like being beaten by the strokes of a rod, but ...."

<sup>4</sup> 155.4: "For she who was supposed to lighten his sorrow was angry."

And every spirit his vigour eke in knit,  
 So they astonèd and oppressèd were; <sup>1</sup>  
 The feeling of his sorrow or his fear  
 Or of aught else fled were out of town;  
 Adown he fell all suddenly a-swown.

*stunned*

*in a swoon*

157. This was no little sorrow for to see,  
 For all was hushed and Pandare up as fast;  
 "O, niece, peace, or we be lost," quod he.  
 Be not aghast." But certain at the last  
 For this or that he into bed him cast,  
 And said: "O thief, is this a mannè's heart?"  
 And off he rent all to his barè shirt,

*jumped up or spoke up*

*afraid*

158. And saidè: "Niece, but you help us now,  
 Alas your ownè Troilus is lorn."  
 "I-wis, so would I an I wistè how,  
 Full fain," quod she. "Alas that I was born."  
 "Yea, niece, will you pullen out the thorn  
 That sticketh in his heartè," quod Pandàre.  
 "Say `All forgiven", and stint is all this fare"

*Unless  
 finished  
 Indeed / if I knew how  
 Very gladly*

*this fuss will be over*

159. "Yea, that to me", quod she, "full lever were  
 Than all the good the sun aboutè goth;"  
 And therewithal she swore him in his ear,  
 "I-wis, my dearè heart ! I am not wroth,  
 Have here my truth," and many another oath.  
 "Now speak to me, for it am I Criseyde;"  
 But all for naught; yet might he not abraid.

*more pleasing  
 i.e. in all the world*

*I swear*

*awake*

160. Therewith his pulse and palmès of his hands  
 They gan to frote, and wet his temples twain,  
 And to deliver him from bitter bonds  
 She oft him kissed; and, shortly for to sayn,  
 Him to revoken she did all her pain;

*to rub / both temples*

*revive*

---

<sup>1</sup> 156.3-7: Each of the three "spirits" in his body tightened up (*knit*) as if stunned, so that he had no feeling, and fainted. The three spirits were the "vital", the "animal", and the "natural."

And at the last he gan his breath to draw,  
And of his swoon soon after that a-daw,

*And from / to awake*

161. And gan bet' mind and reason to him take;  
But wonder sore he was abashed i-wis,  
And with a sigh when he gan bet' awake  
He said: "O mercy, God! what thing is this?"  
"Why do you with yourselfen thus amiss?"  
Quod then Criseyde. "Is this a man's game?  
What, Troilus! will you do thus for shame?"

*better  
embarrassed indeed  
more fully awake*

*behave so stupidly?*

162. And therewithal her arm o'er him she laid,  
And all forgave, and oftentime him kissed.  
He thanked her, and to her spoke and said  
As fell to purpose for his heartè's rest;  
And she to that him answered as her lest,  
And with her goodly words him to disport  
She gan, and oft his sorrows to comfórt.

*as she pleased  
to cheer*

163. Quod Pandarus: "For aught I can espyen  
This light nor I ne serven here of nought.<sup>1</sup>  
Light is not good for sickè folkès eyen.  
But, for the love of God, since you be brought  
In thus good plight, let now no heavy thought  
Be hanging in the heartès of you tway."  
And bore the candle to the chimeney.

*eyes*

*situation  
two*

164 . Soon after this, (though it no needè were)  
When she such oathès as her list devise  
Had of him taken, her thoughtè then no fear  
Nor cause eke none to bid him thence arise:  
Yet lesser thing than oathès may suffice  
In many a case, for every wight I guess  
That loveth well meaneth but gentleness.

*as she chose*

*person*

165. But in effect she wouldè wit anon

*wanted to know at once*

---

<sup>1</sup> 163.1-2: "As far as I can see, neither this light nor I are doing any good here."

Of what man, and eke where, and also why  
 He jealous was, since there was causè none,  
 And eke the signè that he took it by, <sup>1</sup>  
 She bade him that to tell her busily,  
 Or elsè, certain, she bore him on hand  
 That this was done of malice, her to fond.

*exactly  
 would suspect  
 to test*

166. Withouten morè, shortly for to sayn,  
 He must obey unto his lady's hest,  
 And for the lessè harm he mustè feign;  
 He said her when she was at such a feast  
 She might on him have lookèd at the least;  
 N'ot I not what (all dear enough a rush)  
 As he that needès must a causè fish. <sup>2</sup>

*command  
 pretend  
  
 I don't know / straw  
 fish for a reason*

167. And she answered: "Sweet, al' were it so,  
 What harm was that, since I no evil mean?  
 For, by that God that wrought us bothè two, <sup>3</sup>  
 In allè things is mine intentè clean;  
 Such arguments ne be not worth a bean:  
 Will you the childish jealous counterfeit?  
 Now were it worthy that you were y-beat."

*even if it were  
  
 made  
  
 act like a jealous child  
 deserve to be spanked*

168. Then Troilus gan sorrowfully to sigh.  
 Lest she be wroth him thought his heartè died,  
 And said: "Alas! upon my sorrow's sick  
 Have mercy, O sweet heartè mine, Criseyde!  
 And if that in those wordès that I said  
 Be any wrong, I will no more trespass.  
 Do what you list; I am all in your grace."

*angry  
  
 offend  
 you want / at your mercy*

---

<sup>1</sup> 165.4: "And what the evidence was."

<sup>2</sup> 166.6-7: "I don't know (what else he invented), none of it worth a rush (straw), like a man who must fish around for a reason."

<sup>3</sup> 167.3: This is one of the comparatively few obtrusive Christian anachronisms that have found their way into the pagan milieu of the poem.

169. And she answered: "Of guilt, misericord;<sup>1</sup> *mercy*  
 That is to say, that I forgive all this,  
 And evermore on this night you record, *remember*  
 And be well 'ware you do no more amiss." *And take care*  
 "Nay, dearè heartè mine! " quod he, "i-wis." *indeed*  
 "And now," quod she, "that I have done you smart *caused you pain*  
 Forgive it me, mine ownè sweetè heart!"

170. This Troilus with bliss of that surprised  
 Put all in God's hand, as he that meant  
 Nothing but well, and, suddenly avised, *determined*  
 He her in armès fastè to him hent, *tightly squeezed*  
 And Pandarus, with full good intent  
 Laid him to sleep, and said: "If you be wise,  
 Swooneth not now, lest morè folk arise."<sup>2</sup>

171. What might or may the silly larkè say  
 When that the sparrow-hawk has it in his foot?  
 I can no more but of these ilkè tway, *same two*  
 (To whom this talè sugar be or soot) *sweet or bitter (like soot)*  
 Though that I tarry a year, sometime I must  
 After mine author tellen their gladness, *According to my*  
 As well as I have told their heaviness.

172. Criseydè, which that felt her thus y-take, *seized*  
 (As writen clerkès in their bookès old)  
 Right as an aspen leaf she gan to quake  
 When she him felt her in his armès fold;  
 But Troilus all whole of carès cold,  
 Gan thanken then the blissful goddès seven. *planetary influences*  
 Thus sundry painès bringen folk to heaven.

---

<sup>1</sup> 169.1: "For guilt (there is) mercy."

<sup>2</sup> The presence of Pandarus throughout this scene has bothered many readers. We should, perhaps, remember the comparative lack of privacy even in large wealthy medieval households. Commentators say that in the early Middle Ages it was common for others to sleep even in royal bedrooms.

173. This Troilus in armès gan her strain  
 And said: "O sweet, as ever may I gon,  
 Now you be caught, now is there but we twain  
 Now yieldeth you, for other boote is none."  
 To that Criseyde answered thus anon:  
 "Ne haddè I ere now, my sweet heart dear  
 Been yold, i-wis I werè not now here."

*As sure as I live  
 we two  
 other help  
 promptly  
 If I hadn't before now ...  
 ... surrendered ...*

174. Oh, sooth is said that healèd for to be,  
 As of a fever or other great sickness,  
 Men mustè drink (as men may often see)  
 Full bitter drink; and for to have gladness  
 Men drinken often pain and great distress:  
 I mean it here (as for this áventure),  
 That through a pain is founden all his cure.

175. And now sweetness seemeth morè sweet  
 That bitterness assayèd was beforne:  
 For out of woe in blissè now they fleet,  
 None such they felten since that they were born.  
 Now is this better than both two be lorn.  
 For love of God, take every woman heed  
 To worken thus, if it come to the need.

*experienced  
 float  
 lovelorn*

176. Criseyde, all quit from every dread and teen  
 As she that just cause had in him to trust,  
 Made him such feast that joy it was to see,  
 When she his truth and clean intentè wist,  
 And as about a tree with many a twist  
 Betrènt and writhes the sweetè woodèbine  
 Gan each of them in arms the other wind.

*worry  
 knew  
 entwines / honeysuckle*

177. And as the new abashèd nightingale,  
 That stinteth first, when she begins to sing,  
 When that she heareth any herdè tale,  
 Or in the hedges any wight stirring,

*just disturbed? always timid?  
 stops  
 herdsman talk  
 anybody*

And after, siker doth her voice out ring <sup>1</sup>—  
 Right so Criseyde, when that her dreadè stent,  
 Opened her heart, and told him her intent.

*more firmly  
 stopped*

178. And right as he that sees his death y-shapen,  
 And dien must, in aught that he may guess,  
 And suddenly rescue doth him escapen,  
 And from his death is brought in sikerness,—  
 For all this world in such present gladness  
 Was Troilus, and has his lady sweet.  
 With no worse hap God let us never meet!

*execution prepared  
 to all appearances  
 releases him  
 safety*

*luck*

179. Her armès small, her straightè back and soft,  
 Her sidès long, fleshly smooth and white  
 He gan to stroke, and good thrift bade full oft  
 Her snowish throat, her breastès round and lite.  
 Thus in this heaven he gan him to delight  
 And therewithal a thousand times her kissed,  
 That what to do, for joy unnethe he wist.

*and eagerly greeted  
 little*

*he hardly knew*

180. Then said he thus: “O Love, O Charity,  
 Thy mother eke Cytherea the sweet  
 After thyself, next herièd be she  
 Venus mean I, the well willing planet  
 And next that, Hymæus I thee greet  
 For never man was to you goddès hold  
 As I which you have brought from carès cold

*praised  
 benevolent  
 god of marriage  
 beholden  
 I whom*

181. “Benignè Love, thou holy bond of things,  
 Whoso will love, and list thee not honoúr,  
 Lo, his desire will flee withouten wings.  
 For, n’ouldest thou of bounty them succoúr <sup>2</sup>

*& will not honour thee*

---

<sup>1</sup> 177: Criseyde is compared to a singing nightingale which is easily startled from its singing by the sound of a herdsman speaking, or anything moving in the hedge, but which sings out unrestrained when she sees there is no danger.

<sup>2</sup> 181.4-5: “For if thou didst not wish (*n’ouldest*) of your bounty to help (*succour*) those who serve ...” In 181 & 182 Troilus turns Dantean & Boethian again.

That serven best and most always labour,  
 Yet were all lost — that dare I well say, certes —  
 But-if thy grace passèd our deserts.<sup>1</sup>

182. “And for thou me (that couldè least deserve  
 Of them that numbered been unto thy grace)  
 Hast holpen where I likely was to starve,<sup>2</sup>  
 And me bestowèd in so high a place,  
 That thilkè boundès may no blissè pace,  
 I can no more, but laud and reverence  
 Be to thy bounty and thine excellence.”

*Has helped / to die*

*those bounds / surpass  
 praise*

183. And therewithal Criseyde anon he kissed,  
 Of which certáin she feltè no dis-ease,  
 And thus said he: "Now would to God I wist,  
 Mine heartè sweet, how I you mightè please.  
 What man," quod he, "was ever thus at ease  
 As I, on which the fairest and the best  
 That ere I saw, deigneth her heart to rest?"

*distress  
 I knew*

*on whom*

184. "Here may men see that mercy passeth right;  
 Th' experience of that is felt in me,  
 That am unworthy to so sweet a wight;  
 But heartè mine! of your benignity  
 So thinketh, that though I unworthy be,  
 Yet must I need amenden in some wise  
 Right through the virtue of your high service.

*m. surpasses justice*

*improve  
 by serving you*

185. "Ah, for the love of God, my lady dear!  
 Since God hath wrought me for I shall you serve,  
 As thus I mean that you will be my steer,

*has made me to serve you  
 steersman i.e. pilot*

---

<sup>1</sup> 181.7: "Unless your graciousness surpassed what we deserve"

<sup>2</sup> 182.1-5: "And because you (Love) have helped me (the least among those who deserve your grace) at a point where I was likely to perish (*starve*), and have put me in a place so high that no joy can pass its bounds ..."



To do me live, if that you list, or starve,<sup>1</sup>  
 So teacheth me how that I may deserve *teach me (imper.)*  
 Your thanks, that, through minè ignorance  
 I do no thing that you be díspleasance: *may displease you*

186. "For certès, freshè womanlikè wife,<sup>2</sup>  
 This dare I say: that truth and diligence,  
 That shall you finden in me all my life.  
 Ne will I, certain, breaken your defence;<sup>3</sup> *your commands*  
 And if I do, présént on in absénce,  
 For love of God, let slay me with the deed, *have me killed for*  
 If that it like unto your womanhood." *if it please*

187. "I-wis," quod she, "mine ownè heartè's list!  
 My ground of ease, and all mine heartè dear!  
 Grammmércy! for on that is all my trist: *Indeed / desire*  
 But let us fall away from this mattér,  
 For it sufficeth this that said is here;  
 And at one word, withouten répentance,  
 Welcome my knight, my peace, my suffisance!" *Many thanks / trust*  
*fulfillment*

188. Of their delight or joys one of the least  
 Were impossíble to my wit to say,<sup>4</sup> *for my ability*  
 But judgeth you that have been at the feast  
 Of such gladness, if that them list to play; *if they chose to make love*  
 I can no more but thus: these ilkè tway *I know / same two*

---

<sup>1</sup> 185.2-5: "Since God has made me to serve you, I mean since he wants you to be my guide (*steer*) who will cause me to live or die (*starve*) as you choose, teach me ..."

<sup>2</sup> 186.1: *Wife* probably has as its primary meaning simply "woman", with strong overtones of the meaning "spouse" (see III, 16 above). The ME spelling is "*fresshe womanliche wif*"; pronouncing the two final -e's would give the two extra syllables needed to make up a pentameter line.

<sup>3</sup> 186.4: "Nor will I, certainly, disobey your commands." *defence* is the French word meaning literally "prohibition".

<sup>4</sup> 188-89: Once more, in these stanzas the narrator draws attention to his own lack of personal experience of the joys of love, hence his inability to describe even the least of their joys.

That night, betwixen dread and sikerness,  
Felten in love the greatè worthiness.

*certainty*

189. O blissful night! of them so long y-sought,  
How blithe unto them bothè two thou were!  
Why n'ad I such a one with my soul bought,  
Yea, or but the least joyè that was there?<sup>1</sup>  
Away thou foulè Daunger and thou Fear! <sup>2</sup>  
And let them in this heaven's blissè dwell  
That is so high that all ne can I tell.

*How pleasing*

190. But sooth is, though I cannot tellen all,  
As can mine author of his excellence,  
Yet have I said, and God toforn I shall,  
In every thing all wholly his senténce,  
And if that I, at Lovè's reverence,  
Have any word in ekèd for the best,  
Do therewithal right as yourselven lest;

*truth is*

*main idea*

*added any word*

191. For minè wordès, here and every part,  
I speak them all under correction  
Of you that feeling have in lovè's art,  
And put it all in your discretion  
T' increase or maken diminution  
Of my language; and that I you beseech.  
But now to purpose of my rather speech.

192. These ilkè two, that be in armès left,  
So loth to them asunder go it were,  
That each from other wenden been bereft;  
Or elsè, lo! this was their mostè fear,  
That all this thing but nicè dreamès were,  
For which full oft each of them said: "O sweet!

*so reluctant to part  
thought they were robbed  
greatest  
only foolish dreams*

---

<sup>1</sup> 189.3-4: "Why didn't I sell my soul for such a night or for the smallest joy they experienced?"

<sup>2</sup> 189.5: "*Daunger*" was the personification of that part of the lady's nature or training that urged her to be "*dangerous*", that is, to keep her lover at a distance. In the **Romance of the Rose** Daunger was portrayed as an ugly (*foul*) "churl".

Clip I you thus? Or else do I it mete?"

*Hold I? / dream it?*

193. And, Lord! so he gan goodly on her see,  
That ne'er his look ne blentè from her face,  
And said: "O my dear heartè! may it be  
That it be sooth? that you be in this place?"  
"Yea, heartè mine! God thank I of his grace,"  
Quod then Criseyde, and therewithal him kissed,  
That where her spirit was for joy she n'ist.

*looked so intently  
turned  
can it be ...  
...true?*

*didn't know*

194. This Troilus full oft her eyen two  
Gan for to kiss, and said; "O eyen clear!  
It weren you that wroughtè me such woe,  
You humble nettès of my lady dear,  
Though there be mercy written in your cheer,  
God wot the text full hard is, sooth, to find;  
How couldè you withouten bond me bind?" <sup>1</sup>

*caused me  
nets*

195. Therewith he gan her fast in armès take,  
And well a hundred timès gan he sigh,  
Not such sorrowful sighès as men make  
For woe, or elsè when that folk be sick,  
But easy sighès, such as be to like,  
That showed his affection within;  
Of such sighès could he not belinne.

*cease*

196. Soon after this they spoke of sundry things,  
As fell to purpose of this áventure,  
And playing, interchangeden their rings,  
Of which I cannot tellen no scripture,  
But well I wot a brooch, gold and azure,  
In which a ruby set was, like a heart,  
Criseyde him gave, and stuck it on his shirt.

*various  
about this event*

*inscription  
I know*

197. Lord! trow you that a covetous or a wretch  
That blameth love, and holds of it despite,

*a greedy person  
& despises it*

---

<sup>1</sup> 194: The metaphors in this stanza seem quite confused, but the meaning is reasonably clear.

That of those pence that he can mucker and catch  
 Was ever yet y-given him such delight  
 As is in love -- in one point, in some plight?  
 Nay, doubtèless, for all so God me save,  
 So perfect joy ne may no niggard have.

*grab*

*at any time, in any way?*

*no miser*

198. They will say 'Yes.' But Lord, so that they lie!  
 Those busy wretches full of woe and dread  
 That callen love a woodness or folly;  
 But it shall fall them as I shall you redde,  
 They shall forego the white and eke the red,  
 And live in woe, there God give them mischance!  
 And every lover in his truth advance.

*a madness*

*(be)fall / tell you*

*wine (?), silver & gold (?)*

199. As would to God those wretches that despise  
 Service of love, had earès all so long  
 As haddè Midas, full of covetise,  
 And thereto drunken had as hot and strong  
 As Crassus did for his affectès wrong,<sup>1</sup>  
 To teachen them that they be in the vice,  
 And lovers not, although they hold them nice.<sup>2</sup>

200. These ilkè two of whom that I you say,  
 When that their heartès well assurèd were,  
 Then they began to speaken and to play,  
 And eke rehearsen how, and when, and where,  
 They knew them first, and every woe or fear  
 That passèd was; but all such heaviness,  
 I thank it God, was turnèd to gladness.

*began / relax*

*each other*

201. And evermore when that they fell to speak  
 Of any thing of such a time agoone,  
 With kissing all that talè shouldè break,

*would interrupt*

---

<sup>1</sup> *Midas* the legendary king who wanted everything he touched to turn to gold. *Crassus*:. Defeated in battle, Crassus, a super-rich Roman had molten gold poured down his mouth (*hot and strong drink*). A truly awful fate to wish on anyone, especially for a trivial reason

<sup>2</sup> 199.7: Although they (*wretches*) consider them (*lovers*) to be foolish (*nice*).

And fallen in a newè joy anon,  
 And didnen all their might, since they were one,  
 For to recover bliss and be at ease,  
 And passèd woe with joy [they] counterpoise.

*past woe*

202. Reason will not that I speak of sleep,  
 For it accordeth not to my mattér;  
 God wot they took of it full little keep,  
 But lest this night that was to them so dear  
 Ne should in vain escape in no mannér,  
 It was beset in joy and busyness  
 Of all that souneth into gentleness.<sup>1</sup>

*doesn't go with  
 G. knows / notice*

*accords with*

203. But when the cock, common astrologer,  
 Gan on his breast to beat and after crow;  
 And Lucifer, the day's messenger,  
 Gan for to rise, and out her beams [to] throw,  
 And eastward rose -- to him that could it know,  
 Fortuna Major<sup>2</sup> — then anon Criseyde  
 With heartè sore to Troilus thus said:

*everyone's star-reader*

*L = Venus as morning star*

*a star group*

204. "Mine heartè's life, my trust, all my pleasance!  
 That I was born, alas! that me is woe,  
 That day of us must make disseverance,  
 For time it is to rise and hence to go,  
 Or elsè I am lost for evermo'.  
 O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou o'er us hove  
 As long as when Alcmena lay by Jove?<sup>3</sup>

*between us / parting*

*evermore  
 hover*

---

<sup>1</sup> 202.4-7: These four lines would appear to mean something like this: " But lest this night , so dear to them, should slip away from them, they packed it busily with joy of every kind that accorded with 'gentleness' . "

<sup>2</sup> 203.3-6: *Lucifer ... Fortuna Major*: A rather pretentious "scientific" way, following the farmyard way, of saying that dawn was approaching in the east.

<sup>3</sup> 204.6-7: Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, was one of Jove's many lovers. Jove made their love-night three times longer than usual.

205. "O blackè Night! as folk in bookès read,  
 That shapen art by God this world to hide *art created*  
 At certain timès with thy darkè weed, *clothing*  
 That under that men might in rest abide,  
 Well oughten beasts to plain and folk thee chide,  
 That there as day with labour would us brest, *oppress*  
 That thou thus fleest and deignest us not rest. *don't allow us*

206. "Thou dost, alas! so shortly thine office,  
 Thou rakel Night,<sup>1</sup> that God maker of kind, *quickly thy job*  
 Thee for thine haste, and thine unkindè vice *hasty / of the natural world*  
 So fast ay to our hemispherè bind,  
 That never more under the ground thou wind;  
 For now, for thou so hiest out of Troy *because you hurry*  
 Have I foregone, thus hastily, my joy."

207. This Troilus, that with those wordès felt  
 -- As thought him then, for piteous distress -- *it seemed to him*  
 The bloody tearès from his heartè melt,  
 As he that never yet such heaviness  
 Assayèd had out of so great gladness,<sup>2</sup>  
 Gan therewithal Criseyde his lady dear  
 In armès strain, and said in this mannér: *to squeeze*

208. "O cruel Day! accuser of the joy *exposer*  
 That Night and Love have stole and fast i-wrien, *covered*  
 Accursèd be thy coming into Troy!  
 For every bore has one of thy bright eyen:  
 Envious Day! what list thee so to spyen? *every chink / eyes*  
 What hast thou lost? why seekest thou this place? *Why do you want to spy?*  
 There God thy light so quenchè, for his grace! *May God quench*

---

<sup>1</sup> 206: "Because, hasty Night, you do your work in such a hurry, may God who made all of Nature, tie you because of that haste and unnatural vice, so tightly to our hemisphere that you may never again go under the earth. Now, because you are in such a hurry to be away from Troy, I have had to forego my joy."

<sup>2</sup> 207.4-5: *As he ... sadness* may mean "like a man who had never experienced such depression after such great joy."

209. "Alas! what have these lovers thee aguilt? <sup>1</sup>

Despitous Day! thine be the pain of hell,  
 For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt;  
 Thy poring in will nowhere let them dwell:  
 What! profferest thou thy light here for to sell?  
 Go, sell it them that smallè sealès grave; <sup>2</sup>  
 We will thee not; us needeth no day have."

*Cruel  
 and will again  
 peering  
 offerest  
 engrave  
 We want*

210. And eke the sunnè Titan gan he chide, <sup>3</sup>  
 And said; "O fool! well may men thee despise,  
 That hast all night the Dawning by thy side,  
 And sufferest her so soon up from thee rise,  
 For to dis-easen lovers in this wise;  
 What! hold your bed there, thou and eke thy Morrow;  
 I biddè God so give you bothè sorrow."

*Tithonus  
  
 Aurora  
 And (you) allow  
 to distress  
 Morning (Aurora)  
 pray*

211. Therewith full sore he sighed, and thus he said:

"My lady bright, and of my weal or woe  
 The well and root! O goodly mine, Criseyde,  
 And shall I rise, alas! and shall I go?  
 Now feel I that mine heartè must a-two;  
 And how should I my life an hourè save,  
 Since that with you is all the life I have?"

*joy  
 The source  
  
 must (break) in two*

212. "What shall I do? for certès I n'ot how  
 Nor when, alas, I shall the timè see  
 That in this plight I may be eft with you,  
 And of my life God wot how shall that be,  
 Since that desire right now so burneth me  
 That I am dead anon but I return:  
 How should I long, alas! from you sojourn?"

*certainly I don't know how  
  
 situation / again  
  
 soon unless I  
 stay away*

---

<sup>1</sup> 209.1: "How have these lovers offended thee?"

<sup>2</sup> 209.6: Craftsmen who do fine detailed engraving on small seals need good light.

<sup>3</sup> 210.1: Titan is the sun. It would seem from the following lines that Titan is being confused with Tithonus, the mortal lover of the goddess of dawn, Aurora.

213. "But natheless, mine ownè lady bright!  
 Yet were it so that I wist utterly *Yet if I knew*  
 That I your humble servant and your knight  
 Were in your heart y-set so firmly  
 As you in mine, the which thing truly  
 Me lever were than have these worldès twain, *I'd rather / two*  
 Yet should I bet' enduren all my pain." *better*

214. To that Criseyde answered right anon,  
 And with a sigh she said: "O heartè dear!  
 The game i-wis so far forth now is gone,  
 That first shall Phoebus fallen from the sphere, *the Sun*  
 And every eagle be the dovè's fere, *companion*  
 And every rock out of his placè start, *his = its*  
 Ere Troilus go out of Cressid's heart.

215. "You be so deep within mine heartè grave, *engraved*  
 That though I would it turn out of my thought,  
 As wisly very God my soulè save,  
 To dien in the pain I couldè not; <sup>1</sup> *surely*  
 And for the love of God, that us hath wrought, *under torture*  
 Let in your brain no other fantasy  
 So creepen, that it causè me to die. *may cause*

216. "And that you me would have as fast in mind  
 As I have you, that would I you beseech,  
 And if I wistè soothly that to find,<sup>2</sup>  
 God might not one point of my joyès eche. *increase*  
 But, heartè mine! withouten morè speech,  
 Be to me true, or elsè were it ruth, *it would be a shame*  
 For I am thine, by God and by my truth.

217. "Be glad forthy, and live in sikerness, *therefore / in certainty*

---

<sup>1</sup> 215.1-4: "You are so deeply engraved in my heart that even if I wanted to erase you from my thoughts under the pain death from torture, I could not, as sure as I hope God will save my soul."

<sup>2</sup> 216.3: "If I knew for certain that I would find that."



Thus said I ne'er ere this, ne shall to mo';  
 And if to you it were a great gladness  
 To turn again soon after that you go,  
 As fain would I as you that it were so,  
 As wisly God mine heartè bring to rest";  
 And him in armès took, and often kissed.

*never before**glad*

218. Against his will, sith it must needès be,  
 This Troilus up rose, and fast him clad,  
 And in his armès took his lady free  
 A hundred times, and on his way him sped,  
 And with such words as though his heartè bled,  
 He said: "Farewell, my dearè heartè sweet!  
 That God us grantè sound and soon to meet."

*since**dressed**gracious**prepared to leave**safe*

219. To which no word for sorrow she answered,  
 So sorè gan his parting her distraign,  
 And Troilus unto his palace fared,  
 As woebegone as she was, sooth to sayn,  
 So hard him wrung of sharp desire the pain  
 For to be eft there he was in pleasance,  
 That it may never out of his rémembrance.

*distress**truth**back again where  
never (go) out*

220. Returnèd to his royal palace soon,  
 He soft unto his bed gan for to shrink,  
 To sleepè long, as he was wont to do;  
 But all for naught; he may well lie and wink,  
 But sleep may there none in his heartè sink,  
 Thinking how she, for whom desire him brend,  
 A thousand fold was worth more than he wend.

*close his eyes**burned**imagined*

221. And in his thought gan up and down to wind  
 Her wordès all, and every countenance,  
 And firmly impressen in his mind  
 The leastè point that to him was pleasánce,  
 And verily of thilkè rémembrance  
 Desire all new him burned, and lust to breed

*review**look**at that memory*

Gan more than erst, and yet took he no heed.<sup>1</sup>

*more than before*

222. Criseyde also right in the samè wise  
Of Troilus gan in her heart to shut  
His worthiness, his lust, his deedès wise,  
His gentleness, and how she with him met,  
Thanking Love he so well her beset,  
Desiring eft to have her heartè dear  
In such a plight that she durst make him cheer.<sup>2</sup>

*to treasure  
lust = his passion (for her)*

*who had so favored her  
again / sweetheart  
place / delight him*

223. Pandar, which that a-morrow comen was  
Unto his niece and gan her fair to greet,  
Said: "All this night so rained it alas!  
That all my dread is that you, niece sweet!  
Have little leisure had to sleep and mete.  
All night," quod he, "hath rain so do me wake,  
That some of us I trow their headès ache."

*in the a.m.*

*dream  
kept me awake  
I guess*

224. And near he came and said: "How stands it now  
This merry morrow, niece, how can you fare?"  
Criseyde answered: "Never the bet' for you,  
Fox that you be; God give your heartè care.  
God help me so, you causèd all this fare,  
Trow I," quod she, "for all your wordès white.  
Oh, whoso sees you, knoweth you full lite."

*are you doing  
better*

*this business  
I guess / innocent words  
very little*

225. With that she gan her facè for to wry  
With the sheet, and waxed for shame all red,  
And Pandarus gan under for to pry  
And saidè: "Niece, if that I shall be dead,  
Here, have a sword, and smiteth off my head."  
With that, his arm all suddenly he thrust  
Under her neck, and at the last her kissed.

*to cover  
blushed in embarrassment*

---

<sup>1</sup> 221.6-7: *and lust ... heed*: This has nothing to do with a desire (in Troilus) to produce progeny. The syntax is: *lust gan to breed (grow) more than before*. The meaning of the last clause: *and ... heed* is obscure.

<sup>2</sup> 222.6-7: "Hoping to have her sweetheart where she could give him delight."

226. I pass all that which chargeth not to say  
 What! God forgave His death, and she also  
 Forgave, and with her uncle gan to play,  
 For other causè was there none than so.  
 But of this thing right to the effect to go  
 When timè was, home to her house she went,  
 And Pandarus has fully his intent.<sup>1</sup>

*doesn't matter*

*to joke  
 nothing else to be done  
 To make a long story short*

227. Now turnè we again to Troilus,  
 That restèless full long a-beddè lay,  
 And privily sent after Pandarus  
 To him to come in all the haste he may:  
 He came anon, not oncè said he nay,  
 And Troilus full soberly he gret,  
 And down upon the beddè's side him set.

*secretly sent for*

*greeted*

228. This Troilus with all th' affection  
 Of friendly love that heartè may devise  
 To Pandarus on knees fell he adown;  
 And ere that he would of the place arise  
 He gan him thanken in his bestè wise  
 A hundred sithe; and gan the timè bless  
 That he was born, to bring him from distress.

*And before / from*

*100 times*

229. He said; "O friend! of friends the alderbest  
 That ever was, the soothè for to tell,  
 Thou hast in heaven y-brought my soul at rest  
 From Phlegethon, the fiery flood of hell,  
 That though I might a thousand timès sell  
 Upon a day my life in thy service,  
 It mightè not a mote in that suffice.

*best of all  
 truth*

*river*

*an iota*

---

<sup>1</sup> Some recent critics have seen more than hints of incest in stanzas 225 & 226. Certainly the action of 225 seems odd, but Pandarus is not noted for his sensitivity and good taste. Reading deliberate ambiguity into lines 226.1 & .7 and into a word like *play* (.3) could partly justify a determined reader in such a suspicion which is, however, dismissed by the Riverside editor as "baseless & absurd." The scene is not in Boccaccio, and stanza 226 is not in the Corpus MS, the source MS for both Riverside and Windeatt's editions

230. "The sunnè, which that all the world may see,  
 Saw never yet (my life that dare I lay)  
 So inly fair and goodly as is she  
 Whose I am all, and shall till that I die;  
 And that I thus am hers, dare I well say,  
 That thankèd be the highè worthiness  
 Of Love, and eke thy kindè busyness.

*So totally*

*effort*

231. "Thus hast thou me no little thing y-give;  
 For which to thee obligèd be for ay  
 My life; and why? For through thy help I live,  
 Or elsè dead had I been many a day."  
 And with that word down in his bed he lay,  
 And Pandarus full soberly him heard  
 Till all was said, and then he him answered:

*given  
for ever*

232. "My dearè friend! if I have done for thee  
 In any case, God wot it is me lief,  
 I am as glad as man may of it be,  
 God help me so. But take it not agrief  
 What I shall say. Beware of this mischief,  
 That where as now thou brought art into bliss  
 That thou thyself ne cause it not to miss.

*God knows, I'm pleased*

*thou art brought  
Don't ruin it*

233. "For of Fortúna's sharp adversity  
 The worstè kind of ínfortune is this,  
 A man to have been in prosperity,  
 And it remember when it passèd is:  
 Thou'rt wise enough; forthy do not amiss;  
 Be not too rakel though that thou sit warm,  
 For if thou be, certain it will thee harm.

*therefore  
rash*

234. "Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therein,  
 For all so sure as red is every fire,  
 As great a craft is keepè well as win.  
 Bridle always thy speech and thy desire,  
 For wordly joy holds not but by a wire;  
 That proveth well -- it bursts alday so oft,  
 Forthy is need to worken with it soft."

*as great a skill*

*every day  
Therefore... treat it gently*

235. Quod Troilus: "I hope, and God toforn,  
 My dearè friend, that I shall so me bear  
 That, in my guilt, there shall be nothing lorn,  
 N'I n'ill not rakel for to grieven her.<sup>1</sup>  
 It needeth not this matter oft to steer,  
 For, wistest thou my heartè well, Pandare,  
 God wot, of this thou wouldest little care."

*before God*  
*through my fault / lost*  
*Nor will I be so rash as to*  
*talk about*  
*if you knew*  
*God knows / worry*

236. Then gan he tell him of his gladdè night,  
 And whereof first his heartè dread and how,  
 And saidè: "Friend, as I am a true knight,  
 And by that faith I shall to God and you,  
 I had it never half so hot as now,  
 And ay the morè that desire me biteth  
 To love her best the more it me delighteth.

*dreaded*  
*I owe*  
*And ever the more*

237. "I n'ot myself not wisly what it is,  
 But now I feel a newè quality,  
 Yea, all another than I did ere this."  
 Pandárus answered and said thus, that "he  
 That oncè may in heaven's blissè be,  
 He feeleth other wayès, dare I lay,  
 Than thilkè time he first heard of it say."

*I really don't know*  
*other than*  
*I bet*  
*that time / heard of it*

238. This is a word for all, this Troilus  
 Was never full to speak of this mattér,  
 And for to praisen unto Pandarus  
 The bounty of his rightè lady dear,  
 And Pandarus to thank and maken cheer:  
 This tale was ay span-newè to begin  
 Till that the night departed them a-twin.

*n. surfeited w. speaking*  
*always brand new*  
*separated / in two*

239. Soon after this, for that Fortúne it would,  
 Y-comen was the blissful timè sweet

*wished it*

---

<sup>1</sup> 235.4: *N'I n'ill not* = nor I won't not. The emphatic triple negative would now be grammatically impossible.

That Troilus was warnèd that he should  
 There he was erst, Criseyde his lady meet,<sup>1</sup>  
 For which he felt his heart in joyè fleet,  
 And faithfully gan all the goddès hery;  
 And let's see now if that he can be merry.

*Where he first  
 float  
 praise*

240. And holden was the form and all the wise  
 Of her coming, and eke of his also,  
 As it was erst, which needeth not devise;<sup>2</sup>  
 But plainly to th'effect right for to go:  
 In joy and surety Pandarus them two  
 A-beddè brought when that them bothè lest;  
 And thus they be in quiet and in rest.

*kept / manner  
 before / not tell  
 to the point*

*both wished*

241. Naught needeth it to you, since they be met,  
 To ask of me if that they blithè were,  
 For if it erst was well, then was it bet  
 A thousand fold, this needeth not inquire;  
 A-gone was every sorrow and every fear,  
 And both i-wis they had, and so they wend  
 As muchel joy as heart may comprehend.

*happy  
 at first / better*

*indeed / experienced*

242. This is no little thing of for to say,  
 This passeth every wit for to devise,  
 For each of them gan other's lust obey.  
 Felicity, which that these clerkès wise  
 Commenden so, ne may not here suffice;  
 This joy ne may not written be with ink;  
 This passeth all that any heart may think.

*to speak of  
 describe  
 each other's wishes*

*surpasses*

243. But cruel day, so welaway the stound!  
 Gan for t'approach, as they by signès knew,  
 For which them thought they felten deathè's wound:

*alas, the moment*

---

<sup>1</sup> 239.3-4: "Troilus was told to meet his lady again at the same place as before," i.e. Pandarus's house.

<sup>2</sup> 240.1-3: "The arrangements for her arrival and for his were the same as before, which I don't need to tell you about."

So woe was them that changen gan their hue,  
 And day they gonnen to despise all new,  
 Calling it traitor, envious, and worse,  
 And bitterly the day's light they curse.<sup>1</sup>

*So sad they were / color  
 they began / anew*

244. Quod Troilus "Alas! now am I ware  
 That Pyroïs, and those swift steedès three  
 Which that drawn forth the Sunnè's car  
 Have gone some by-path in despite of me,  
 And maketh it so soonè day to be;  
 And for the Sun him hasteth thus to rise  
 Ne shall I never do him sacrifice."

*aware  
 P = one of the sun's horses  
 chariot  
 short cut*

245. But needès day departen them must soon;  
 And when their speechè done was and their cheer,  
 They twin anon, as they were wont to do,  
 And setten time of meeting eft i-fere.  
 And many a night they wrought in this mannér:  
 And thus Fortúna led a time in joy  
 Criseyde and eke this kingè's son of Troy.

*day must separate  
 & their goodbye's ?  
 separate soon  
 again together  
 (for) a time*

246. In suffisance, in bliss, and in singings,  
 This Troilus gan all his life to lead;  
 He spendeth, jousteth, maketh eke feastings;  
 He giveth freely oft, and changeth weed;  
 He held about him always, out of dread,<sup>2</sup>  
 A world of folk, as came him well of kind,  
 The freshest and the best that he could find,

*In satisfaction  
  
 clothes  
 I assure you  
 came naturally to him*

---

<sup>1</sup> 243.7 & 244: Another short *alba* or *aubade*. In what follows we are given only Troilus's words, not Criseyde's. In the earlier more elaborate one they both participate, Criseyde berating Night and Troilus Day. See above, III, st. 204 ff.

<sup>2</sup> 246.5-7: Again *out of dread* does not mean "out of fear" but the lines say: "I assure you, he kept around him a group of people who were the finest that he could find, as was natural for him (*came him well of kind*)."

The good effect of human sexual love on a man's manners and military prowess mentioned here and earlier, and below in stanzas 254 & 5 was a commonplace of medieval romance

247. That such a voice was of him and a steven  
 Throughout the world, of honour and largesse,  
 That it up rang unto the gate of heaven;  
 And as in love he was in such gladness  
 That in his heart he deemed as I guess  
 That there n'is lover in this world at ease  
 So well as he, and thus gan love him please.

*So that his fame & reputation  
 for h. & generosity*

*judged  
 is not*

248. The goodlihead or beauty which that kind  
 In any other lady had y-set,  
 Can not the mountance of a knot unbind  
 About his heart of all Criseyde's net;<sup>1</sup>  
 He was so narrow y-meshed and y-knit  
 That it undone in any manner side  
 That will not be, for aught that may betide.

*nature*

*as much as a knot*

*tightly enmeshed & knit  
 in any way*

249. And by the hand full often he would take  
 This Pandarus, and into garden lead,  
 And such a feast and such a process make  
 Him of Criseyde, and of her womanhood,  
 And of her beauty, that withouten dread,  
 It was a heaven his wordes for to hear,  
 And then he wouldè sing in this mannér:

*praise & long account*

*without doubt*

#### CANTICUS TROILI <sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 248. "The goodness or beauty that Nature had bestowed on any other woman could not untie a single knot in the net of his affection for Criseyde. He was so tightly enmeshed that there was no possibility that he could be untied in any way."

<sup>2</sup> Troilus's hymn to love is based on Boethius's **Consolations of Philosophy**, II, meter 8. The substance of it is that Love holds all things working together: marriages, societies, the heavens, the oceans, everything. See also the Invocation at the opening of this book III.



250. "Love, that of earth and sea hath governance,  
 Love, that his hestès hath in heaven high, *commands*  
 Love, that with a wholesome álliance  
 Holds people joinèd as him list them gie, *pleases to guide*  
 Love, that knitteth law of company, *of association*  
 And couples doth in virtue for to dwell, *causes*  
 Binds this accord that I have told and tell.

251. "That that the world with faith, which that is stable, *w. regularity*  
 Diverseth so its stoundès conconding *Changes its seasons so smoothly*  
 That elements that be so discordable *that are so discordant*  
 Holden a bond perpetually during, *ever lasting*  
 That Phoebus must his rosy day forth bring, *(So) that*  
 And that the moon has lordship o'er the nights —  
 All this does Love; ay heried be his mights! *ever praised*

252. "That that the sea, that greedy is to flow, *(The fact) that*  
 Constraineth to a certain endè so *Restrains*  
 His floodès, that so fiercely they ne grow  
 To drenchen earth and all, for evermo', *To drown*  
 And if that Love aught let his bridle go,  
 All that now loves asunder shouldè leap,  
 And lost were all that Love holds now to-heap. *together*

253. "So would to God that author is of kind,<sup>1</sup> *who made Nature*  
 That with his bond Love of his virtue list *his power would choose*  
 To circle heartès all and fast to bind,  
 That from his bond no wight the way out wist, *no one / would know*  
 And heartès cold them would I that he twist  
 To make them love, and that list them ay rue *and always take pity*  
 On heartès sore, and keep them that be true."

-----

---

<sup>1</sup> 253. "I wish that God, who is the author of nature (*kind*), would cause Love to use his power (*virtue*) to encircle all hearts and tie them fast so that no one would know the way out of that bond. And I wish that He would change cold hearts to make them love and take pity on suffering people, and that He would guard those people who are true (in love)."

254. In allè needès for the townè's war  
 He was — and ay — the first in armès dight,  
 And certainly — but if that bookès err —  
 Save Hector most y-dread of any wight;  
 And this increase of hardiness and might  
 Came him of love, his lady's thank to win,  
 That alterèd his spirit so within.

*always first armed  
 unless  
 most feared by every (enemy)*

*Came to him from love*

255. In time of truce on hawking would he ride,  
 Or elsè hunt the boar, bear, or lion,  
 The smallè beastès let he go beside;  
 And when that he came riding into town,  
 Full oft his lady from her window down  
 As fresh as falcon comen out of mew,  
 Full ready was him goodly to salue.

*didn't bother with*

*cage  
 greet*

256. And most of love and virtue was his speech,  
 And in despite had he all wretchedness;  
 And doubtèless no need was him beseech  
 To honour them that haddè worthiness,  
 And easen them that weren in distress;  
 And glad was he if any wight well fared  
 That lover was, when he it wist or heard.

*in contempt all bad conduct  
 (to) beseech*

*to help  
 anyone did well  
 knew*

257. For, sooth to say, he lost held every wight  
 But if he were in Lovè's high service,  
 I meanè folk that ought it be of right;  
 And o'er all this so well could he devise  
 Of sentiment, and in so uncouth wise  
 All his array, that every lover thought  
 That all was well what so he said or wrought.

*he thought everyone  
 Unless he  
 who rightfully ought  
 speak  
 so unusual  
 his whole presentation  
 or did*

258. And though that he be come of blood royál  
 Him list of pride at no wight for to chase;  
 Benign he was to each in general,  
 For which he got him thanks in every place:  
 Thus would Love, (y-heried be his grace!)  
 That pride and envy, ire and avarice,

*out of pride / to despise*

*Love wished, (praised be h.g.)  
 (So) that anger*

He gan to flee, and every other vice.<sup>1</sup>

259. Thou lady bright, the daughter of Dione!  
 Thy blind and winged son eke, Dan Cupide!  
 You Sisters Nine eke, that by Helicon  
 In hill Parnassus list for to abide,  
 That you thus far have deigned me to guide,  
 I can no more, but since that you will wend,  
 You heried be for ay withouten end!

*Venus*

*9 muses  
 choose to live  
 me = the poet  
 go (away)  
 (May) you be praised*

260. Through you have I said fully in my song  
 Th'effect and joy of Troilus's service,  
 Al' be that there was some dis-ease among,  
 As to mine author listeth to devise:<sup>2</sup>  
 My Thirde Book now end I in this wise,  
 And Troilus in lust and in quiet  
 Is with Criseyde, his ownè lady sweet.

*Although / mixed in*

*in pleasure*

Here ends Book III

---

<sup>1</sup> 258.5-7: "This was the will of Love (may He be praised), so that he [Troilus] began to flee pride, envy, anger, avarice and every other vice." More of the good effects of love; see second half of note to 246 above.

<sup>2</sup> 260.4: "As my source chooses to tell it."

**TROILUS AND CRISEYDE**

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

**Book IV**

**Unabbreviated**

## BOOK IV

1. But all too little, welaway the while!  
 Lasteth such joy, y-thank•d be Fortúne,  
 That seemeth truest when she will beguile,  
 And can to fool•s so her song entune  
 That she them hent and blent, traitor commune,<sup>1</sup>  
 And when a wight is from her wheel y-throw  
 Then laugheth she, and maketh her the mow.

*more's the pity  
 thanks to Fortune  
 wants to deceive*

*seizes & blinds  
 person / thrown  
 and grins*

2. From Troilus she gan her bright• face  
 Away to writhe, and took of him no heed,  
 And cast him clean out of his lady's grace,  
 And on her wheel she set up Diomedé,  
 For which mine heart right now beginneth bleed;  
 And now my pen, alas! with which I write,  
 Quaketh for dread of what I must endite.

*to turn*

*write*

3. For how Criseyd• Troilus forsook,  
 Or at the least how that she was unkind,  
 Must henc•forth be matter of my book  
 As written folk through which it is in mind:<sup>2</sup>  
 Alas! that they should ever caus• find  
 To speak her harm; and if they on her lie,  
 I-wis themselves should have the villainy.

*how C. forsook T.*

*Certainly / the blame*

4. O you Heryn•s! Night•'s daughters three,  
 That end•less complainen ever in pain,  
 Magaera, Allecto, and Tysiphone,  
 Thou cruel Mars eke, Father of Quirine,  
 This ilk• Fourth• Book help me to fine,

*Furies*

*Romulus  
 to finish*

<sup>1</sup> 1:5-6 Fortune, who betrays everyone, is a "traitor common" to all those she seduces onto her wheel, whom she then whirls off, laughing at them.

<sup>2</sup> 3.4: "As those people write to whom we are indebted for the story."

So that the loss of love and life i-fere  
Of Troilus be fully shew•d here.

*together  
(may) be*

-----

5. Lying in host, as I have said ere this,  
The Greek•s strong abouten Troy• town,  
Befell that when that Phoebus shining is  
Upon the breast of Hercules Lion,<sup>3</sup>  
That Hector with many a bold baron  
Cast on a day with Greek•s for to fight  
As he was wont to grieve them what he might.

*in siege*  
  
*Phoebus = the sun  
i.e. in July-Aug or early Dec.*  
  
*Planned  
As he was accustomed*

6. N'ot I how long or short it was between  
This purpose and that day they fighten meant;  
But on a day well arm•d bright and sheen  
Hector and many a worthy knight out went  
With spear in hand, and with big bow•s bent,  
And in the beard, withouten longer let,  
Their foemen in the field anon them met.

*I don't know*  
  
  
  
  
*face to face / delay*

7. The long• day with spear•s sharp y-ground,  
With arrows, dart•s, swords, and maces fell,  
They fight, and bringen horse and man to ground,  
And with their axes out the brain•s quell;  
But in the last• shower, sooth to tell,  
The folk of Troy themselfen so misled,  
That with the worse at night homeward they fled.

*fell = terrible*  
  
  
  
*beat out  
last assault  
mismanaged*

8. At which• day was taken Antenor,<sup>4</sup>  
Maugre Polydamas, or Menesteo,  
Santippe, Sarpedon, Polystenor,  
Polites, or eke the Trojan, Daun Rupho,  
And other less• folk, as Phebuso,

*Despite efforts of P (A's son)*

---

<sup>3</sup> 5.1-5: "When the Greeks in force were besieging the town of Troy, it happened ... that Hector ..." The syntax is a little mixed. The stanza begins with "Greeks" as the subject of "lying" but then changes to unexpressed "It" in "(It) befell", (It) happened.

<sup>4</sup> 8.1-4: Antenor's is the one name that matters here. As we are told in 29-30 below, he became the traitor who ensured Troy's destruction.

So that for harm that day the folk of Troy  
Dreaden to lose a great part of their joy.

9. Of Priamus was given, at Greeks' request,  
A time of truce, and then they gonnen treat  
Their prisoners to 'changen, most and least,  
And for the surplus given sums great;  
This thing anon was couth in every street,  
Both in the siege, in town, and everywhere,  
And with the first it came to Calchas' ear.

*Of = By  
began to negotiate  
to exchange  
(ransom money)  
immediately known*

*And early on*

10. When Calchas knew this treaty should• hold,  
In consistory among the Greek•s soon  
He gan in thring• forth with lord•s old,  
And set him there as he was wont to do,  
And with a chang•d face them bade a boon,  
For love of God, to do that reverence  
To stinten noise, and give him audience.

*would take place  
in council  
push in*

*asked a favor*

*To stop / a hearing*

11. Then said he thus: "Lo! Lord•s mine, I was  
Trojan, as it known is, out of dread,  
And if that you remember, I am Calchás,  
That alderfirst gave comfort to your need,  
And told• well how that you shoulde speed,  
For dread•less through you shall, in a stound,  
Be Troy y-burnt and beaten down to ground.

*without doubt*

*first of all  
succeed  
Doubtless / in a while*

12. "And in what form or in what manner wise  
This town to shend, and all your lust achieve,  
You have ere this well heard me you devise;  
This knowen you, my Lords, as I believe;  
And, for the Greek•s weren me so leve,  
I came myself in my proper person  
To teach in this how you was best to done.

*to destroy & your wishes  
tell you*

*so dear to me*

*best for you to do*

13. "Having unto my treasure nor my rent  
Right no resport, in respect of your ease,<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> 13.1-2: "Having no regard for my own money or property but only your benefit (*ease*)."

Thus all my good I left and to you went,  
 Weening in this you, Lord•s, for to please;  
 But all that loss ne doth me no dis-ease;  
 I vouch•safe as wisely have I joy,  
 For you to lose all that I have in Troy,

*Expecting  
 distress  
 I'm willing as surely as  
 For your sake*

14. "Save of a daughter that I left, alas!  
 Sleeping at home when out of Troy I start.  
 O stern, O cruel father that I was!  
 How might I have in that so hard a heart?  
 Alas that I n'ad brought her in her shirt!  
 For sorrow of which I will not live to-morrow  
 But-if you, lord•s, rue upon my sorrow.

*I rushed  
  
 nightshirt  
 Unless you, l., take pity*

15. "For, by that cause I saw no time ere now  
 Her to deliver, I holden have my peace,  
 But now or never, if that it lik• you,  
 I may her have right soon now doubt•less:  
 O, help and grace among•st all this press!  
 Rue on this old• caitiff in distress,  
 Since I through you have all this heaviness.

*because I saw  
 I've kept quiet  
 if it pleases you  
  
 crowd  
 Pity this old wretch*

16. "You have now caught and fettered in prison  
 Trojans enough, and if your will•s be,  
 My child with one may have redemption;  
 Now for the love of God and of bounty  
 One of so fele, alas! so give him me:  
 What need were it this prayer for to wern,  
 Since you shall have both folk and town so yern?

*can be exchanged for one  
 generosity  
 One of so many  
 to reject  
 so soon*

17. "On peril of my life I shall not lie,  
 Apollo hath me told it faithfully;<sup>6</sup>  
 I have eke founden by astronomy,  
 By sort, and eke by augury, truly,  
 And dare well say the time is fast• by  
 That fire and flame on all the town shall spread,  
 And thus shall Troy• turn to ashes dead.

*astrology  
 casting lots & divination  
 close*

---

<sup>6</sup> 17.2: Calchas's astrology and consultation of Apollo were mentioned earlier in I, 10-11 as the reason for his abandonment of Troy.



18. "For certain, Phoebus and Neptunus both,  
That makeden the walls of all the town  
Be with the folk of Troy always so wroth  
That they will bring it to confusion  
Right in despite of King Laomedon,  
Because he would not payen them their hire,<sup>7</sup>  
The town of Troy• shall be set on fire."

*are so angry*

*in punishment of*

19. Telling his tale always this old• grey,  
Humble in speech and in his looking eke,  
The salt• tear•s from his eyen tway  
Full fast y-runnen down by either cheek;  
So long he gan of succour them beseech,  
That for to heal him of his sorrows sore  
They gave him Antenor withouten more.

*graybeard*

*eyes two*

*for help (to) beg*

*without more ado*

20. But who was glad enough but Calchas tho!  
And of this thing full soon his need•s laid  
On them that shoulde for the treaty go,  
And them for Antenor full often prayed  
To bringen home King Thoas and Criseyde;  
And when King Priam his safe conduct sent,  
Th'ambassadors to Troy• straight they went.

*then*

*made h. wishes clear*

*go to negotiate the t.*

*in exchange for A*

21. The cause y-told of their coming,<sup>8</sup> the old  
Priam the King full soon in general  
Let hereupon his parliament to hold,  
Of which th'effect rehearsen you I shall:  
Th'ambassadors be answered for final,  
Th'exchange of prisoners and all this need  
Them liketh well, and forth in they proceed.

*caused to be held*

*the results I will tell*

*have their f. answer*

*everything necessary*

*Pleased them*

22. This Troilus was present in the place  
When ask•d was for Antenor Criseyde,  
For which full soon• changen gan his face,  
As he that with those word•s well nigh died;

*v. nearly*

<sup>7</sup> 18.1-6: The gods Neptune and Apollo served King Laomedon of Troy and built the walls of the city, but Laomedon, Priam's father, failed to pay them for their work.

<sup>8</sup> 21.1: "The reason for their coming having been made known."

But natheless he no word to it said,  
 Lest men should his affection espy;  
 With man's heart he gan his sorrows drye.

*endure*

23. And full of anguish and of grisly dread  
 Abode what other lords would to it say,  
 And if that they would grant (as God forbid!)  
 Th'exchange of her. Then thought he thing•s tway:  
 First how to save her honour, and what way  
 He might• best th'exchange of her withstand;  
 Full fast he cast how all this thing might stand.

*Awaited*

*two*

*he calculated*

24. Love him made all• prest to do her bide,  
 And rather dien than she should• go,  
 But reason said him on that other side:  
 "Without assent of her ne do not so,  
 Lest for thy work she would• be thy foe,  
 And say that through thy meddling is y-blow  
 Your bother love where it was erst unknow."<sup>9</sup>

*v. anxious to make her stay*

*blown around (in talk)  
 love of you both / before*

25. For which he gan deliberen for the best,  
 And though the lord•s woulde that she went,  
 He would• let them grant• what them lest,  
 And tell his lady first what that they meant;  
 And when that she had said him her intent,  
 Thereafter would he worken all so blive  
 Though all the world against it would• strive.

*wished her to go  
 what they wanted*

*v. forcefully*

26. Hector which that full well the Greek•s heard  
 For Antenor how they would have Criseyde,  
 Gan it withstand, and soberly answered:  
 "Sirs, she is no prisoner," he said.  
 "I n'ot on you who that this charg• laid,"<sup>10</sup>

*I don't know*

---

<sup>9</sup> 24.3-7: His reason urged him as follows: "Do not intervene without consulting her in case she should be angry at you and say that because of your meddling the love of you both (*bother*) is exposed (*y-blow*) which was previously secret." Troilus is motivated by the conventional requirement of secrecy in romances and by Criseyde's almost obsessive fear of wagging tongues.

<sup>10</sup> 26.5: "I don't know who gave you this commission."

But, on my part, you may eftsoons them tell  
We usen here no women for to sell."

*promptly*  
*We're not used to*

27. The noise of people up started then at once  
As breme as blaze of straw y-set on fire,  
For ínfortune it would• for the nonce  
They shouldeñ their confusíon desire.<sup>11</sup>  
"Hector," quod they, "what ghost may you inspire  
This woman thus to shield, and do us lose  
Daun Antenor? A wrong way now you choose,

*fierce*  
*their own destruction*  
*(evil) spirit*  
*and cause us*  
*Lord Antenor*

28. "That is so wise, and eke so bold baroun.  
And we have need of folk, as men may see;  
He is eke one the greatest of this town.  
O Hector! let such fantasi•s be;  
O King Priam!" quod they, "thus sayen we,  
That all our voice is to forego Criseyde."  
And to deliver Antenor they prayed.

*baron*

29. O Juv'nal lord•, true is thy senténce  
That little witen folk what is to yern <sup>12</sup>  
That they ne find in their desire offence,  
For cloud of error lets them not discern  
What best is; and lo, here example as yern  
This folk desiren now deliverance  
Of Antenor, that brought them to mischance;

*opinion*  
*folk know / ask for*  
*harm*

*as apt*

30. For after, he was traitor to the town  
Of Troy. Alas, they quit him out too rathe.  
O nic• world, lo thy discretion.  
Criseyd• which that never did them scathe  
Shall now no longer in her bliss• bathe;  
But Antenor he shall come home to town  
And she shall out; thus said• here and hown.

*released him t. quickly*  
*O silly*  
*harm*

*one & all*

---

<sup>11</sup> 27.3-4: "For Misfortune wanted (it) on that occasion that they should choose their own destruction.

<sup>12</sup> 29.2-5: "People have no idea how to ask for something that will not harm them, because of a cloud of error which will not allow them to see what is best." Juvenal, a Roman satirist, is here paraphrased.

31. For which, delibered was by parliament,  
 For Antenor to yelden out Criseyde.  
 And it pronounc•d by the President,  
 Although that Hector `Nay' full often prayed;  
 And finally, what wight that it withsaid,  
 It was for naught; it must• be and should,  
 For substance of the parliament it would.

*decided*

*no matter who opposed*

*the majority of p. wanted it*

32. Departed out of parliament each one,  
 This Troilus, withouten word•s mo'  
 Unto his chamber sped him fast alone,  
 But if it were a man of his or two,  
 The which he bade out fast• for to go,  
 Because that he would sleepen, as he said,  
 And hastily upon his bed him laid.

*When each had departed  
 more*

*Except for*

33. And as in winter leav•s be bereft  
 Each after other till the trees be bare,  
 So that there n'is but bark and branch y-left,  
 Lies Troilus bereft of each welfare,  
 Y-bounden in the black• bark of care,  
 Dispos•d wood out of his wits to braid,  
 So sore him sat the changing of Criseyde.

*fall off*

*mad out of h. w. to go  
 So badly affected him*

34. He rose him up and every door he shut  
 And window eke, and then this woeful man  
 Upon his bed's side adown him set,  
 Full like a dead imag• pale and wan  
 And in his breast the heap•d woe began  
 Out burst, and he to worken in this wise  
 In his woodness, as I shall you devise.

*(To) burst out  
 In his madness*

35. Right as the wild• bull begins to spring  
 Now here now there, y-darted to the heart,  
 And of his death• roareth, cōmplaining,  
 Right so gan he about the chamber start,  
 Smiting his breast ay with his fist•s smart;  
 His head unto the wall, his body to the ground  
 Full oft he swapt himselfen to confound.

*(when) pierced*

*hard*

*he threw / to hurt*

36. His eyen two for pity of his heart

Out streameden as swift as well•s tway;  
 The high• sobb•s of his sorrows smart  
 His speech him reft; unneth• might he say  
 "O Death alas! why n'ilt thou do me die?  
 Accursed be that day which that Natúre  
 Shope me to be a liv• creätúre!"

*two wells*

*robbed him, scarcely  
 Why will y. not make me d.*

*Shaped me*

37. But after, when the fury and the rage,  
 Which that his heart• twist and fast• thrust,  
 By length of tim• somewhat gan assuage,  
 Upon his bed he laid him down to rest.  
 But then began his tear•s more out-burst,  
 That wonder is the body may suffice  
 To half this woe which that I you devise.

*twisted & battered*

*stand up  
 tell you*

38. Then said he thus: "Fortúne, alas the while,  
 What have I done, what have I thus a-guilt;  
 How mightest thou (for ruth•) me beguile?  
 Is there no grace, and shall I thus be spilt?  
 Shall thus Criseyde away for that thou wilt?  
 Alas! how mayst thou in thy heart• find  
 To be to me thus cruel and unkind.

*done wrong  
 (for pity's sake!) deceive me  
 ruined  
 (go) away because you want it*

39. "Have I thee not honoúr•d all my life,  
 As thou well wost, above the godd•s all?  
 Why wilt thou me from joy• thus deprive?  
 O Troilus, what may men thee now call  
 But wretch of wretches out of honour fall  
 Into misery, in which I will bewail  
 Criseyde, alas, till that the breath me fail?

*Well knowest*

*fallen*

40. "Alas, Fortúne, if that my life in joy  
 Displeas•d had unto thy foul envy  
 Why hadst thou not my father, king of Troy,  
 Bereft the life or do my brethren die,<sup>13</sup>  
 Or slain myself that thus complain and cry?--

*Taken / caused my*

---

<sup>13</sup> 40:1-7: "Fortune, if you were foully envious of my joyous life, why didn't you kill my father, the King of Troy, or cause the death of my brothers, or kill me who complain like this ?-- I who encumber the world, good for nothing, constantly dying but never expiring"

I, cumber-world, that may of nothing serve,  
But ever die and never fully starve.

*world encumbrance  
constantly die / expire*

41. "If that Criseyde alon• were me left,  
Not rought• I whither thou would'st me steer;  
And her, alas, then hast thou me bereft.  
But evermore, lo, this is thy mannér,  
To rieve a wight that most is to him dear,  
To prove in that thy gereful violence.  
Thus am I lost, there helpeth no defence.

*I would not reck (care)  
And of her  
custom  
deprive a person of what is  
changeable*

42. "O very Lord! O Love, O God! alas!  
That knowest best mine heart and all my thought,  
What shall my sorrowful life do in this case  
If I forego what I so dear have bought?  
Since you Criseyde and me have fully brought  
Into your grace, and both our heart•s sealed,  
How may you suffer, alas! it be repealed? <sup>14</sup>

*you = god of love*

43. "What I may do I shall, while I may dure  
On live, in torment and in cruel pain;  
This infortúne and this disáventúre  
Alone as I was born I will complain,  
Ne never will I see it shine or rain,  
But end I will, as Oedipe I darknéss,  
My woeful life, and dien in distress.

*last  
Alive*

44. "O weary ghost that errest to and fro,  
Why n'ilt thou flien out of the woefullest  
Body that ever might on ground• go?  
O soul•! Lurking in this woeful nest,  
Fly forth anon, and do mine heart to burst,  
And follow Cressida thy lady dear;  
Thy right place is no longer to be here.

*soul t. wanders*

*cause my heart  
thy = soul*

45. "O woful eyen two! Since your disport  
Was all to see Criseyd•'s eyen bright,

*delight*

---

<sup>14</sup> 42.7: "Alas ! How can you allow it [the seal of our union] to be broken?"

What shall you do, but for my díscomfort  
 Standen for naught and weepen out your sight,  
 Since she is quenched that wont was you to light?  
 In vain from this forth have I eyen tway  
 Y-form•d, since your virtue is away.

*Count for*  
*in vain*  
*your power, value*

46. "O my Criseyde! O lady sovereign!  
 Of thilk• sorrowful soul• that thus crieth,  
 Who shall now given comfort to thy pain?  
 Alas! no wight. But when mine heart• dieth,  
 My spirit, which that so unto you hieth,  
 Receive in gree, for that shall aye you serve;  
 Forthy, no force is though the body starve.

*nobody*  
*hastens*  
*favorably / will always*  
*Therefore, no matter / die*

47. "O you lovers! that high upon the wheel  
 Be set of Fortune, in good áventure,  
 God lev• that you ay find love of steel,  
 And long• may your life in joy endure;<sup>15</sup>  
 But when you comen by my sepulture,  
 Remember that your fellow resteth there,  
 For I loved eke; though I unworthy were.

*position*  
*G. grant you may always*  
*my grave*  
*I too was a lover*

48. "O old, unwholesome, and misliv•d man,  
 Calchas I mean! Alas! what ail•d thee  
 To be a Greek since thou art born Trojan?  
 O Calchas! Which that wilt my ban• be,  
 In cursed tim• wast thou born for me.  
 As would• blissful Jov• for his joy  
 That I thee had where that I would in Troy.”<sup>16</sup>

*evil-living*  
*my death*

49. A thousand sigh•s hotter than the glead  
 Out of his breast each after other went,  
 Meddled with 'plaint•s new, his woe to feed,  
 For which his woeful tear•s never stent;  
 And, shortly, so his pain•s him to-rent,  
 He wax'd so mate that joy• nor penánce

*hot coal*  
*Mingled*  
*never stopped*  
*tore him*  
*grew so depressed*

<sup>15</sup> 47.1.4: "O, you lovers who are sitting on the top of the Wheel of Fortune, god grant that you may always find love as strong as steel, and may your lives be joyful."

<sup>16</sup> 48.6-7: "I wish to God I had you where I want you in Troy."

He feeleth none, but lieth in a trance.

50. Pandárus, which that in the parliament  
Had heard what every lord and burgess said,  
And how full granted was by one assent  
For Antenor to yelden out Criseyde,  
Gan well nigh wood out of his wit to braid,  
So that for woe he n'ist• what he meant,  
But in a rage to Troilus he went.

*citizen*

*nearly mad / to go  
didn't know*

51. A certain knight that for the tim• kept  
The chamber door undid it him anon,  
And Pandarus full tenderly that wept,  
Into the dark• chamber, still as stone,  
Toward the bed gan softly for to gon,  
So cónfused that he n'ist• what to say;  
For very woe his wit was nigh away.

*for him*

*to go*

*his mind was nearly gone*

52. And with his cheer and looking all to-torn  
For woe of this, and with his arm•s fold,  
He stood this woeful Troilus beforne,  
And on his piteous face he gan behold;  
But Lord! so often gan his heart to cold,  
Seeing his friend in woe, whose heaviness  
His heart• slew, as thought him, for distress.

*behavior & appearance*

*to (grow) cold*

53. This woeful wight, this Troilus, that felt  
His friend Pandáre y-comen him to see,  
Gan as the snow against the sun to melt.  
For which this woeful Pándare of pity  
Gan for to weep as tenderly as he;  
And speech•less thus been these ilk• tway,  
That neither might for sorrow one word say.

*same two*

54. But at the last this woeful Troilus,  
Nigh dead for smart, gan bursten out to roar,  
And with a sorrowful noise he said• thus  
Among his sobb•s and his sigh•s sore:  
"Lo! Pándare, I am dead, withouten more;  
Hast thou not heard at parliament," he said,  
"For Antenor how lost is my Criseyde?"

*nearly d. of pain*



55. This Pandarus, full dead and pale of hue,  
 Full piteously answered and said: "Yes,  
 As wisly were it false as it is true,  
 That I have heard, and wot all how it is.  
 O mercy, God, who would have trow•d this?  
 Who would have wend that in so little a throw  
 Fortune our joy• would have overthrow?

*indeed, would that it were  
 & I know how  
 believed  
 thought / time*

56. "For in this world there is no crëature  
 As to my doom, that ever saw ruin  
 Stranger than this through cas or áventure.  
 But who may all eschew or all divine?  
 Such is this world; for-thy I thus define:  
 Ne trust no wight to finden in Fortúne  
 Ay property; her gift•s been commúne.<sup>17</sup>

*As I think  
 accident or chance  
 escape or foresee  
 so I conclude*

57. "But tell me this, why art thou now so mad  
 To sorrow thus? Why liest thou in this wise,  
 Since thy desire all wholly hast thou had,  
 So that by right it ought enough suffice?  
 But I, that never felt in my service  
 A friendly cheer or looking of an eye,  
 Let me thus weep and wail until I die.

*service of love  
 greeting*

58. "And over all this, as thou well wost thyself,  
 This town is full of ladies all about,  
 And, to my doom•, fairer than such twelve  
 As e'er she was shall I find in some rout,<sup>18</sup>  
 Yea, one or two, withouten any doubt.  
 For-thy be glad, mine own• dear• brother:  
 If she be lost, we shall recover another.

*you know  
 in my judgement  
 group*

*Therefore*

---

<sup>17</sup> 56: 6-7: *Property* means something like "something *proper* to oneself", special favors. Her "gifts" are common, i.e. they are for everyone, no individual has ownership rights.

<sup>18</sup> 58.3-5: Either "twelve times as beautiful" or "more beautiful than twelve such women as ever Criseyde was". P. says that there are lots of beautiful women in Troy and that he can find at least one or two of them in some group.

59. "What, God forbid, alway that each pleasance  
 In one thing were, and in none other wight ! <sup>19</sup>  
 If one can sing, another can well dance;  
 If this be goodly, she is glad and light;  
 And this is fair, and that can good aright.  
 Each for his virtue holden is for dear,  
 Both heroner and falcon of rivere.

*this (one) / she = that one  
 beautiful / has good sense  
 is valued  
 2 kinds of falcon*

60. "And eke, as writ Zanzis that was full wise, <sup>20</sup>  
 The new• love out-chaseth oft the old,  
 And upon new• case lies new advice.  
 Think eke, thyself to saven thou art hold.  
 Such fire by process shall of kind• cold;  
 For since it is but casual pleasance,  
 Some case shall put it out of remembrance.

*need new plans  
 bound  
 in time will cool naturally  
 chance pleasure  
 Some accident*

61. "For all so sure as day comes after night,  
 The new• love, labor, or other woe,  
 Or els• seldom seeing of a wight  
 Do old affections all over go.  
 And, for thy part, thou shalt have one of tho'  
 T'abridge• with thy bitter pain•s smart:  
 Absence of her shall drive her out of heart."

*a person  
 supercede*

*to ease*

62. These word•s said he for the non•s all  
 To help his friend, lest he for sorrow died,  
 For doubt•less to do his woe to fall  
 He raught• not what unthrift that he said;  
 But Troilus, that nigh for sorrow died,  
 Took little heed of all that e'er he meant;  
 One ear it heard, at t' other out it went.

*for the occasion*

*to lessen his pain  
 didn't care what nonsense  
 nearly*

63. But at the last he answered, and said: "Friend,  
 This leech•craft, or heal•d thus to be  
 Were well fitting if that I were a fiend  
 To treason her that true is unto me;

*this kind of medicine  
 devil  
 To betray*

---

<sup>19</sup> 59.1-2: "God forbid that every pleasure should be concentrated on one object and exclude all others".

<sup>20</sup> 60.1: Zanzis remains unidentified and possibly imaginary.

I pray God never let this counsel thee,  
But do me rather starve anon right here  
Ere I thus do as thou me wouldest lere.<sup>21</sup>

*thee (vb) = succeed  
But make me die  
advise*

64. "She that I serve i-wis, whatso thou say,  
To whom my heart enhabit is by right,  
Shall have me wholly hers till that I die;  
For, Pandarus, since I have truth her hight  
I will not be untru• for no wight,  
But as her man I will ay live and starve,  
And never will no other creature serve.

*indeed, whatever  
devoted*

*promised  
for nobody  
always live & die*

65. "And where thou say'st thou shalt as fair y-find  
As she, let be. Make no comparison  
To creature y-form•d here by kind.  
O lev• Pándare, in conclusion,  
I will not be of thine opinïon  
Touching all this, for which I thee beseech  
So hold thy peace; thou slay'st me with thy speech.

*don't bother  
by nature  
O dear P.*

66. "Thou biddest me I should• love another  
All freshly new, and let Criseyd• go:  
It lies not in my power, lev• brother,  
And though I might, yet would I not do so:  
But canst thou playen racket to and fro,  
Nettle in, dock out, now this, now that, Pandáre? <sup>22</sup>  
Now foul fall her that for thy woe hath care!

67. "Thou farest eke by me, thou Pandarus,  
As he that when a wight is woe-begone,  
Comes to him apace and says right thus:  
'Think not on smart and thou shalt feel• none.'  
Thou must me first transmute into a stone,  
And rieve me of my passion•s all,  
Ere thou so lightly do my woe to fall.

*a person  
about pain  
relieve me  
cause my woe to f.*

---

<sup>21</sup> 63.7: "Before I do as you would advise me."

<sup>22</sup> 66.6: "Nettle in, dock out" are said to have been the words of a charm for nettle stings.

66.7: "Bad luck to the woman who pities your love-pain."

68. "The death may well out of my breast depart  
 The life, so long• may this sorrow mine,  
 But from my soul• shall Criseyd•'s dart  
 Out nevermore, but down with Proserpine,  
 When I am dead, I will go won in pain,  
 And there I will eternally complain  
 My woe, and how that twinn•d be we twain.

*cut  
 (under)mine  
 arrow  
 Queen of the underworld  
 dwell in  
 parted are we two*

69. "Thou hast here made an argument, for fine,  
 How that it should a less• pain• be  
 Criseyd• to for-go for she was mine,<sup>23</sup>  
 And live in ease and in felicity.  
 Why gabbest thou, that saidest thus to me,  
 That him is worse that is from weal y-throw  
 Than had he erst none of that weal y-know?

*in short  
  
 prosperity  
 Than if he'd never known*

70. "But tell me now, since that thee think'th so light  
 To changen so in love ay to and fro,  
 Why hast thou not done busily thy might  
 To changen her that doth thee all thy woe?  
 Why n'ilt thou let her from thine heart• go?  
 Why n'ilt thou love another lady sweet  
 That may thine heart• setten in quiet?

*it seems so easy  
  
 causes you*

71. "If thou hast had in love ay yet mischance,  
 And canst it not out of thine heart• drive,  
 I, that have lived in lust and in pleasance  
 With her as much as creäture alive,  
 How should I that forget, and that so blive?  
 Oh, where hast thou been hid so long in mew,  
 That canst so well and formally argue?

*always bad luck  
  
 so quickly  
 cage*

72. "Nay, nay, God wot, nought worth is all thy rede,  
 For which, for what ever may befall,  
 Withouten word•s more, I will be dead.  
 O Death, that ender art of sorrows all,  
 Come now, since I so oft after thee call;

*God knows / advice  
  
 for you*

---

<sup>23</sup> 69.3: *for she was mine*: "because I had enjoyed her love"

For sely is that death, sooth for to sayn,  
That, oft y-clep•d, comes and endeth pain.

*happy  
called*

73. "Well wot I, while my life was in quiet,  
Ere Thou me slew I would have given hire;  
But now thy coming is to me so sweet,  
That in this world I nothing so desire.  
O Death, since with this sorrow I am afire,  
Thou either do me anon in tear•s drench,  
Or with thy cold• stroke my heat• quench.

*well I know  
Thou = Death; ransom*

*promptly / drown*

74. "Since that thou slayest so fele in sundry wyse  
Against their will, unpray•d, day and night,  
Do me, at my request•, this service:  
Deliver now the world (so dost thou right)  
Of me that am the woefullest• wight  
That ever was; for time is that I starve,  
Since in this world of right naught may I serve."

*so many in different ways  
unasked*

*Rid the world  
person  
time for me to die  
I'm of no use*

75. This Troilus in tears gan to distill,  
As liquor out of álembic full fast,  
And Pandarus gan hold his tongu• still,  
And to the ground his eyen down he cast,  
But natheless thus thought he at the last:  
"What! pardee! rather than my fellow die,  
Yet shall I somewhat more unto him say."

*distilling vessel*

*by God*

76. And said•: "Friend, since thou hast such distress,  
And since thou list mine arguments to blame,  
Why wilt thou not thyself help do redress,  
And with thy manhood letten all this grame?  
Go ravish her, ne canst thou not? For shame!  
And either let her out of town• fare,  
Or hold her still and leave thy nice fare.

*choose to  
prevent this sorrow  
Go & abduct her  
go  
& stop complaining*

77. "Art thou in Troy and hast no hardiment  
To take a woman which that loveth thee  
And would herselfen be of thine assent?  
Now is not this a nic• vanity?  
Rise up anon, and let this weeping be  
And kith thou art a man, for in this hour

*no courage  
agree with you  
utter foolishness*

*And show*

I will be dead or she shall bleven our."

*remain ours*

78. To this him answered Troilus full soft,  
And said: "I-wis, my lev• brother dear!  
All this have I myself yet thought full oft,  
And mor• things than thou devisest here,  
But why this thing is left thou shalt well hear,  
And when thou hast me given audience  
Therafter may'st thou tell all thy sentence.

*Indeed, my beloved*

*left (undone)  
listened  
opinion*

79. "First, since -- thou wost -- this town has all this war  
For ravishing of women so by might,  
It should• not be suffered me to err,  
As it stands now, nor do so great unright;  
I should have also blame of every wight  
My father's grant if that I so withstood,  
Since she is 'chang•d for the town•'s good.

*you know  
abducting w. by force  
I won't be allowed to*

*from everybody*

*exchanged*

80. "I have eke thought, so it were her assent,  
To ask her of my father of his grace;  
Then think I this were her accus•ment,  
Since well I wot I may her not purchase,  
For since my father in so high a place  
As parliament has her exchange ensealed,  
He n'ill for me his letter be repealed.

*if she agreed  
as a favor*

*won't retract his word*

81. "Yet dread I most her heart• to perturb  
With violence, if I do such a game;  
For if I would it openly disturb,  
It must be a dis-slander to her name;  
And me were lever die than her defame;  
As n'ould• God, but if that I should have  
Her honour lever than my life to save.<sup>24</sup>

*I'd rather  
God forbid  
dearer*

82. "Thus am I lost, for aught that I can see,  
For certain is, that since I am her knight,  
I must her honour lever have than me  
In every case, as lover ought of right.

*dearer than myself*

---

<sup>24</sup> 81.6-7: "God forbid that I should not hold her honor more precious than my life."

Thus am I with desire and reason twight:  
 Desire for to disturben her me reddeth,  
 And reason n'ill not; so mine heart• dreadeth."

*torn  
 to prevent her (going) / urges  
 says No / suffers*

83. Thus weeping that he could• never cease,  
 He said: "Alas, how shall I, wretch•, fare?  
 For well feel I always my love increase,  
 And hope is less and less always, Pandáre.  
 Increasesen eke the causes of my care,  
 So, welaway ! why n'ill my heart• burst?  
 For, as in love, there is but little rest."

*Alas! why won't*

84. Pandárus answered: "Friend, thou may'st, for me,  
 Do as thee list; but, had I it so hot  
 And thine estate, she should• go with me  
 Though all this town cried on this thing by note.  
 I would not set at all that noise a groat,  
 For when men have well cried, then will they rowen.  
 A wonder lasts but nine nights ne'er in town.

*Do as you like  
 And your rank  
 shouted it down  
 care a penny  
 whisper*

85. "Divin• not in reason ay so deep  
 Nor courteously, but help thyself anon.  
 Bet' is that other than thyselfen weep,  
 And namely, since you two be all• one.  
 Rise up, for, by my head, she shall not gon.  
 And rather be in blame a little found  
 Than starve here as a gnat, withouten wound.

*Don't always think so deeply  
 Nor so scrupulously  
 Better  
 And especially  
 go  
 Than die*

86. "It is no shame unto you, nor no vice,  
 Her to withholden that you lov• most.  
 Paraunter she might holden thee for nice  
 To let her go thus to the Greek•s' host.  
 Think eke that Fortune, as thyself well wost,  
 Helpeth a hardy man to his emprise,<sup>25</sup>  
 And waiveth wretches for their cowardice.

*Perhaps / think you stupid  
 well know  
 enterprise  
 abandons*

87. "And though thy lady would a little grieve,  
 Thou shalt thy peace full well hereafter make.

---

<sup>25</sup> 86.5-6: "Fortune favors the brave, as you yourself know well."

But as for me, certáin, I cannot 'lieve  
 That she would it as now for evil take;  
 Why should•, then, of fear thine heart• quake?  
 Think eke how Paris hath (that is thy brother)  
 A love, and why shalt thou not have another?

*believe  
 take it badly*

*A lover (Helen)*

88. "And, Troilus, one thing I dare thee swear,  
 That if Criseyd•, which that is thy lief,  
 Now loveth thee as well as thou dost her,  
 God help me so, she will not take a-grief,  
 Though thou do boote anon in this mischíef,  
 And if she willeth from thee for to pass,  
 Then is she false; so love her well the less.

*beloved*

*amiss  
 find a cure  
 wishes*

89. "For-thy take heart and think right as a knight.  
 Through love is broken alday every law  
 Kith now somewhat thy courage and thy might,  
 Have mercy on thyself for any awe;  
 Let not this wretched woe thine heart• gnaw,  
 But manly set the world on six and seven,  
 And if thou die a martyr, go to heaven!

*Therefore*

*daily  
 Show  
 at any rate (?)*

*at odds*

90. "I will myself be with thee at this deed,<sup>26</sup>  
 Though I and all my kin upon a stound  
 Shall in a street, as dogg•s, lien dead  
 Through-girt with many a wide and bloody wound.  
 In every case I will a friend be found.  
 And if thee list here starven as a wretch,  
 Adieu, the devil speed him that it recks!"

*in one hour*

*Run through*

*If you choose to die here*

91. This Troilus gan with those words to quicken,  
 And said•: "Friend, grammércy, I assent;  
 But certainly thou may'st not me so pricken,<sup>27</sup>

*recover*

*many thanks  
 goad*

---

<sup>26</sup> 90: "I will be beside you in this even if I and my kindred should be killed in an hour in the streets like dogs torn with many wide bloody wounds. If you want to stay and die like a wretch, goodbye, and the devil take anyone who cares."

<sup>27</sup> 91.3-7: "But certainly you can't goad me, and no amount of tormenting pain can get me (to do that): in short, I will not agree to abduct her unless she herself wants it, even if that should kill me."



Nor pain• none ne may me so tormént,  
 That for no case it is not mine intent,  
 At short• word•s, though I dien should,  
 To ravish her, but-if herself it would."

*In short  
 To abduct h. / unless*

92. "Why, so I meant," quod Pandare, "all this day.  
 But tell me then, hast thou her well assayed,  
 That sorrowest thus?" And he him answered "Nay."  
 "Whereof art thou," quod Pandare, "then amayed,  
 --That know'st not that she will be evil apaid--  
 To ravish her, since thou hast not been there,  
 But-if that Jov• told it in thine ear?"

*all this time  
 asked her  
 afraid  
 displeased  
 To carry her off  
 Unless*

93. "For-thy rise up, as nought ne were, anon,<sup>28</sup>  
 And wash thy face, and to the king thou wend,  
 For he may wonder whither thou art gone.  
 Thou must with wisdom him and others blend,  
 Or, upon case, he may after thee send  
 Ere thou be 'ware. And shortly, brother dear,  
 Be glad, and let me work in this mattér,

*Therefore / at once  
 go  
 deceive  
 perhaps  
 Before you're aware*

94. "For I shall shape it so that sikerly  
 Thou shalt this night, some time, in some mannér,  
 Come spoken with thy lady privily;  
 And by her word•s eke and by her cheer  
 Thou shalt full soon perceiv• and well hear  
 All her intent, and in this case the best;  
 And farewell now, for in this point I rest."

*fix it / certainly*

95. The swift• Fame, the which that fals• things  
 Equally reporteth like things true,  
 Was throughout Troy y-fled with prest• wings  
 From man to man, and made this tale all new,  
 How Calchas' daughter with her bright• hue,  
 At parliament, withouten word•s more,  
 Y-granted was in 'change for Antenor.

*Rumor  
 fast  
 exchange*

96. The which• tale anon right as Criseyde

*As soon as C*

---

<sup>28</sup> 93.1: "Therefore get up at once ( *anon* ) as if nothing were the matter and ..."

Had heard, she, which that of her father raught  
 (As in this case) right naught, nor when he died,  
 Full busily to Jupiter besought  
 'Give him mischanc• that this treaty brought':  
 But, shortly, lest these tal•s sooth• were,  
 She durst at no wight asken it for fear.

*cared*  
*absolutely nothing*  
*prayed*  
*brought (about)*  
*were true*  
*She dared ask no one*

97. As she that had her heart and all her mind  
 On Troilus y-set so wonder fast,  
 That all this world ne might her love unbind,  
 Nor Troilus out of her heart• cast,  
 She would be his while that her life may last;  
 And she thus burneth both in love and dread  
 So that she n'ist• what was best to redde.

*didn't know / to do*

98. But as men see in town and all about,  
 That women usen friend•s to visit;  
 So to Criseyde of women came a rout  
 For piteous joy, and wenden her delight,  
 And with their tal•s (dear enough a mite)  
 These women, which that in the city dwell,  
 They set them down, and said as I shall tell.

*a crowd*  
*thought to please her*  
*chatter / a cent*

99. Quod first that one: "I am glad truly  
 Because of you, that shall your father see."  
 Another said: "I-wis so am not I,  
 For all too little has she with us be."  
 Quod then the third: "I hope i-wis that she  
 Shall bringen us the peace on every side,  
 That when she goes, Almighty God her guide!"

*Indeed*

100. Those word•s and those womanish• things  
 She heard them right as though she thenc• were,  
 For God it wot, her heart on other thing is.  
 Although the body sat among them there,  
 Her advertence is always els•where  
 For Troilus full fast her soul• sought ;  
 Withouten word on him she always thought.

*Her attention*

101. These women that thus wenden her to please  
 Abouten naught gan all their tal•s spend;

*hoped to*  
*talked about nothing*

Such vanity ne can do her no ease,  
 As she that all this mean•whil• brend  
 Of other passïon than that they wend,  
 So that she felt almost her heart• die  
 For woe, and weary of that company.

*burned  
 With o. p. / thought*

102 For which no longer might• she restrain  
 Her tear•s, they began so up to well,  
 That gav• sign•s of her bitter pain  
 In which her spirit was and must• dwell,  
 Remembering her, from heaven unto which hell  
 She fallen was, since she forgoes the sight  
 Of Troilus, and sorrowfully she sighed.

103. And thilk• fool•s sitting her about  
 Wenden that she had wept and sigh•d sore  
 Because that she should out of the rout  
 Departen, and play never with them more;  
 And they that hadd• knowen her of yore  
 Saw her so weep, and thought it was kindnéss,  
 And each of them wept eke for her distress.

*And those same f.  
 Thought  
 the group  
 never socialize  
 affection*

104. And busily they 'gannen her comfórt  
 On things, God wot on which she little thought,  
 And with their tal•s wenden her disport,  
 And to be glad they often her besought;  
 But such an ease therewith they in her wrought,  
 Right as a man is eas•d for to feel  
 For ache of head, to claw him on his heel.<sup>29</sup>

*hoped to cheer her up*

105. But after all this nic• vanity  
 They took their leave, and home they wenten all;  
 Criseyd•, full of sorrowful pity,  
 Into her chamber went out of the hall,  
 And on her bed she gan for dead to fall,  
 In purpose never thenc• for to rise,  
 And thus she wrought, as I shall you devise.

*silly  
 as if dead  
 she did / describe*

---

<sup>29</sup> 104.5-7: "They give her as much relief as a man with a headache gets from scratching his heel."

106. Her ounded hair, that sunnish was of hue,  
 She rent, and eke her fingers long and small  
 She wrung full oft, and bade God on her rue,  
 And with the death to do bote on her bale;  
 Her hu•, whilom bright, that then was pale,  
 Bore witness of her woe and her constraint,  
 And thus she spoke, sobbing in her complaint:

*wavy / sunlike / color  
 She tore  
 take pity  
 to cure her trouble  
 Her color, formerly  
 distress*

107. "Alas! " quod she, "out of this regiōn  
 I, woeful wretch and infortún•d wight,  
 And born in cursed constellatīōn,  
 Must go, and thus departen from my knight!  
 Woe worth, alas! that ilk• day•'s light  
 On which I saw him first with eyen twain  
 That causeth me, and I him, all this pain!"

*unfortunate creature*

*Curse!  
 two eyes*

108. Therewith the tear•s from her eyen two  
 Down fell as showers in Aperil full swithe,  
 Her whit• breast she beat, and for the woe,  
 After the death she cried a thousand sithes  
 Since he that wont her woe was for to lithe  
 She must forego, for which disáventure  
 She held herself a forelost crëatúre.

*v. copiously*

*For death / times  
 who used to soothe*

109. She said; "How shall he do and I also!  
 How should I live if that I from him twin!  
 O dear• heart• eke, that I love so,  
 Who shall that sorrow slay that you be in?  
 O Calchas, father! Thine be all this sin!  
 O mother mine, that clep•d were Argive,  
 Woe worth that day that thou me bore alive!

*part*

*w. called A.  
 Curse the day!*

110. "To what fine should I live and sorrow thus?  
 How should a fish withouten water dure?  
 What is Criseyd• worth from Troilus?  
 How should a plant or other crëatúre  
 Liven without its kindly nuritúre?  
 For which full oft a byword here I say,  
 That 'root•less must green• soon• die.'

*To what purpose  
 live  
 (separated) from*

*natural nourishment  
 a common proverb*

111. "I shall do thus: since neither sword nor dart

*spear*

Dare I none handle for the cruelty,  
 That ilk• day that I from him depart,  
 If sorrow of that will not my ban• be,  
 Then shall no meat or drink• come in me  
 Till I my soul out of my breast unsheath,  
 And thus myselfen would I do to death.

*That same  
 my death*

112. ?And, Troilus, my cloth•s everyone<sup>30</sup>  
 Shall black• be in token, heart• sweet,  
 That I am as out of this world agone,  
 That wont was you to setten in quiet;  
 And of mine order, ay till death me meet,  
 The óbservances ever, in your absénce,  
 Shall sorrow be, complaint, and abstinence.

*all my clothes  
 (As into a convent)  
 ( I ) Who used to  
 religious order, always*

113. “Mine heart and eke the woeful ghost therein  
 Bequeath I with your spirit to complain  
 Eternally, for they shall never twin;  
 For though in earth• twinn•d be we twain  
 Yet in the field of pity out of pain  
 That hight Elysium, shall we be y-fere  
 As Orpheus and Eurydice his fere.

*spirit  
 part  
 we two are parted  
 called E. / together  
 his partner*

114. Thus, heart• mine! for Antenor, alas!  
 I soon• shall be 'chang•d, as I ween;  
 But how shall you do in this woeful case?  
 How shall your tender heart• thus sustain?  
 But, heart• mine! forget this sorrow and teen,  
 And me also; for, soothly for to say,  
 So you well fare, I reck not for to die.”

*I guess  
 vexation  
 truly  
 Provided you fare well*

115. How might it e'er y-read been or y-sung  
 The 'plaint•s that she made in her distress?  
 I n'ot, but as for me, my little tongue,  
 If I describen would her heaviness,

*I don't know / feeble words*

---

<sup>30</sup> 112: Criseyde vows to dress in black like a nun in token that she who used to give him delight has left behind the pleasures of the world, and from this point on till her death will observe the rules of her "monastic order": sorrow, complaint, sexual abstinence. This, presumably, will be during the hunger strike that she has vowed in the preceding stanza, unless sorrow kills her first.

It should• make her sorrow seem• less  
 Than that it was, and childishly deface  
 Her high complaint, and therefore I it pass.

116. Pandár•, which that sent from Troilus  
 Was to Criseyde, as you have heard devise,  
 That for the best it was accorded thus,  
 And he full glad to do him that service,  
 Unto Criseyd• in full secret wise  
 There as she lay in torment and in rage  
 Came her to tell all wholly his messáge;

*described  
 in the public interest*

117. And found that she herselfen gan to treat  
 Full piteously, for with her salt• tears  
 Her breast, her face y-bath•d was full wet,  
 The mighty tresses of her sunnish hairs  
 Unbraided hangen all about her ears,  
 Which gave him very signal of martyr  
 Of death, which her heart• gan desire.

*behave*

*signs of martyr's ...  
 ... death*

118. When she him saw she gan for sorrow anon  
 Her teary face betwixt her arm•s hide,  
 For which this Pandare is so woe-begone  
 That in the house he might unn•the abide,  
 As he that sorrow felt on every side,  
 For if Criseyde had erst complain•d sore  
 Then gan she 'plain a thousand tim•s more:

*scarcely*

119. And in her aspre 'plaint• thus she said:  
 "Pandár• first of joy•s more than two  
 Was caus•, causing first to me Criseyde,  
 That now transmuted be in cruel woe.  
 Whe'r shall I say to you welcome or no,  
 That alderfirst me brought unto service  
 Of love, alas! that endeth in such wise?

*bitter complaint  
 my uncle*

*Whether  
 in first place*

120. "Endeth then love in woe? Yea, or man lies,  
 And every worldly bliss, as thinketh me;  
 The end of bliss ay sorrow occupies,  
 And who that troweth not that it so be,  
 Let him upon me, woeful wretch, y-see,

*always  
 doesn't believe  
 look*

That hate myself, and ay my birth accurse,  
Feeling always from woe I go to worse.

121. "Whoso sees me, sees sorrow all at once,  
Pain, torment, woe, and 'plaint, and eke distress;  
Out of my woeful body harm there none is,  
As langour, anguish, cruel bitterness,  
Annoy, smart, dread, fury, and eke sickness:  
I trow i-wis from heaven tear•s rain  
For pity of my aspre and cruel pain."

*Outside of*

*I trow  
bitter*

122. "O thou my niec•, full of discomfort,"<sup>31</sup>  
Quod Pandarus, "what thinkest thou to do?  
Why n' ast thou to thyselfen some resport?  
Why wilt thou thus thyself, alas! fordo?  
Leave all this work, and take now heed• to  
What I shall say, and hark of good intent  
This message which thy Troilus thee sent."

*Why haven't you s. regard  
destroy*

*listen*

123. Turned her then Criseyde, a woe making  
So great, that it a death was for to see:  
"Alas!" quod she, "what word•s may you bring,  
What will my dear heart senden unto me,  
Which that I dread• never more to see?  
Will he have 'plaint or tear•s ere I wend?  
I have enough if he thereafter send."<sup>32</sup>

*Whom  
before I go*

124. She was right such (to see in her viságe)  
As is that wight that men on bier• bind,  
Her fac•, like of paradise th'imáge,  
Was all y-chang•d in another kind;  
The play, the laughter men were wont to find  
In her, and eke her joy•s every one,  
Been fled; and thus lies now Criseyde alone.

*(to judge by her looks)  
tie on a hearse*

*used to find*

125. About her eyen two a purple ring

---

<sup>31</sup> 122.1: *niece*: most MSS have *suster*, sister. .7: *this message*: many mss omit *message*. ...

<sup>32</sup> 123.7: "I have enough (tears) for both of us if he wants to send for them."

Bitrent in soothfast tokening of her pain,  
 That to behold it was a deadly thing,  
 For which Pandár• might• not restrain  
 The tear•s from his eyen for to rain;  
 But natheless, as he best might, he said,  
 From Troilus these words unto Criseyde:

*Encircled as true sign*

126. "Lo, niece, I trow that you have heard all how  
 The king, with other lord•s, for the best  
 Hath made exchange of Antenor and you  
 That cause is of this sorrow and unrest,  
 But how this case doth Troilus molest  
 That may no earthly mann•'s tongu• say;  
 For very woe his wit is all away.

*Distresses T.*

*out of his wits*

127. "For which we have so sorrowed, he and I,  
 That unto little both it had us slaw;  
 But through my counsel this day finally  
 He somewhat is from weeping now withdraw:  
 It seemeth me that he desireth faw  
 With you to be all night for to devise  
 Remedy in this, if there were any wise.

*it has almost slain*

*eagerly  
 to plan  
 way*

128. "This, short and plain, th'effect of my messáge,  
 As farforth as my wit may comprehend;  
 For you that be of torment in such rage,  
 May to no long prológue as now entend;  
 And hereupon you may an answer send.  
 And for the love of God, my niec• dear,  
 So leave this woe ere Troilus be here."

*storm of pain  
 listen*

*Before T. comes*

129. "Great is my woe," quod she, and sigh•d sore,  
 As she that feeleth deadly sharp distress,  
 "But yet to me his sorrow is much more,  
 That love him bet' than he himself, I guess.  
 Alas! for me hath he such heaviness?  
 Can he for me so piteously complain?  
 I-wis, this sorrow doubles all my pain.

*better*

*Indeed*

130. "Grievous to me, God wot, it is to twin,"  
 Quod she, "but yet it harder is to me

*G. knows / to part*



To see that sorrow which that he is in,  
 For well wot I it will my ban• be,  
 And die I will in certain then," quod she.  
 "But bid him come ere Death, that thus me threateth,  
 Drive out that ghost which in mine heart• beateth."

*I know / be my death*

*that life*

131. These word•s said, she on her arm•s two  
 Fell gruf, and gan to weepen piteously.  
 Quod Pandarus: "Alas! why do you so,  
 Since you well wot the time is fast• by  
 That he shall come? Arise up hastily,  
 That he you not be-weep•d thus ne find,  
 But you will have him wood out of his mind."<sup>33</sup>

*T.w. (having been) said  
 face down*

*know / is near*

*tear-stained  
 Unless / mad*

132. "For, wist he that you fared in this mannér,  
 He would himselfen slay; and if I wend  
 To have this fare, he should• not come here  
 For all the good that Priam may despend."<sup>34</sup>  
 For to what fine he would anon pretend,  
 That know I well, and for-thy yet I say,  
 So leave this sorrow, or platly he will die.

*If he knew  
 I thought  
 behavior*

*therefore  
 plainly*

133. And shapeth you his sorrow for t' abridge  
 And not increas•, lev• niec• sweet:  
 Be rather to him cause of flat than edge,<sup>35</sup>  
 And with some wisdom, you his sorrows bet.  
 What helpeth it to weepen full a street,  
 Or though you both in salt• tear•s dreynt?  
 Bet' is a time of cure ay than of 'plaint.

*take steps; lessen  
 dear  
 healing than wounding  
 make better  
 fill a street with  
 drowned  
 Better / always / complaint*

134. "I mean• thus: when I him hither bring,  
 Since you be wise, and both of one assent,

*one mind*

---

<sup>33</sup> 131.7: "Unless you want to drive him mad out of his mind."

<sup>34</sup> 132: 2-5: "If I thought you would behave like this I would not have him come here for all the wealth of Priam, because he would aim (*pretend*) at that end (*fine*)' i.e. suicide. That I do know."

<sup>35</sup> 133.3: In the Squire's Tale there is a magic sword whose flat heals the wounds inflicted by the edge. Achilles had a similarly gifted spear.

So shapeth how to disturb your going  
 Or come again soon after you be went;  
 Women be wise in short avis•ment.  
 And let's see how your wit shall now avail  
 And what that I may help it shall not fail."

*to prevent  
 return ...after your departure  
 fast decisions*

135. "Go," quod Criseyde, "and, uncle, truly  
 I shall do all my might me to restrain  
 From weeping in his sight, and busily  
 Him for to glad I shall do all my pain,  
 And in mine heart• seeken every vein;  
 If to this sore there may be founden salve  
 It shall not lacken, certain, on my half.'<sup>36</sup>

*to cheer / do my best  
 search  
 on my part*

136. Goes Pandarus, and Troilus he sought  
 Till in a temple he found him all alone,  
 As he that of his life no longer raught,  
 But to the piteous godd•s everyone  
 Full tenderly he prayed and made his moan,  
 To do him soon out of this world to pace,  
 For well he thought there was no other grace.

*cared  
 merciful gods  
 To make him / to pass*

137. And shortly, all the sooth• for to say,  
 He was so fallen in despair that day,  
 That utterly he shope him for to die;  
 For right thus was his argument alway:  
 He said he n'as but lorn•, welaway!  
 "For all that comes, comes by necessity:  
 Thus to be lorn it is my destiny."<sup>37</sup>

*to tell truth  
 prepared  
 was as good as lost, alas  
 lost*

138. "For certainly, this wot I well," he said,

*know I*

---

<sup>36</sup> 135.5-7: Modern punctuation cannot accommodate the flexibility of the unpunctuated syntax of the manuscripts which seems to allow line 6 (*If ...*) to go both with 5 and with 7.

<sup>37</sup> 137.6-7: These two lines sum up the long involved scholastic argument about Predestination in the stanzas that follow (missing in some MSS). It is, in form and content, a medieval Christian scholar's argument rather than the thinking of a pagan lover in distress. It derives from Boethius's *Consolations of Philosophy* but without Boethius's argument in favor of human free will.

“That foresight of divin• purveyance  
 Hath always seen me to forego Criseyde,  
 Since God sees everything, out of doutance,  
 And them disposeth through his ordinance  
 In their merits soothly for to be  
 As they shall comen by predestiny.

*providence  
 has foreseen I would lose C.  
 without doubt*

*predestination*

139. “But natheless, alas, whom shall I ’lieve?  
 For there be clerk•s great•, many a one,  
 That Destiny through argument•s preeve;  
 And some men say that needly there is none,  
 But that free choice is given us everyone.  
 Oh, welaway, so sly been clerk•s old  
 That I n’ot whose opinion I may hold.

*believe  
 scholars  
 prove  
 certainly*

*alas!  
 I don’t know*

140. “For some men say, if God sees all befor  
 And God may not deceiv•d be, pardee,  
 Then must it fall, although men had it sworn,  
 What purveyance hath seen before to be.  
 Wherefore I say that from eterne if He  
 Hath wist before our thought as eke our deed•,  
 We have no free choice as these clerk•s read.

*for sure  
 resolved against it*

*eternity  
 Has known  
 scholars, clerics*

141. “For other thought or other deed also  
 Might never be, but such as purveyance  
 (Which may not be deceiv•d never mo’)  
 Hath felt before withouten ignorance;  
 For if there might• be a variance  
 To writen out from God•s purveying,  
 Then n’ere no prescience of thing coming;

*to squirm  
 would be no foreknowledge*

142. “But it were rather an opinion  
 Uncertain, and no steadfast foreseeing,  
 And cert•s, that were an abusion  
 That God should have no perfect clear witting  
 More than we men that have doubtful weening,  
 But such an error upon God to guess  
 Were false and foul and wicked cursedness.

*blasphemy  
 knowledge  
 doubtful knowledge  
 to suppose*

143. “Eke this is an opinion of some  
 That have their top full high and smooth y-shorn

*have tonsures (i.e. clerics)*

They say right thus that thing is not to come  
 For that the prescience hath seen before  
 That it shall come; but they say that therefore  
 That it shall come, therefore the purveyance  
 Wot it before, withouten ignorance.

*say that because*

*Knows it*

144. "And in this manner, this necessity  
 Returneth in his part contrair again;  
 For, needfully behoves it not to be  
 That th'ilke thing•s fallen in certáin  
 That be purveyed; but needly, as they sayn,  
 Behoveth it that thing•s which that 'fall  
 That they in certain be purvey•d all.

*it does not have to be*

*necessarily*

*It must be / befall*

145. "I mean as though I laboured me in this  
 T'enquiren which thing cause of which thing be;  
 As whether that the prescience of God is  
 The certain cause of the necessity  
 Of thing•s that to comen be, pardee;  
 Or if necessity of thing coming  
 Be caus• certain of the purveying.

*foreknowledge*

146. "But now n' enforce I me not in showing  
 How th' order of causes stands; but well wot I  
 That it behoveth that the befalling  
 Of thing•s wist beforen certainly  
 Be necessary, al' seem it not thereby  
 That prescience put falling necessaire  
 To thing to come, al' 'fall it foul or fair.

*I won't (can't?) demonstrate*

*the occurrence*

*known before*

*makes the event necessary  
 whether good or bad*

147. "For if there sits a man yond on a see  
 Then by necessity behoveth it  
 That cert•s thine opiniõn sooth be  
 That weenest or conjectest that he sits,  
 And further-over now againward yet,  
 Lo right so is it of the part contrary  
 As thus -- now hearken for I will not tarry.

*on a seat*

*certainly / is true*

*thinkest*

*on the other hand*

148. "I say that if th' opinion of thee  
 Be sooth for that he sits, then I say this:  
 That he must sitten by necessity;

*Is true*

And thus necessity in either is  
 For in him need of sitting is, i-wis,  
 And in thee need of sooth; and thus, forsooth,  
 There must necessity be in you both.

*indeed  
 truth*

149. "But thou mayst say, the man sits not therefore  
 That thine opinion of his sitting sooth is;  
 But rather for the man sat there before.  
 Therefore is thy opinion sooth i-wis  
 And I say though the cause of sooth of this  
 Comes of his sitting, yet necessity  
 Is interchang•d both in him and thee.

*is true*

150. "Thus in this sam• wise, out of doutance,  
 I may well maken as it seemeth me,  
 My reasoning of God•'s purveyance  
 And of the thing•s that to comen be;  
 By which• reason men may well y-see  
 That thilke thing•s that on earth• fall  
 That by necessity they comen all.

*no doubt*

*befall, happen*

151. "For although that for thing shall come, y-wis,  
 Therefore it is purvey•d certainly  
 Not that it comes for it purvey•d is.  
 Yet, natheless behoves it needfully  
 That things to come be purvey•d, truly  
 Or els• thing•s that purvey•d be  
 That they betiden by necessity.

*beause things / indeed*

*necessarily*

*happen*

152. "And this sufficeth right enough certáin  
 For to destroy our free choice every deal;  
 But now is this abusíon to sayn  
 That falling of the thing•s temporal  
 Is cause of God•'s prescience éternal:  
 Now truly, that is a false senténce  
 That things to come should cause his prescience.

*balsphemy, absurdity*

*opinion*

153. "What might I ween an I had such a thought  
 But that God púrveys thing that is to come  
 For that it is to come and els• nought?  
 So might I ween that thing•s, all and some,

*If I had*

*I might think*

That whilom been befall and overcome,  
 Been cause of thilk• sovereign purveyance  
 That forewot all withouten ignorance.

*That once  
 divine foreknowledge  
 that foresaw*

154. "And overall this yet say I more thereto  
 That right as when I wot there is a thing,  
 Y-wis that thing must needfully be so;  
 Eke right so when I wot a thing coming  
 So must it come; and thus the befalling  
 Of thing•s that been wist before the tide  
 They may not been eschew•d on no side ."

*when I know*

*the occurrence  
 known beforehand  
 avoided*

155. Then said he thus: "Almighty Jove in throne,  
 That wost of all• things the soothfastness,  
 Rue on my sorrow, or do me dien soon,  
 Or bring Criseyde and me from this distress."  
 And while he was in all this heaviness,  
 Disputing with himself in this mattér,  
 Came Pandarus and said as you may hear:

*Who know / truth  
 Take pity ... or kill me*

1083

156. "O mighty God," quod Pandarus, "in throne !!  
 Ey! Who ever saw a wise man faren so?  
 Why, Troilus, what thinkest thou to do,  
 Hast thou such lust to be thine own• foe?  
 What, párdée, yet Criseyde is not a-go.  
 Why list thee so thyself for-do for dread,  
 That in thine head thine eyen seemen dead?

*such desire  
 not yet gone  
 Why do you want to destroy  
 (So) that / eyes*

157. "Hast thou not liv•d many a year before  
 Withouten her, and fared full well at ease?  
 Art thou for her and for no other born?  
 Hath Kind thee wrought all only her to please?  
 Let be, and think right thus in thy dis-ease,  
 That in the dice right as there fallen chances  
 Right so in love there come and go pleasánces.

*Has Nature made you  
 distress*

158. "And yet this is a wonder, most of all,  
 Why thou thus sorrowest, since thou know'st not yet,

Touching her going, how that it shall fall,<sup>38</sup>  
 Nor if she can herself disturben it.  
 Thou hast not yet assay•d all her wit:  
 A man may all betime his neck• beed  
 When it shall off, and sorrowen at the need.

*befall*  
*prevent*  
*tested her ingenuity*  
*soon enough stick out*  
*When he's to be beheaded*

159. "For-thy take heed of that that I shall say:  
 I have with her y-spoke and long y-be,<sup>39</sup>  
 So as accorded was betwixt us tway,  
 And ever more methinketh thus, that she  
 Hath somewhat in her heart•'s privity  
 Wherewith she can, if I shall right a-redde,  
 Disturb all this of which thou art in dread.

*Therefore / that which*  
*agreed between us both*  
  
*interpret*  
*Prevent*

160. "For which my counsel is: when it is night  
 Thou to her go and make of this an end  
 And bless•d Juno, through her great• might  
 Shall, as I hope, her grace unto us send.  
 My heart says certainly she shall not wend,  
 And for-thy put thy heart awhile in rest  
 And hold thy purpose, for it is the best."

*she = Criseyde / go*  
*therefore*

161. This Troilus answered, and sigh•d sore:  
 "Thou say'st right well, and I will do right so."  
 And what him list he said unto him more,  
 And when that it was tim• for to go,  
 Full privily himself withouten more  
 Unto her came, as he was wont to do,  
 And how they wrought I shall you tellen soon.

*What he pleased*  
  
*more ado*  
*acustomed to do*  
*behaved*

162. Sooth is, that when they gonnen first to meet<sup>40</sup>  
 So gan the pain their heart•s for to twist,  
 That neither of them might the other greet,  
 But them in arm•s took and after kissed;

*Truth is*

---

<sup>38</sup> 158.2-3: "Since you do not yet know how the business of her departure is going to work out."

<sup>39</sup> 159.2: "and I have spoken and been with her a long time."

<sup>40</sup> 162.1: "The truth is that at first when they met ..."

The less• woeful of them both• n'iste  
 Where that he was, ne might one word out bring,  
 As I said erst, for woe and for sobbing.

*didn't know*

*said before*

163. The woeful tear•s that they leten fall  
 As bitter weren, out of tear•s kind,  
 For pain, as is ligne-alo•s or gall;  
 So bitter tear•s wept not, as I find,  
 The woeful Myrrha through the bark and rind;<sup>41</sup>  
 That in this world there n'is so hard a heart  
 That n'ould have ru•d on their paines smart.

*wouldn't have pitied*

164. But when their woeful weary ghost•s twain  
 Return•d been there as they ought to dwell,  
 And that somewhat to weaken gan the pain  
 By length of 'plaint, and ebban gan the well  
 Of their tears, and the heart unswell;  
 With broken voice all hoarse for-shrieked, Criseyde  
 To Troilus these ilk• word•s said:

*spirits two*

*complaint / to ebb*

*hoarse with shrieking  
 these very*

165. "O Jove! I die, and mercy I beseech;  
 Help Troilus," and therewithal her face  
 Upon his breast she laid, and lost her speech,  
 Her woeful spirit from its proper place  
 Right with the word always in point to pace,  
 And thus she lies with hu•s pale and green  
 That whilom fresh and fairest was to seen.

*on point of leaving  
 her color pale & wan  
 That once*

166. This Troilus that on her gan behold,  
 Cleping her name, and she lay as for dead,  
 Withouten answer, and felt her limb•s cold,  
 Her eyen upward thrown unto her head,  
 This sorrowful man can now no other redde,  
 But often time her cold• mouth he kissed.  
 Whe'r him was woe, God and himself it wist.

*Calling*

*knows no o. remedy*

*Whether / knew*

167. He riseth up, and long straight he her laid.  
 For sign of life for aught he can or may

*laid her down*

---

<sup>41</sup> 163.5: Myrrha was turned into a tree through which she wept tears of myrrh.



Can he none find for nothing in Criseyde,  
 For which his song full oft is "Welaway!"  
 But when he saw that speech•less she lay,  
 With sorrowful voice, and heart of bliss all bare,  
 He said how she was from this world y-fare.

*Alas!**gone*

168. So after that he long had her complained,  
 His hand•s wrung, and said what was to say,  
 And with his tear•s salt her breast be-rained,  
 He gan those tear•s wipen off full dry,  
 And piteously gan for her soul• pray,  
 And said: "O Lord, that set art in thy throne,  
 Rue eke on me, for I shall follow her soon."

*lamented**Take pity*

169 She cold was, and withouten sentiment  
 For aught he wot, for breath ne felt he none,  
 And this was him a pregnant argument  
 That she was forth out of this world agone;  
 And when he saw there was no other won  
 He gan her limb•s dress in such mannere  
 As men do them that shall be laid on bier.

*feeling**for him a strong a.*

*help  
 to arrange  
 in coffin*

170. And after this with stern and cruel heart  
 His sword anon out of his sheath he twight  
 Himself to slay, how sor• that him smart,<sup>42</sup>  
 So that his soul her soul• follow might  
 There as the doom of Minos would it dight,<sup>43</sup>  
 Since Love and cruel Fortune it ne would  
 That in this world he longer liven should.

*pulled*

*judgement / direct  
 didn't wish*

171. Then said he thus, fulfilled of high disdain:  
 "O cruel Jove! and thou Fortune adverse!  
 This all and some is, falsely have you slain

*filled with**In short*


---

<sup>42</sup> 170.3: *how sore* ...: either "however much it might hurt" or "(because) he hurt so much".

<sup>43</sup> 170.4-7: "So that his soul might follow hers to wherever Minos would direct it, since Love and Fortune no longer wished him to live in this world." Minos was a judge of souls in the underworld. In the original, *soule* is spelled with an *-e* each time.

Criseyde, and since you may do me no worse,  
 Fie on your might and work•s so diverse!  
 Thus cowardly you shall me never win;  
 There shall no death me from my lady twin.

*separate*

172. "For I this world, since you have slain her thus,  
 Will let, and follow her spirit low or high;  
 Shall never lover say that Troilus  
 Dare not for fear• with his lady die,  
 For certain I will bear her company;  
 But since you will not suffer us liven here,  
 Yet suffer that our soul•s be i-fere.

*will leave*

*allow her to live  
 allow / together*

173. "And thou, City! which that I leave in woe,  
 And thou, Priam! and brethren all i-fere!  
 And thou, my mother! farewell, for I go,  
 And Atropos! make ready thou my bier,<sup>44</sup>  
 And thou, Criseyde! O sweet• heart• dear!  
 Receiv• now my spirit," would he say,  
 With sword at heart, all ready for to die.

*together*

174. But, as God would, of swoon she then abraid,  
 And gan to sigh, and "Troilus!" she cried;  
 And he answered: "Lady mine, Criseyde!  
 Live you yet?" and let his sword down glide.  
 "Yea, heart• mine! that thank•d be Cypride,"  
 Quod she, and therewithal she sor• sighed,  
 And he began to glad her as he might,

*from swoon she woke*

*Venus*

*to cheer*

175. Took her in arm•s two, and kissed her oft,  
 And her to glad he did all his intent,  
 For which her ghost, that flickered ay aloft,  
 Into her woeful heart again it went;  
 But at the last, as that her eyen glent  
 Aside, anon she gan his sword espy  
 As it lay bare, and gan for fear to cry.

*gladden  
 soul / above*

*glanced*

176. And ask•d him why he had it out draw?

---

<sup>44</sup> 173.4: Atropos: the Fate who cuts the thread of life.

And Troilus anon the cause her told,  
 And how himself therewith he would have slaw, *slain*  
 For which Criseyde upon him gan behold,  
 And gan him in her arm•s fast to fold,  
 And said; "O mercy, God! lo which a deed! *what a deed*  
 Alas! how nigh we weren both• dead! *how nearly*

177. "Then if I had not spoken, as grace was, *by good fortune*  
 You would have slain yourself anon?" quod she.  
 "Yea, doubt•less." And she answered: "Alas!  
 For by that ilk• Lord that mad• me  
 I n'ould a furlong way alive have be *2 or 3 minutes*  
 After your death, to have been crown•d queen  
 Of all the lands the sun on shineth sheen; <sup>45</sup> *brightly*

178. "But with this selv• sword which that here is *this same*  
 Myself I would have slain•," quod she tho. *then*  
 "But whoa ! for we have right enough of this,  
 And let us rise and straight to bedd• go,  
 And ther• let us speaken of our woe,  
 For by that mortar which that I see bren *lamp / burn*  
 Know I full well that day is not far henne." *hence*

179. When they were in their bed in arm•s fold,  
 Naught was it like those night•s here-beforn,  
 For piteously each other gan behold,  
 As they that hadden all their bliss y-lorn, *lost*  
 Bewailing all the day that they were born,  
 Till at the last this woeful wight Criseyde  
 To Troilus these ilk• word•s said:

180. "Lo, heart• mine! well wot you this," quod she,  
 "That if a wight always his woe complain,  
 And seeketh not how holpen for to be, *how to be helped*  
 It n'is but folly and increase of pain;  
 And since that here assembled be we twain *we two*  
 To finden boote of woe that we be in, *find a cure*

---

<sup>45</sup> 177.5-7 ff: "I would not have stayed alive for three minutes after your death, not if I were to be crowned queen of all the earth the sun shines brightly on."

It were all time right soon• to begin.

181. "I am a woman, as full well you wot,  
And as I am avis•d suddenly,  
So will I tell it you while it is hot:  
Methinketh thus, that neither you nor I  
Ought half this woe to maken--skilfully,  
For there is art enough for to redress  
What yet's amiss, and flee this heaviness.

*you know  
I've just had a thought*

*in truth  
enough ways to change*

182. "Sooth is, the woe the which that we be in,  
For aught I wot, for nothing els• is  
But for the caus• that we should• twin;  
Considered all, there is no more amiss.  
And what is then a remedy unto this  
But that we shape us soon• for to meet?  
This all and some is, my dear heart• sweet!

*The truth is  
For all I know, for no other reason  
should separate*

*arrange to meet*

183. "Now, that I shall well bringen it about  
To come again soon after that I go  
Thereof am I no manner thing in doubt,  
For dread•less within a week or two  
I shall be here; and that it may be so  
By all• right, and that in word•s few,  
I shall you well a heap of way•s show.

*doubtless*

184. "For which I will not maken long sermon,  
For tim• lost may not recovered be,  
But I will go to my conclusi•n,  
And to the best in aught that I can see;  
And for the love of God forgive it me  
If I speak aught against your heart•'s rest,  
For truly I speak it for the best,

185. "Making alway a protestation,  
That now these word•s which that I shall say  
Is but to shoven you my moti•n  
To find unto our help the best• way,  
And taketh it no otherwise I pray;  
For, in effect, what so you me command  
That will I do, for that is no demand.

186. "Now hearken this: You have well understood  
 My going granted is by parliament,  
 So farforth that it may not be withstood  
 For all this world, as by my judg•ment;  
 And since there helpeth no avis•ment  
 To letten it, let it pass out of mind,  
 And let us shape a better way to find.

*So that*

*argument  
 To prevent*

187. "The sooth is this; the twinning of us twain  
 Will us dis-ease and cruelly annoy,  
 But him behoveth sometimes to have pain  
 That serveth Love, if that he will have joy;<sup>46</sup>  
 And since I shall no farther out of Troy  
 Than I may ride again on half a morrow,  
 It ought the less• causen us to sorrow;

*parting of us two  
 distress*

*shall (go)  
 morning*

188. "So as I shall not now be hid in mew,  
 That day by day, mine own• heart• dear,  
 Since well you wot that it is now a truce,  
 You shall full well all mine estate y-hear,  
 And ere that truce is done I shall be here;  
 And thus have you both Antenor y-won  
 And me also. Be glad now if you can.

*in cage*

*you know  
 hear how I am*

189. "And think right thus: Criseyde is now agone,  
 But what! she shall come hastily again."  
 "And when, alas?" "By God, lo, right anon,  
 Ere day•s ten, this dare I safely sayn,  
 And then as erst• shall we both be fain,  
 So as we shall together ever dwell,  
 That all this world ne might our bliss• tell.

*soon*

*as before / be glad*

190. "I see that oft-time whereas we be now,  
 That for the best, our counsel for to hide,  
 You speak not with me nor I with you  
 In fort•night, nor see you go nor ride;<sup>47</sup>

*in our present situation  
 to keep our secret*

*For 2 weeks*

---

<sup>46</sup> 187.3-4: "Whoever serves Love has to have pain sometimes if he is also to have joy."

<sup>47</sup> 190.1-4: "There are many times when we have been in the same situation as we are now. To keep our secret, you do not speak with me nor I with you for two weeks on

And may you not ten day•s then abide  
 For mine honóur, in such an áventure?  
 I-wis you may, or els• lite endure.

*wait*

*Indeed / little*

191. "You know eke how that all my kin is here  
 But if that only it my father be,  
 And eke mine other thing•s all i-fere,  
 And nam•ly, my dear• heart•, ye,  
 Whom that I n'ould• leav• for to see  
 For all this world as wide as it has space,  
 Or els• see I never Jov•'s face.

*Except for  
 connections all together*

*may I never see*

192. "Why trow• you my father in this wise  
 Coveteth so to see me, but for dread  
 Lest in this town that folk•s me despise  
 Because of him for his unhappy deed?  
 What wot my father what life that I lead?  
 For if he wist in Troy how well I fare  
 Us needed for my wending naught to care.

*Why do you think*

*What does m.f. know?  
 If he knew  
 my departure*

193. "You see that every day, eke more and more,  
 Men treat of peace, and it suppos•d is  
 That men the queen Elain• shall restore,  
 And Greeks restoren us what is amiss.  
 So though there n'er• comfort none but this,  
 That men purpósen peace on every side,  
 You may the better at ease of heart abide.

*Helen*

*though there were no*

194. "For if that it be peace, mine heart• dear,  
 The nature of the peace must need•s drive  
 That men must intercómmunen i-fere  
 And to and fro eke ride and go as blive  
 All day, and thick as bees fly from a hive,  
 And every wight have liberty to bleve  
 Whereas him list the best, withouten leave.

*will require  
 communicate together  
 readily*

*to stay  
 Wherever he thinks best*

195. "And though so be that peace there may be none,  
 Yet hither, though there never peace ne were,

---

end, and I don't even see you walk or go on horseback."

I must• come, for whither should I gon?  
 Or how, mischanc•! should I dwell• there  
 Among those men of arm•s ever in fear?  
 For which, as wisly God my soul• redde,  
 I cannot see whereof you shoulde dread.

*how on earth*  
*as surely / guide*

196. "Have here another way, if it so be  
 That all this thing ne may you not suffice:<sup>48</sup>  
 My father, as you knowen well, pardee,  
 Is old; and eld is full of covetise.  
 And I right now have founden all the guise,  
 Withouten net wherewith I shall him hent;  
 And hearken, now if that you will assent.

*by God*  
*old age / greed*  
*the very way*  
*catch him without a net*

197. "Lo! Troilus, men say, that hard it is  
 The wolf full and the wether whole to have;<sup>49</sup>  
 This is to say, that men full oft i-wis  
 Must spenden part the remnant for to save;  
 For aye with gold men may the heart• grave  
 Of him that set is upon covetise  
 And how I mean I shall it you devise.

*impress*  
*on greed*  
*I'll tell*

198. "The moble which that I have in this town  
 Unto my father shall I take and say  
 That right for trust and for salvation  
 It sent is from a friend of his or tway  
 The which• friend•s fervently him pray  
 To senden after more, and that in hie,  
 While that this town stands thus in jeopardy.<sup>50</sup>

*goods*  
*safety*  
*or two*  
*for more / in haste*

---

<sup>48</sup> 196.1-2: "Here's another argument, if those already mentioned are not enough for you."

<sup>49</sup> 197.1-2: "it is hard to have the whole sheep (*wether*) if the wolf is full (from feeding on the sheep)." You can't have both.

<sup>50</sup> 198. The gist of the stanza seems to be that since her father is old (and therefore covetous) she will take her moveable possessions and give them to him, pretending that they are sent from some old friends for safe keeping, who also want him to send her back for more. How this would appeal to his covetousness is not clear. Calchas would hardly need "sort" to see through this particular plan.

199. "And that shall be of gold huge quantity;  
 Thus shall I say, but lest folk it espied,  
 This may be sent by no wight but by me:  
 I shall eke shoven him, if peace betide,  
 What friend•s that I have on every side  
 Towards the court, to do the wrath to pace  
 Of Priamus, and do him stand in grace.

*nobody*

*At court, to cause / to pass  
 restore him to favor*

200. "So what for one thing and for other, sweet!  
 I shall him so enchanten with my saws,  
 That right in heaven his soul is shall he mete:  
 For, all Apollo or his clerk•s laws  
 Or calculing availeth not three haws;  
 Desire of gold shall so his soul• blend  
 That as me list I shall well make an end.

*my words  
 dream*

*3 straws  
 blind  
 as I please*

201. "And if he would aught by his sort it preeve  
 If that I lie, in certain I shall fonde  
 Disturben him and pluck him by the sleeve  
 Making his sort, and bearen him in hand,  
 He hath not well the godd•s understand,<sup>51</sup>  
 For godd•s speak in amphibologies,  
 And for one sooth they tellen twenty lies.

*test by divination  
 find a way*

*understood  
 riddles  
 truth*

202. "Eke dread found first• godd•s, I suppose.<sup>52</sup>  
 Thus shall I say, and that his coward heart  
 Made him amiss the godd•s' text to glose,  
 When he, for fear•, out of Delphi start.<sup>53</sup>  
 And but I make him soon• to convert

*wrongly to interpret  
 rushed  
 And unless / to change*

---

<sup>51</sup> 201.4-5: *Making ...understand*: "While he is doing his divination, and convince him he has not understood...."

<sup>52</sup> 202.1: "It was fear that first created the gods." Editors agree that this was a commonplace dating back to Roman times: "Timor invenit deos". It is hardly reverent. Notice that Criseyde's irreverence in this line and the two preceding is not penalized any more than Troilus's in 171 above. See also V, 30.4-7 below. Contrast the situation in Henryson's sequel, **The Testament**.

<sup>53</sup> 202.3-4: According to Benoit, Calchas had consulted the oracle at Delphi where he learned that Troy would fall, so he had gone over to the Greeks. See Bk I, stanzas 10-14.



And do my redde within a day or tway,  
I will to you oblig• me to die."

*follow my advice  
I promise to kill myself*

203. And truly, as written well I find,  
That all this thing was said of good intent,  
And that her heart• tru• was and kind  
Toward•s him, and spoke right as she meant,  
And that she starved for woe nigh when she went,  
And was in purpose ever to be true;  
Thus writen they that of her work•s knew.

*she nearly died*

204. This Troilus, with heart and ear•s spread,  
Heard all this thing devisen to and fro;  
And verily him seem•d that he had  
The self• wit, but yet to let her go  
His heart• misforgave him evermo'.  
But finally he gan his heart• wrest  
To trusten her, and took it for the best.

*open  
discussed  
  
same feeling  
had misgivings  
compel*

205. For which the great fury of his penance  
Was quenched with hope, and therewith them between  
Began, for joy, the amorous• dance,  
And, as the bird•s, when the sun is sheen,  
Delighten in their song in leav•s green,  
Right so the word•s that they spoke i-fere  
Delighted them and made their heart•s clear.

*shining*

*together*

206. But nathelees the wending of Criseyde,  
For all this world, may not out of his mind,  
For which full oft he piteously her prayed  
That of her hest he might her tru• find,  
And said her: "Cert•s, if you be unkind,  
And but you come at day set into Troy,  
Ne shall I ne'er have honour, heal, nor joy.

*departure*

*to her promise*

*unless / on agreed day  
health*

207. "For all so sooth as sun uprist to-morrow,  
-- And God, so wisly thou me woeful wretch  
To rest• bring out of this cruel sorrow,--

*as true / rises  
surely*

I will my selfen slay if that you dretch;<sup>54</sup> *delay*  
 But of my death though little be to reck, *care*  
 Yet ere that you me causen so to smart,  
 Dwell rather here, mine own • sweet • heart! *Stay*

208. "For truly, mine own • lady dear,  
 Those sleight • s yet that I have heard you stere *these tricks / propose*  
 Full shapely be to failen all i-fere; *v. likely / together*  
 For thus men say: `That one [way] thinks the bear,  
 But all another thinketh his leader.'  
 Your sire is wise, and said is, out of dread: *his master*  
 `Men may the wise outrun, but not out-redde.'<sup>55</sup> *your father / for sure*  
*outwit*

209. "It is full hard to halten unespied *to limp undetected*  
 Before a cripple, for he can the craft.<sup>56</sup> *he knows*  
 Your father is, in sleight, as Argus-eyed, *in cunning has 100 eyes*  
 For all be that his moble is him bereft, *Although his goods are lost*  
 His old • sleight is yet so with him left, *His old skill*  
 You shall not blind him, for your womanhead,  
 Nor feign aright, and that is all my dread. *Nor lie with skill*

210. "I n'ot if peace shall ever more betide,  
 But peace or no, for earnest nor for game, *I don't know*  
 I wot, since Calchas on the Greek • s' side *in earnest or in jest*  
 Has onc • been, and lost so foul his name, *I know*  
 He dare no more come here again for shame,  
 For which that way, for aught I can espy,  
 To trusten on is but a fantasy.

211. "You shall eke see your father shall you glose *persuade*

---

<sup>54</sup> 207.2-4: *thou* refers to God and *you* to Criseyde. Lines 2-3 are a parenthesis addressed to God saying something like: "and as surely as I hope that thou wilt give me, a woefilled wretch, rest from this terrible sorrow ..."

<sup>55</sup> 208.2-7: "The tricks that you have mentioned are likely to fail completely. For, as they say, 'The bear wants one thing, but his master wants something else.' Your father is astute, and, as they rightly say: 'You can outrun a wise man, but not outwit him.' "

<sup>56</sup> 209.1-2: "In front of a cripple it is hard to get away with pretending to be a cripple, because he knows the real thing."

To be a wife; and as he can well preach,  
 He shall some Greek so praise and well alose,  
 That ravishen he shall you with his speech,  
 Or do you do by force as he shall teach.  
 And Troilus, of whom you n'ill have ruth,  
 Shall caus•less so starven in his truth.

*commend  
 he'll seduce  
 Or make you by f. do as  
 won't have pity  
 die faithful*

212. "And over all this, your father shall despise  
 Us all, and say this city n'is but lorn,  
 And that the sieg• never shall arise,  
 — For-why the Greek•s have it all y-sworn,—  
 Till we be slain and down our wall•s torn.  
 All thus he shall you with his word•s fear,  
 That ay dread I that you will blev• there.<sup>57</sup>

*as good as lost  
 shall be raised  
 Because  
 frighten  
 I constantly d. / remain*

213. "You shall eke see so many a lusty knight,  
 Among the Greek•s, full of worthiness;  
 And each of them with heart•, wit, and might  
 To pleasen you do all his busyness,  
 That you shall dullen of the rud•ness  
 Of us silly Trojans, but if ruth  
 Remord• you, or virtue of your truth.<sup>58</sup>

*do his best  
 grow tired / plainness  
 simple / unless pity  
 fills you with remorse*

214. "And this to me so grievous is to think,  
 That from my breast it will my soul• rend;  
 Ne dread•less in me there may not sink  
 A good opinion, if that you wend;  
 For-why your father's sleight• will us shend.  
 And if you go, as I have told you yore,  
 So think I n'am but dead, withouten more.

*Nor indeed do I have ..  
 ...a good feeling (?) / go  
 Because / trickery / ruin  
 before  
 I'm as good as dead*

215. "For which with humble, true, and piteous heart  
 A thousand tim•s mercy I you pray,  
 So rueth on mine asper pain•s smart,

*take pity / bitter sharp p.*

---

<sup>57</sup> 212.1-7: This same argument is indeed used in Bk V, 127-132, though not by Calchas, to persuade Criseyde to stay with the Greeks.

<sup>58</sup> 213.6-7: "Unless (*but if*) pity fills you with remorse, or virtue [reminds you] of your promise." Or "Unless pity and the strength (*virtue*) of your promise fill you with remorse."

And do somewhat as that I shall you say,  
 And let us steal away betwixt us tway,  
 And think that folly is when man may choose  
 For accident his substance ay to lose.<sup>59</sup>

*two*

*little thing / main thing*

216. "I mean• thus, that since we may ere day  
 Well steal away and be together so,  
 What wit were it to putten in assay  
 (In case you should unto your father go)  
 If that you mighten come again or no?  
 Thus mean I, that it were a great folly  
 To put that sikerness in jeopardy.

*Easily*

*What's the point / to the test*

*that certainty*

217. "And, vulgarly to speaken of substance:  
 Of treasure may we both• with us lead  
 Enough to live in honour and pleasance  
 Until the tim• that we shall be dead;  
 And thus we may eschewen all this dread,  
 For every other way you can record  
 My heart, i-wis, may not therewith accord.

*bluntly / money  
take*

*may avoid  
mention*

*indeed / agree*

218. "And hardily ne dreadeth no povert,  
 For I have kin and friend•s els•where,  
 That though we comen in our bar• shirt  
 Us should• never lack nor gold nor gear,  
 But be honóur•d while we dwelten there:  
 Go we anon, for as in mine intent  
 This is the best, if that you will assent."

*And certainly / poverty*

*clothes*

*Let's go now / opinion*

219. Criseyd• with a sigh right in this wise  
 Answer•d him: "I-wis, my dear heart true!  
 We may well steal away as you devise,  
 And finden such unthrifty way•s new,  
 But afterward full sore it will us rue;

*suggest*

*dubious*

*we'll regret*

---

<sup>59</sup> 215.6-7: A theological distinction between the true substance of something, and the less important accidents: color, shape, weight, etc. So he is saying that it is stupid to lose the main thing out of consideration for some unimportant detail. In this case their love is the main thing and the unimportant detail is presumably what people will think of them if they elope. A few lines later (217.1) he has another meaning for *substance*: money.

And, help me God so at my most• need!  
As caus•less you suffer all this dread.

220. "For th'ilk• day that I, for cherishing  
Or dread of father or of other wight,  
Or for estate, delight, or for wedding,  
Be false to you, my Troilus, my knight,  
Saturn's daughter, Juno, through her might  
As wood as Athamante do me dwell <sup>60</sup>  
Eternally in Styx, the pit of hell!

*that day / for love*  
*person*  
*for rank*  
  
*(may) S's daughter*  
*As mad*

221. "And this on every god celestial  
I swear it you, and eke on each goddess,  
On every nymph and deity infernal,  
On satyry and fauny more and less  
(That half•-godd•s be of wilderness);  
And, Atropos, my thread of life thou brest <sup>61</sup>  
If I be false; now trow me, if thou lest.

*deity*  
*satyrs & fauns*  
  
*Fate / cut*  
*trust me, please*

222. "And thou, Simois, that as an arrow clear  
Through Troy aye runnest downward to the sea,  
Be witness of this word that said is here,  
That thilk• day that I untru• be  
To Troilus, mine own• heart• free,  
That thou return backward unto thy well,  
And I with body and soul sink into hell.

*River S*

223. "But that you speak away thus for to go  
And letten all your friend•s -- God forbid  
For any woman that you should do so!  
And nam•ly, since Troy hath now such need  
Of help; and eke of one thing taketh heed:  
If this were wist, my life lay in balánce  
And your honoúr, God shield us from mischance!

*leave*

*known / would lie*

---

<sup>60</sup> 220.5-6: "(May) Juno make me live eternally in Styx, the pit of hell, as mad (*wood*) as Athamas", the King of Thebes who was driven mad at the request of Juno.

<sup>61</sup> 221.6: "(May) Atropos, cut the thread of my life." Atropos was the Fate who cut the thread of life which had been spun by Clotho and measured by Lachesis. .7: *thou* = Troilus

224. "And if so be that peace hereafter take,  
 As all day happens after anger, game, *constantly / play*  
 Why, Lord! the sorrow and woe you woulden make  
 That you ne durst not come again for shame! *dare not*  
 And ere that you jeopárden so your name *jeopardize*  
 Be not too hasty in this hott• fare; *excited way*  
 For hasty man ne wanteth never care. *is never without trouble*

225. "What trow you eke the people all about *What do you think*  
 Would of it say? It is full light t'arede. *easy to guess*  
 They woulden say, and swear it out of doubt,  
 That love ne drove you not to do this deed,  
 But lust voluptuous and coward dread:  
 Thus were all lost i-wis, mine heart• dear, *for sure*  
 Your honour which that now so shineth clear.

226. "And also thinketh on my honesty, *my good name*  
 That flowereth yet, how foul I should it shend, *ruin*  
 And with what filth y-spotted it should be,  
 If in this form I should• with you wend: *go*  
 Not though I lived unto the world•'s end  
 My nam• should I never againward win: *win back*  
 Thus were I lost, and that were ruth and sin. *pity*

227. ?And for-thy slay with reason all this heat. <sup>62</sup>  
 Men say: 'The suffrant overcomes', pardee; *The patient man*  
 Eke: 'Whoso will have lief, he lief must lete.' <sup>63</sup>  
 Thus maketh virtue of necessity *make! (imperative)*  
 By patience, and think that lord is he  
 Of Fortune aye that naught will of her reck, <sup>64</sup>  
 And she ne daunteth no wight but a wretch. *scares nobody*

228. "And trusteth this, that cert•s heart• sweet!  
 Ere Phoebus' sister, Lúcina the sheen, *the moon*

---

<sup>62</sup> 227.1: "And so control your excitement with reason."

<sup>63</sup> 227.3: 'He who wants to have (something) desirable, must give up (something else) he desires.'

<sup>64</sup> 227.6-7: "he is always Fortune's master who cares nothing about her."

The Lion passeth out of this Ariete  
 I will be here withouten any ween;<sup>65</sup>  
 I mean, as help me Juno, heaven's queen!  
 The tenth• day, but-if death me assail,  
 I will you see withouten any fail."

*Leo / Aries  
 doubt*

*unless I die*

229. "And now, so this be sooth," quod Troilus,  
 "I shall well suffer unto the tenth• day,  
 Since that I see that needs it must be thus;  
 But for the love of God, if it be may,  
 So let us stolen privily away,  
 For ever in one as for to live in rest;<sup>66</sup>  
 My heart• says that it will be the best."

*if this is true*

230. "O mercy, God! what life is this !" quod she,  
 "Alas! you slay me thus for very teen:  
 I see well now that you mistrusten me,  
 For by your word•s it is well y-seen.  
 Now for the love of Cynthia the sheen  
 Mistrust me not thus caus•less, for ruth,  
 Since to be true I have you plight my truth.

*vexation*

*the bright moon  
 for pity's (sake)  
 pledged*

231. "And thinketh well that sometimes it is wit  
 To spend a time, a tim• for to win;  
 Ne, pardee, lorn am I not from you yet.  
 Though that we be a day or two a-twin,  
 Drive out those fantasi•s you within,  
 And trusteth me, and leaveth eke your sorrow,  
 Or (here my truth) I will not live till morrow.

*is wise*

*lost  
 apart*

*(I swear)*

232. "For, if you wist how sore it doth me smart,  
 You would• cease of this. 'Fore God, thou wost  
 The pur• spirit weepeth in my heart  
 To see you weepen that I lov• most,  
 And that I must go to the Greek•s host;

*if y. knew / it hurts me  
 Before God! you know*

---

<sup>65</sup> 228: She promises to be back in Troy before the moon passes out of the sign of Aries where it is at the moment, into the sign of Leo, a period, apparently, of about 10 days. Another Chaucerian display of astronomic knowledge for indicating time.

<sup>66</sup> 229.6: "To live together forever peacefully."

Yea, n'ere it that I wist a remedy  
To come again, right her• would I die.

*if I didn't know a way*

233. "But cert•s I am not so nice a wight  
That I ne can imagin a way  
To come against the day that I have hight,  
For who may hold a thing that will away? <sup>67</sup>  
My father naught, for all his quaint• play!  
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troy  
Another day shall turn us all to joy.

*so stupid a person*

*by the day I've promised*

*cannot / cunning tricks  
By my skill, my going*

234. "For-thy with all my heart I you beseech,  
If that you list do aught• for my prayer;  
And for the love which that I love you eke,  
That ere that I depart• from you here  
That of so good a comfort and a cheer  
I may you see, that you may bring at rest  
My heart• which that is on point to burst.

*Therefore  
if you want  
also*

235. "And o'er all this I pray you," quod she tho,  
"Mine own• heart•'s soothfast suffisance!  
Since I am thine all whole withouten mo',  
That while that I am absent, no pleasance  
Of other do me from your rémembrance, <sup>68</sup>  
For I am e'er aghast; for why? Men redde  
That love is thing aye full of busy dread.

*then  
true*

*always afraid / They say  
is always*

236. "For in this world there liveth lady none,  
If that you were untrue, as God defend!  
That so betray•d were or woe-begone  
As I, that all• truth in you intend;  
And doubt•less if that I other wend  
I n'ere but dead, and ere you caus• find, <sup>69</sup>

*God forbid*

*expect  
If I thought otherwise*

---

<sup>67</sup> 233.4: "Who can hold back a person who wants to get away?"

<sup>68</sup> 235.4-5: "While I am absent, don't let pleasure from any other woman drive me out of your memory."

<sup>69</sup> 236.5-7: "If I thought otherwise, I'd be as good as dead, and unless you find a real reason, for God's sake, please do not be unkind."



For God's love, be not to me unkind."

237. To this answered Troilus, and said:

"Now God, to whom there is no cause y-wry,  
Me glad, as wis I never to Criseyde,  
Since thilk• day I saw her first with eye,  
Was false, nor ever shall till that I die:<sup>70</sup>  
At short• words, well may you me believe;  
I can no more; it shall be found at preve."

*hidden  
make me glad / surely*

*In brief  
when tested*

238. "Grammércy, good heart mine i-wis," quod she,  
"And, blissful Venus, let me never starve  
Ere I may stand of pleasance in degree  
To 'quite him well that so well can deserve;<sup>71</sup>  
And while that God my wit will me conserve  
I shall so do, so true I have you found,  
That aye honóur to me-ward shall redound.<sup>72</sup>

*Many thanks  
never die*

*To repay*

*That ever*

239. "For trusteth well that your estate royál,  
Nor vain delight, nor only worthiness  
Of you in war or tourney martial,  
Nor pomp, array, nobley, or eke richesse,  
Ne mad• me to rue on your distress,  
But moral virtue, grounded upon truth;  
That was the cause I first had on you ruth.

*prowess  
tournament  
noble rank  
to take pity on*

*had pity*

240. "Eke gentle heart, and manhood that you had,  
And that you had (as me thought) in despite  
Every thing that souned into bad,  
As rudeness and peoplish appetite,

*you despised  
smacked of evil  
and common lust*

---

<sup>70</sup> 237.1-5: " Now may God, from whom nothing is hidden, make me glad that (as) I was never unfaithful to Criseyde from the day I first saw her, and never will be till the day I die"

<sup>71</sup> 238.3-4: *Ere ...*: "Before I am in a position pleasant enough to repay him who deserves it so well." or "Before I am able to repay him the degree of pleasure he so well deserves."

<sup>72</sup> 238.5-7: "And as long as God preserves me, I shall do so; I have found you so true that honor will always accrue to me for that."

And that your reason bridled your delight;  
 This made aboven every creäture  
 That I was yours, and shall while I may dure.<sup>73</sup>

*endure*

241. "And this may length of year•s not fordo,  
 Nor rémuable Fortune it deface,  
 But Jupiter, that of his might may do  
 The sorrowful to be glad, so give us grace  
 Ere night•s ten to meeten in this place,  
 So that it may your heart and mine suffice;  
 And fare now well, for time is that you rise."

*wipe out  
 changeable  
 can cause*

242. And after that they long y-plain•d had,  
 And often kissed, and strait in arm•s fold,  
 The day gan rise, and Troilus him clad,  
 And ruefully his lady gan behold,  
 As he that felt• death•'s car•s cold;  
 And to her grace he gan him recommend.  
 Whe'r him was woe, this hold I no demand.<sup>74</sup>

*lamented  
 tight*

*looked at his lady sadly*

*Whether*

Here ends Book IV

## Appendix 1

### WHEEL OF FORTUNE

This theme or convention is ubiquitous in the art and literature of the Middle Ages, one illustration of the constant theme of Mutability. The notion of Fortune whimsically spinning a wheel with men on it probably originates with Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* (II, poem 1, prose 2). There Fortune presents herself as non-malevolent, but, at the same time, as raising or degrading men for her own amusement. She implies that men get on the Wheel only if they wish. Chaucer,

---

<sup>73</sup> 240.6-7: "This was what made me yours above any other living person, and I shall remain yours as long as I live."

<sup>74</sup> 163.7: "Whether (*Wh'er*) he was sorrowful, I don't think there is any need to ask."

however, in his ballade *Fortune* (45-46) has her say to the "plaintiff":

*Thou borne art in my regne of variance*      (kingdom of change)  
*About the wheel with others most thou drive.*

In the *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, on the other hand, Fortune tells Arthur:

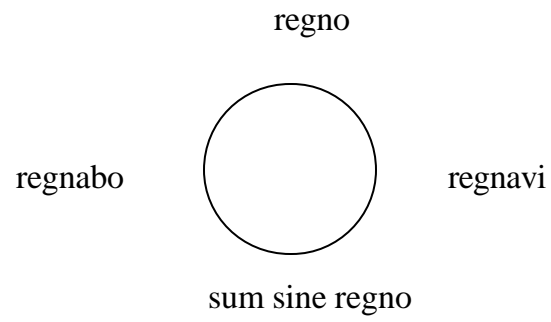
*"I chose thee my selfen ..."*  
*And (she) set me softly in the see*      (seat)  
(3347-3350).

There are, therefore, at least three notions of the relationship of man to the Wheel of Fortune.

- a. He can choose to be on it or not.
- b. He and everyone else is on it whether they wish or no.
- c. Fortune singles him out to be on it.

Possibly the most potent presentation of the Wheel in medieval English literature is that in the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* (3250 ff) where Arthur shares his fate with the other eight of the Nine Worthies, including Hector. Two other versions of the Death of Arthur also present a dream in which Arthur sees himself hurled to destruction from the Wheel, but neither of them shows or even mentions Lady Fortune: the *Stanzaic Morte Arthure* (3168 ff), and Malory's *Morte Darthur* ("The Day of Destiny"). The Wheel is also prominent in the poem "Summer Sunday" and in *The Kingis Quair* (1114 ff), a poem attributed to King James of Scotland.

Visual illustrations of the Wheel are as common as their literary counterparts. One of those occurs so frequently that Patch calls it the Formula of Four. It shows four figures on the Wheel, one each at the 12, 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions. The figure at 12, generally crowned, is accompanied by the Latin word "regno" (I reign). Two others—clockwise—with "regnavi" (I have reigned), "sum sine regno" (I am without a throne). Both of these are tumbling off. The fourth, "regnabo" (I shall reign), is clawing his way up:



**TROILUS AND CRISEYDE**

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

**Book V**

## Book V

1. APPROACHEN gan the fatal destiny  
 That Jovè hath in disposition,  
 And to you, angry Parcae, sisters three,  
 Committeth to do execution,<sup>1</sup>  
 For which Criseyde must out of the town,  
 And Troilus shall dwellen forth in pine  
 Till Lachesis his thread no longer twine.

*has contol of  
 the 3 Fates*

*must (go)  
 in torture*

2. The golden tressèd Phoebus high aloft  
 Thrice had allè with his beamès clean  
 The snows melted,<sup>2</sup> and Zephirus as oft  
 Y-brought again the tender leavès green  
 Since that the son of Hecuba the Queen  
 Began to love her first for whom his sorrow  
 Was all that she departen should a-morrow.

*the Sun*

*west wind of Spring*

*Troilus*

*next day*

3. Full ready was at primè Diomedè<sup>3</sup>  
 Criseyde unto the Greekès' host to lead;  
 For sorrow of which she felt her heartè bleed,  
 As she that n'istè what was best to rede.  
 And truly, as men in bookès read,  
 Men wistè never woman have the care,  
 Nor was so loath out of a town to fare.<sup>4</sup>

*early in a.m.*

*didn't know / to do*

*knew*

---

<sup>1</sup> 1.1-4: "There began to approach the fatal destiny which Jove has control of, and which he delegates to the three Fates to carry out (*to do execution*).\" The three Parcae or Fates -- Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos -- spin (*twine*) the thread of human life and decide when it is to be cut.

<sup>2</sup> 2.1-5: A roundabout way of saying that it has been three years since Troilus fell in love with Criseyde whose impending departure was causing his present pain.

<sup>3</sup> 3.1: Diomedè, a prominent Greek warrior, and the fourth major character in the story, arrives early in the morning (*at prime*) to escort Criseyde to the Greek camp.

<sup>4</sup> 3.6-7: "No one ever knew a woman who had so much sorrow (*care*) or was so reluctant to leave the town."

4. This Troilus withouten rede or lore, *plot or plan*  
 As man that hath his joyès eke forlore, *lost*  
 Was waiting on his lady evermore,  
 As she that was the soothfast crop and more *root & branch*  
 Of all his lust or joyès herebefore; *desire*  
 But Troilus, now farewell all thy joy!  
 For shalt thou never see her eft in Troy. *again*
5. Sooth is, that while he bode in this mannér *waited*  
 He gan his woe full manly for to hide,  
 That well unneth it seen was in his cheer,<sup>1</sup> *scarcely / behavior*  
 But at the gatè where she should out ride  
 With certain folk he hoved, her to abide, *lingered to wait for her*  
 So woe-begone, al would he not complain, *although he*  
 That on his horse unneth he sat for pain. *could barely sit*
6. For ire he quoke, so gan his heartè gnaw, *w. anger he shook*  
 When Diomede on horse gan him to dress, *to mount*  
 And said unto himself this ilkè saw: *these words*  
 "Alas! " quod he, "thus foul a wretchedness *he = Troilus*  
 Why suffer I it? why n'ill I it redress? *why don't I put it right?*  
 Were it not better at oncè for to die  
 Than evermore in languor thus to drye? *to suffer*
7. "Why n'ill I make at oncè rich and poor *Why don't I*  
 To have enough to do ere that she go?  
 Why n'ill I bring all Troy upon a roar?  
 Why n'ill I slay this Diomede also?  
 Why n'ill I rather with a man or two  
 Steal her away? why will I this endure?  
 Why n'ill I helpen to mine ownè cure?"
8. But why he would not do so fell a deed *terrible*  
 That shall I say, and why him list it spare: *he chose to refrain*  
 He had in heart always a manner dread  
 Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare, *in chaos of the disturbance*  
 Should have been slain. Lo! this was all his care, *concern*

---

<sup>1</sup> 5.3: "So that it was scarcely perceptible in his behavior."

And elsè, certain, as I saidè yore,  
He had it done withouten wordès more.

*otherwise / earlier  
would have done*

9. Criseydè, when she ready was to ride,  
Full sorrowfully she sighed, and said "Alas!"  
But forth she must for aught that may betide:<sup>1</sup>  
There is no other remedy in this case.  
And forth she rode full sorrowfully a pace;  
What wonder is though that her sorè smart  
When she forgoes her ownè dearè heart.

*suffers sorely  
o.d. heart = Troilus*

10. This Troilus in wise of courtesy,  
With hawk on hand, and with a hugè rout  
Of knightès, rode and did her company,  
Passing all the valley far without,  
And farther would have ridden out of doubt  
Full fain, and woe was him to go so soon,  
But turn he must, and it was eke to doon.<sup>2</sup>

*by way of  
crowd  
kept her company*

*doubtless  
v. gladly*

11. And right with that was Antenor y-come  
Out of the Greekès' host, and every wight  
Was of it glad, and said he was welcome;  
And Troilus, al n'ere his heartè light,  
He painèd him with all his fullè might  
Him to withhold of weeping at the least,  
And Antenor he kissed and made great feast.

*although his h. wasn't l.  
He forced himself  
keep from  
made v. welcome*

12. And therewithal he must his leavè take,  
And cast his eye upon her piteously,  
And near he rode, his causè for to make,  
To take her by the hand all soberly;  
And Lord! so she gan weepen tenderly,  
And he full soft and slily gan her say:  
"Now hold your day, and do me not to die."

*don't cause me to die*

13. With that his courser turnèd he about

*his horse*

---

<sup>1</sup> 9.3: "But forth she must (go), no matter what happens."

<sup>2</sup> 10.5-7: "And he would very gladly (*full fain*) have ridden further -- no doubt about that -- and sad he was (*woe was him*) to go so soon, but he had to turn back; there was no way out of that."



With face pale, and unto Diomede  
 No word he spoke, nor none of all his rout,  
 Of which the son of Tydeus took heed,  
 As he that couldè more than the creed  
 In such a craft,<sup>1</sup> and by the rein her hent;  
 And Troilus to Troy homeward he went.

*i.e. Diomede*

*grasped*

14. This Diomede, that led her by the bridle,  
 When that he saw the folk of Troy away,  
 Thought: "All my labour shall not be on idle  
 If that I may, for somewhat shall I say,  
 For at the worst it may yet short our way;  
 I have heard said eke timès twicè twelve,  
 He is a fool that will forget himself."

*wasted*

*shorten*

15. But natheless this thought he well enough:  
 "That certainly I am abouten naught  
 If that I speak of love, or make it tough,  
 For doubtèless if she have in her thought  
 Him that I guess, he may not be y-brought  
 So soon away; but I shall find a mean  
 That she not wit as yet shall what I mean."

*I will get nowhere*

*a method  
will not guess*

16. This Diomede, as he that could his good,  
 When timè was, gan fallen forth in speech  
 Of this and that,<sup>2</sup> and asken why she stood  
 In such dis-ease, and gan her eke beseech,  
 That if that he increasen might or eche  
 With any thing her easè, that she should  
 Command it him, and said he do it would.

*or add to  
her comfort*

17. For truly he swore her as a knight  
 That there n'as thing with which he might her please  
 That he n'ould do his pain and all his might

*there was nothing ...  
... he wouldn't take pains*

---

<sup>1</sup> 13.5-6: "Like a man that knew (*could*) more than the elementary stages (*creed*) in this business (*craft*) [of love]." That is, he was a practiced lover.

<sup>2</sup> 16.1-3: "like a man who knew what was best for himself, when the opportunity arose, he began to chat about one thing and another."

To do it, for to do her heart an ease,  
 And prayed her she would her sorrow appease, *assuage*  
 And said: "Iwis we Greekès can have joy  
 To honour you as well as folk of Troy."

18. He said eke thus: "I wot you thinketh strange *I know to you it seems*  
 (No wonder is) for it is to you new,  
 Th'acquaintance of these Trojans for to change  
 For folk of Greece, which that you never knew,  
 But wouldè never God, but if as true *God forbid*  
 A Greek you should among us allè find  
 As any Trojan is, and eke as kind.

19. "And by the cause I swore you, lo! right now  
 To be your friend, and help you to my might, *as best I can*  
 And for that more acquaintance eke of you  
 Have I had than another stranger wight,  
 So from this forth I pray you day and night  
 Commandeth me, how sore so that me smart, *however it pains me*  
 To do all that may like unto your heart:

20. "And that you me would as your brother treat,  
 And taketh not my friendship in despite;  
 And though your sorrows be for thingès great --  
 N'ot I not why but out of more respite <sup>1</sup> *I don't know / high regard*  
 Mine heart hath for t'amend it great delight,  
 And if I may your harmès not redress *cure*  
 I am right sorry for your heaviness. *sadness*

21. "For though you Trojans with us Greekès wroth *angry*  
 Have many a day been, always yet pardee *by God*  
 One god of Love in sooth we serven both: *in truth*  
 And for the love of God, my lady free, *my gracious lady*  
 Whom so you hate, as be not wroth with me, *Whomsoever / angry*  
 For truly there can no wight you serve

---

<sup>1</sup> 20.4-7: "I don't know why ( *N'ot I not why*), but out of high regard (*more respite*), I would be heartily pleased to improve things, and if I cannot cure your troubles, I am at least sorry for your sadness."

That half so loath your wrathè would deserve.<sup>1</sup>

*your anger*

22. "And n'ere it that we be so near the tent  
Of Calchas, which that see us bothè may,  
I would of this you tell all mine intent,  
But this ensealed is till another day.  
Give me your hand; I am and shall be ay,  
God help me so, while that my life may dure,  
Your own, aboven every creäture.

*And were it not  
who can see us*

*always  
may last*

23. "Thus said I ne'er ere now to woman born,  
For, God my heart as wisly gladden so,<sup>2</sup>  
I lovèd never woman herebeforn  
As paramour, ne never shall no mo';  
And, for the love of God, be not my foe,  
Al' can I not to you, my lady dear,  
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere.<sup>3</sup>

*never before now*

*Although  
to learn*

24. "And wonder naught, mine ownè lady bright,  
Though that I speak of love to you thus blive,  
For I have heard ere this of many a wight  
That lovèd thing he never saw his life;  
Eke I am not of power for to strive  
Against the god of Love, but him obey  
I will always, and mercy I you pray.

*so soon  
person  
(in) his life*

25. "There be so worthy knightès in this place,  
And you so fair, that ever each of them all  
Will painè him to standen in your grace;  
But might to me so fair a grace befall  
That me as for your servant you would call,  
So lowly nor so truly you serve  
Will none of them as I shall till I starve."

*so = such  
every one  
take pains / your favor*

*die*

---

<sup>1</sup> 21.5-7: "And whomsoever you hate, do not be angry with me, because no one who wants to serve you would be half so unwilling as I to earn your anger."

<sup>2</sup> 23.2: "For, as surely as I hope God may gladden my heart, ..."

<sup>3</sup> 23.6-7: "although I cannot make my (love) complaint to you properly, my dear lady, because I am only a learner." Diomedes, the practiced seducer, pretends he is a clumsy amateur.

26. Criseyde unto that purpose lite answered,  
 As she that was with sorrow oppressèd so,  
 That in effect she naught his talès heard,  
 But here and there, now here a word or two;  
 Her thought her sorrowful heartè burst a-two,  
 For when she gan her father far espy  
 Well nigh down off her horse she gan to sye.

*little*

*to sink*

27. But natheless she thankèd Diomede  
 Of all his trávail and of his goodè cheer,  
 And that him list his friendship to her bid,  
 And she accepted it in good mannér,  
 And would do fain that is him lief and dear,  
 And trusten him she would, and well she might,  
 As saidè she, and from her horse she 'light.

*his trouble*  
*he wanted to offer his f.*  
*with good grace*  
*would gladly do what pleased him*  
*alighted, dismounted*

28. Her father hath her in his armès nome,  
 And twenty times he kissed his daughter sweet,  
 And said: "O dearè daughter mine, welcome."  
 She said eke she was fain with him to meet,  
 And stood forth mutè, mild, and mansuete.  
 But here I leave her with her father dwell,  
 And forth I will of Troilus you tell.

*taken*

*glad*  
*and meek*

29. To Troy is come this woeful Troilus  
 In sorrow aboven allè sorrows smart,  
 With felon look and with face despiteous,  
 Tho suddenly down from his horse he start,  
 And through his palace with a swollen heart  
 To chamber went; of no wight took he heed,  
 Ne none to him dare speak a word for dread.

*painful*  
*scowling / angry*  
*There*

30. And there his sorrows that he sparèd had  
 He gave an issue large, and "Death!" he cried,  
 And in his throès frénetic and mad  
 He curseth Jove, Apollo, and Cupid,  
 He curseth Bacchus, Ceres, and Cyprid,  
 His birth, himself, his fate, and eke Natúre,  
 And, save his lady, every creäture.

*controled*  
*gave full vent*

*Cyprid = Venus*

31. To bed he goes, and wallows there and turneth  
 In fury as does Ixion in hell,  
 And in this wise he nigh till day sojourneth,  
 But then began his heartè a lite unswell  
 Through tearès which that gonnen up to well,  
 And piteously he cried upon Criseyde,  
 And to himself right thus he spoke and said:

*(chained to a wheel)  
 till nearly day he remains  
 a little*

32. "Where is mine ownè lady lief and dear?  
 Where is her whitè breast? Where is it? Where?  
 Where be her armès and her eyen clear  
 That yesternight this timè with me were?  
 Now may I weep alonè many a tear,  
 And grasp about I may, but in this place  
 Save a pillow naught find I to embrace.

*beloved*

33. "How shall I do? When shall she come again?  
 I n'ot, alas! Why let I her to go?  
 As woulde God I had as then been slain!  
 O heartè mine, Criseyde! O sweetè foe!  
 O lady mine! That I love and no mo',  
 To whom for evermore mine heart I dow,  
 See how I die; you n'll me not rescue!

*I don't know*

*endow*

34. "Who sees you now, my rightè lodèstar?  
 Who sits right now or stands in your presénce?  
 Who can comfórtén now your heartè's war,  
 Now I am gone? whom give you audience?  
 Who speaks for me right now in my absénce?  
 Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,  
 For well wot I, as ill as I you fare.<sup>1</sup>

*guiding star*

*nobody*

35. "How should I thus ten dayès full endure  
 When I the firstè night have all this teen?  
 How shall she do eke, sorrowful creäture,  
 For tenderness how shall she eke sustain  
 Such woe for me? O! piteous, pale, and green,  
 Shall be your freshè womanlicè face  
 For languor ere you turn unto this place."

*vexation*

*For = because of  
 and sickly  
 womanly  
 From pain (of longing)*

---

<sup>1</sup> 34.7: "I know well you are as badly off as I am."

36. And when he fell in any slumberings  
 Anon begin he wouldè for to groan,  
 And dreamen of the dreadfullestè things  
 That mightè be: as mette he were alone  
 In place horrible, making aye his moan,  
 Or meten that he was amongès all  
 His enemies, and in their handès fall.

*dream that he*

*Or dreamed*

37. And therewithal his body wouldè start,  
 And with the start all suddenly awake,  
 And such a tremor feel about his heart,  
 That of the fear his body wouldè quake,  
 And therewithal he would a noisè make,  
 And seem as though he wouldè fallè deep,  
 From high aloft; and then he wouldè weep,

38. And ruen on himself so piteously,  
 That wonder was to hear his fantasy;  
 Another time he wouldè mightily  
 Comfort himself, and say it was folly  
 So causèless such dread and woe to drie,  
 And eft begin his asper sorrows new,  
 That every man might on his painès rue.

*And take pity*

*to suffer  
 his bitter  
 take pity*

39. Who couldè tell aright, or full describe  
 His woe, his plaint, his languor, and his pain?  
 Not all the men that have or be alive:  
 Thou, Reader, may'st thyself full well divine  
 That such a woe my wit cannot define;  
 On idle for to write it should I swink  
 When that my wit is weary it to think.

*In vain / I s. labor  
 My mind*

40. On heaven yet the starrès werè seen,  
 Although full pale y-waxen was the moon,  
 And whiten gan the horizontè sheen  
 All eastwards, as it is wont to do,  
 And Phoebus with his rosy cartè soon  
 Gan after that to dress him up to fare,  
 When Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

*the m. had grown  
 bright horizon*

*the Sun / chariot  
 got ready to go*

41. This Pándare, that of all the day befor  
 Ne might have comen Troilus to see,  
 Although he on his head it had y-sworn,  
 For with King Priam all the day was he,  
 So that it lay not in his liberty  
 Nowhere to go, but on the morrow he went  
 To Troilus, when that he for him sent;

*could not come  
 solemnly promised*

42. For in his heartè he could well divine  
 That Troilus all night for sorrow woke,  
 And that he wouldè tell him of his pine;  
 This knew he well enough withouten book,  
 For which to chamber straight the way he took,  
 And Troilus then soberly he gret,  
 And on the bed full soon he gan him set.

*could guess  
 he wanted to / agony*

*quietly greeted T*

43. "My Pandarus!" quod Troilus, "the sorrow  
 Which that I drye I may not long endure;  
 I trow I shall not liven till to-morrow;  
 For which I would always on áventure  
 To thee devisen of my sépulture  
 The form, and of my meuble thou dispone  
 Right as thee seemeth best is for to done:

*suffer  
 I think  
 in preparation  
 give instructions for my tomb  
 my goods / dispose*

44. "But of the fire and flame funereal  
 In which my body burn shall into gleed,  
 And of the feast and playès palestral  
 At my vigil I pray thee take good heed  
 That all be well, and offer Mars my steed,  
 My sword, my helm, and, levè brother dear,  
 My shield to Pallas give, that shineth clear.

*coals, ashes  
 funeral games*

*beloved brother*

45. "The powder to which my heartè burned shall turn,  
 That pray I thee thou take, and it conserve  
 In a vessel that men clepe an urn  
 Of gold, and to my lady that I serve,  
 For love of whom thus piteously I starve,  
 So give it her, and do me this pleasánce  
 To pray her keep it for a rémembrance.

*call*

*die*

46. "For well I feelè by my malady,

And by my dreamès now and yore ago,  
 All certainly that I must needès die;  
 The owl eke, which that hight Ascalapho,  
 Hath shriekèd after me these nightès two.  
 And, god Mercury, of me now woeful wretch  
 The soulè guide, and when thee list, it fetch."<sup>1</sup>

*in the past*

*which is called*

*when you please*

47. Pandáre answered and saidè: "Troilus,  
 My dearè friend, as have I told thee yore  
 That it is folly for to sorrow thus,  
 And causèless, for which I can no more.  
 But whoso will not trowen redde nor lore  
 I cannot see in him no remedy,  
 But let him worthen with his fantasy.

*in the past*

*heed advice & teaching*

*remain with*

48. "But, Troilus, I pray thee tell me now  
 If that thou trow ere this that any wight  
 Hath lovèd paramours as well as thou?  
 Yea, God wot, and from many a worthy knight  
 Hath his lady gone a fortnight  
 And he not yet made halvendel the fare.  
 What need is thee to maken all this care?

*believe that anyone*

*two weeks  
 half the fuss  
 this noise*

49. "Since day by day thou mayst thyselfen see  
 That from his lover or else from his wife  
 A man must twinnen of necessity.  
 Yea, though he love her as as his ownè life,  
 Yet n'ill he with himself thus maken strife;  
 For well thou wost, my levè brother dear,  
 That always friendès may not been y-fere.

*must part*

*you know  
 together*

50. "How do these folk that see their lovers wedded  
 By friendès' might, as it betides full oft  
 And see them in their spouses' bed y-bedded?  
 God wot, they take it, wisly, fair and soft.  
 For-why good hope holds up their heart aloft  
 And for they can a time of sorrow endure;  
 As time them hurt, a timè doth them cure.

*By family pressure*

*G. knows / indeed  
 Because  
 And because*

---

<sup>1</sup> 46.6: Mercury assigned spirits their place after death. See below 261.7.



51. "So shouldest thou endure, and letten slide  
 The time, and fonden to be glad and light. *and try to be*  
 Ten days is not so long for to abide.  
 And since she thee to comen has behight *has promised*  
 She will her hest not broken for no wight; *promise / nobody*  
 For dread thee not that she n'll finden way  
 To come again; my life that durst I lay. *dare I bet*
52. "Thy swevens eke and all such fantasy *dreams*  
 Drive out, and let them faren to mischance; *go to the devil*  
 For they proceed of thy melánocholy,  
 That doth thee feel in sleep all this penánce. *causes you to feel*  
 A straw for all swevens' significance!  
 God help me so, I count them not a bean;  
 There wot no man aright what dreamès mean. *No man knows*
53. "For priestès of the temple tellen this,  
 That dreamès be the revelations  
 Of gods; and as well they tell, iwis, *indeed*  
 That they be infernál illusions.  
 And leeches ween that of complexions *doctors believe*  
 Proceeden they, or fast, or gluttony.<sup>1</sup>  
 Who wot in sooth thus what they signify? *Who knows in truth*
54. "Eke others say that through impressiõns  
 (As if a wight has fast a thing in mind), *a person*  
 That thereof cometh such avisiõns;  
 And others say, as they in bookès find,  
 That after timès of the year by kind *by kind = naturally*  
 Men dream, and that th' effect goes by the moon.  
 But 'lieve no dream, for it is nought to do. *believe / is worthless*
55. "Well worth of dreamès aye these oldè wives, *are for old wives*  
 And truly eke augury of these fowls; *soothsaying*  
 For fear of which men weenen lose their lives, *think they will*

---

<sup>1</sup> 53: Medieval thinkers explained dreams in different ways. Clerical commentators acknowledged that dreams could be of divine origin, as with the Josephs of the Old and New Testaments, but warned that they could also be of diabolical origin. Physicians (*leeches*) held that dreams often came from the body's predominant "complexion" or "humor" of the moment, in this case melancholy; or that they came from eating or drinking too much or too little.

As raven's qualm or shrieking of these owles.  
 To trowen on it both false and foul is.  
 Alas! Alas! So noble a creature  
 As is a man, shall dread such ordure!

*croaking*  
*To believe in*  
  
*rubbish*

56. "For which with all my heart I thee beseech  
 Unto thyself that all this thou forgive;  
 And rise up now withouten more speech,  
 And let us cast how forth may best be drive  
 This time, and eke how freshly we may live  
 When that she comes, the which shall be right soon.  
 God help me so, the best is thus to do.

*think / spent*  
  
*This is the best thing to do*

57. "Rise, let us speak of lusty life in Troy  
 That we have led, and forth the time drive,  
 And eke of time coming us rejoice,  
 That bringen shall our bliss now so blive,  
 And languor of these twice dayes five  
 We shall therewith so forget or oppress,  
 That well unneth it do shall us duress.

*pass the time*  
  
*very soon*  
*10-day tedium*  
*or defeat*  
*scarcely bother us*

58. "This town is full of lordes all about,  
 And truce lasteth all this mean while;  
 Go we play us in some lusty rout,<sup>1</sup>  
 To Sarpedon, not hence but a mile,  
 And thus thou shalt the time well beguile,  
 And drive it forth unto that blissful morrow  
 That thou her see that cause is of thy sorrow.

*pass*  
  
*you (will) see*

59. "Now rise, my dear brother Troilus!  
 For certes it no honour is to thee  
 To weep, and in thy bed to jouken thus,  
 For truly, of one thing trust to me,  
 If thou thus lie a day or two or three,  
 The folk will say that thou for cowardice  
 Thee feignest sick, and that thou dar'st not rise."

*to lie*

60. This Troilus answer'd; "O brother dear!  
 This knowen folk that have y-suffered pain,

---

<sup>1</sup> 58.3: "Let's go amuse ourselves in some lively company."

That though he weep and makè sorrowful cheer  
 That feeleth harm and smart in every vein  
 No wonder is; and though I ever 'plain  
 Or always weep, I am nothing to blame,  
 Since I have lost the cause of all my game.

*my joy*

61. "But since of finè force I must arise,  
 I shall arise as soon as e'er I may,  
 And God, to whom mine heart I sacrifice,  
 So send us hastily the tenthè day,  
 For was there never fowl so fain of May  
 As I shall be when that she comes in Troy  
 That cause is of my torment and my joy.

*of necessity*

*bird so happy*

62. "But whither is thy redde," quod Troilus,  
 "That we may play us best in all this town?"  
 "By God, my counsel is," quod Pandarus  
 "To ride and play us with King Sarpedoun."  
 So long of this they speaken up and down  
 Till Troilus gan at the last assent  
 To rise; and forth to Sarpedoun they went.

*advice  
 find distraction*

63. This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable  
 Was e'er his life, and full of high largesse  
 With all that might y-servèd be on table  
 That dainty was, all cost it great richesse,  
 He fed them day by day, that such noblesse --  
 As saiden both the most and eke the least --  
 Was ne'er ere that day wist at any feast.

*hospitality*

*even if it cost  
 generosity*

*known*

64. Nor in this world there is no instrument  
 Delicious through wind or touch of chord,  
 As far as any wight hath ever went,<sup>1</sup>  
 That tonguè tell or heartè may record  
 But at that feast it was well heard accord;  
 Nor of ladies eke so fair a company  
 On dance ere then was never seen with eye.

*any person ... thought*

*in harmony*

65. But what availeth this to Troilus,

---

<sup>1</sup> 64: *Went* might be the past participle of either *wenen*: think or *wenden*: go.

That for his sorrow nothing of it raught,<sup>1</sup>  
 But ever in one his heartè piteous  
 Full busily Criseyde, his lady, sought?  
 On her was ever all that his heartè thought,  
 Now this, now that so fast imagining  
 That glad iwis can him no festying.

*But continually*

*no festivity can gladden him*

66. These ladies eke that at this feastè be,  
 Since that he saw his lady was away,  
 It was his sorrow on them for to see,  
 Or for to hear on instruments so play;  
 For she that of his heartè bore the key  
 Was absent, lo! this was his fantasy,  
 That no wight shouldè maken melody.<sup>2</sup>

*to look*

67. Nor there n'as hour in all the day or night,  
 When he was there as no man might him hear,  
 That he ne said, "O lovesome lady bright!  
 How have you farèd since that you were here?  
 Welcome iwis, mine ownè lady dear!"  
 But welaway! All this n'as but a maze;  
 Fortune his houe intended but to glaze.<sup>3</sup>

*where no one could*

*alas / imagination*

68. The letters eke that she of oldè time  
 Had him y-sent he would alonè read  
 A hundred sithe atwixen noon and prime,<sup>4</sup>  
 Refiguring her shape, her womanhood  
 Within his heart, and every word or deed  
 That passèd was; and thus he drove to an end  
 The fourthè day, and said that he would wend;

*100 times between*

*wished to leave*

69. And saidè: "Levè brother, Pandarus!  
 Intendest thou that we shall herè bleve

*Dear brother  
 stay*

---

<sup>1</sup> 65.2 : 'who because of his sorrow, cared nothing about it.'

<sup>2</sup> 66.5-7: Since his beloved was absent, he had the idea that nobody should make music.

<sup>3</sup> 67.7: Fortune just intended to give him a glass hood, i.e. to delude him.

<sup>4</sup> 68.3: *Betwixt noon and prime* could be a kind of inversion meaning "between about 9 a.m. and noon", or it could be literally between noon one day and 9 a.m. the next day, hence most of any 24-hour day.

Till Sarpedoun will forth congeyen us?  
 Yet were it fairer that we took our leave;  
 For God's love, now let us soon at eve  
 Our leavè take, and homeward let us turn,  
 For truly I will not thus sojourn."

*throw us out*

70. Pandarus answered: "Be we comen hither  
 To fetchen fire and runnen home again?  
 God help me so I can not tellen whither  
 We mighten go, if I shall soothly sayn,  
 Where any wight is of us morè fain  
 Than Sarpedoun; and if we hencè hie  
 Thus suddenly, I hold it villainy,

*more glad of us  
 hurry  
 bad manners*

71. "Since that we saiden that we wouldè bleve  
 With him a week, and now thus suddenly  
 The fourthè day to take of him our leave!  
 He wouldè wonder on it truly.  
 Let us hold forth our purpose firmly,  
 And since that you behighten him to bide  
 Hold forward now, and after let us ride."

*stay*

*promised to stay  
 Keep your word now*

72. This Pandarus with allè pain and woe  
 Made him to dwell; and at the weekè's end  
 Of Sarpedoun they took their leavè tho,  
 And on their way they speden them to wend.  
 Quod Troilus: "Now, Lord, me gracè send  
 That I may finden at my home-coming  
 Criseyde come." And therewith gan he sing.

*made him stay*

*prepared to leave*

73. "Yea, hazelwoodè!" thoughtè this Pandare,  
 And to himself full soberly he said:  
 "God wot, refreyden may this hot fare  
 Ere Calchas send to Troilus Criseyde!"  
 But natheless he japèd thus and played,  
 And swore iwis his heart him well behight  
 She wouldè come as soon as e'er she might.

*A likely tale!*

*t. hot affair will cool*

*joked  
 indeed / told him*

74. When they unto the palace were y-come  
 Of Troilus, they down off horse alight,  
 And to the chamber their way then have they nome,

*taken*

And until time that it began to night  
 They spoken of Criseyde the bright,  
 And after this, when that them bothè lest,  
 They speed them from the supper unto rest.

*to get dark*  
*"Cris-é-y-de": 4 syllables*  
*it pleased them both*

75. On morrow, as soon as day began to clear,  
 This Troilus gan of his sleep t'abraid,  
 And to Pandárus, his own brother dear,  
 "For love of God," full piteously he said,  
 "As go we see the palace of Criseyde,  
 "For since we yet may have no other feast,  
 So let us see her palace at the least!"

*In the morning*  
*to wake*

76. And therewithal his meinie for to blind  
 A cause he found into the town to go,  
 And to Criseyde's palace they gan wend;  
 But Lord! this silly Troilus was woe,  
 Him thought his sorrowful heartè burst a-two  
 For when he saw her doorès sparrèd all  
 Well nigh for sorrow down he gan to fall.

*to deceive his household*  
*made their way*  
*barred*

77. Therewith when he was 'ware, and gan behold  
 How shut was every window of the place,  
 As frost him thought his heartè gan to cold,  
 For which with changèd deadly palè face  
 Withouten word he forth began to pace,  
 And, as God would, he gan so fast to ride  
 That no wight of his countenance espied.

*aware*  
*get cold*

78. Then said he thus: "O palace desolate! <sup>1</sup>  
 O house of houses whilom best y-hight!  
 O palace empty and disconsolate!  
 O thou lantern, of which quenched is the light!  
 O palace whilom day, that now art night!  
 Well oughtest thou to fall and I to die,  
 Since she is went that wont was us to gie.

*once called the best*  
*that once was day*  
*gone / used to guide*

---

<sup>1</sup> 78-9: Troilus's address is known as a "paraclausithyron", a convention of classical love poetry where the desolate lover addresses the beloved's house, especially the door. It extends to other places that bring up memories of the beloved. See M. Bloomfield's article in *NM* 73 (1972), 15-24.

79. "O palace whilom crown of houses all!  
 Enlumined with the sun of allè bliss,  
 O ring from which the ruby is out fall!  
 O cause of woe that cause hast been of liss!  
 Yet since I may no bet, fain would I kiss  
 Thy coldè doors, if I durst for this rout; <sup>1</sup>  
 And farewell shrine of which the saint is out!"

*once the crown*

*joy  
 no better, gladly*

80. Therewith he cast on Pandarus his eye  
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold,  
 And when he might his time aright espy,  
 Aye as he rode to Pandarus he told  
 His newè sorrow, and his joyès old  
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,  
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

*Constantly*

*color  
 take pity*

81. From thencè forth he rideth up and down,  
 And every thing came him to réembrance  
 As he rode forth by places of the town  
 In which he whilom had all his pleasáncé:  
 "Lo! yonder saw I last my lady dance,  
 And in that temple with her eyen clear  
 Me caughtè first my rightè lady dear. <sup>2</sup>

82. "And yonder have I heard full lustily  
 My dearè heartè laugh, and yonder play  
 Saw I her oncè eke full blissfully,  
 And yonder oncè to me gan she say:  
 `Now goodè sweet, love me well, I pray,'  
 And yon so goodly gan she me behold  
 That to the death my heart is to her hold.

*sweet(heart)  
 yon(der) so lovingly  
 bound*

83. "And at the corner in the yonder house  
 Heard I mine alderlevest lady dear  
 So womanly with voice melodious  
 Singen so well, so goodly and so clear,

*dearest lady of all*

---

<sup>1</sup> 79.6: "If I dared in front of this crowd." No crowd has been mentioned. Perhaps it simply means "in public".

<sup>2</sup> 81.6-7: "My very dear lady first caught me with her bright eyes."

That in my soul methinketh yet I hear  
 The blissful sound. And in that yonder place  
 My lady first me took unto her grace."

*her favor*

84. Then thought he thus: "O blissful lord, Cupid,  
 When I the process have in memory  
 How thou me hast werreyed on every side,  
 Men might a book make of it like a story.  
 What need is thee to seek on me victory,  
 Since I am thine and wholly at thy will?  
 What joy hast thou thine ownè folk to spill?"

*attacked*

*victory over me*

*destroy*

85. "Well hast thou, lord, y-wroke on me thine ire,  
 Thou mighty God, and dreadful for to grieve,  
 Now mercy, lord, thou wost well I desire  
 Thy gracè most of allè lustès leve.<sup>1</sup>  
 And live and die I will in thy belief;  
 For which I n'ax in guerdon but a boon,  
 That thou me send again Criseyde soon.

*wreaked your anger*

*offend*

*knowest well*

*ask in return only one favor*

*send C. to me*

86. "Distreyn her heart as fastè to return  
 As thou dost mine to longen her to see;  
 Then wot I well that she will not sojourn.  
 Now, blissful lord, so cruel thou ne be  
 Unto the blood of Troy I prayè thee  
 As Juno was unto the blood Thebane,<sup>2</sup>  
 For which the folk of Thebès caught their bane."

*constrain*

*delay*

*their destruction*

87. And after this he to the gatès went  
 There as Criseyde out rode a full good pace,  
 And up and down there made he many a went,  
 And to himself full oft he said: "Alas!  
 From hencè rode my bliss and my solace;  
 As wouldè blissful God now for his joy  
 I might her see again come into Troy!"

*(city) gates*

*a turn*

*I wish to God*

---

<sup>1</sup> 85.3-4: *thou wost ... leve*: "You know well that of all my deepest desires (*lustès leve*) I want thy favor most."

<sup>2</sup> Juno was hostile to the people of Thebes because of Jove's infidelities with Theban women.



88. "And to the yonder hill I gan her guide,  
 Alas! and there I took of her my leave,  
 And yond I saw her to her father ride,  
 For sorrow of which my heartè shall to-cleave,  
 And hither home I came when it was eve,  
 And here I dwell, out cast from every joy,  
 And shall, till I may see her eft in Troy."

*escorted her**yonder  
split apart**again*

89. And of himself imaginèd he oft  
 To be defet and pale and waxen less  
 Than he was wont, and that men saiden soft,  
 "What may it be? Who can the soothè guess  
 Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?"  
 And all this n'as but his meláncholy,  
 That he had of himself such fantasy.

*disfigured / become thinner  
quietly**was nothing but*

90. Another time imaginen he would  
 That every wight that wentè by the way  
 Had of him ruth, and that they sayen should:  
 "I am right sorry Troilus will die;"  
 And thus he drove a day yet forth or tway,  
 As you have heard; such life right gan he lead  
 As he that stood betwixen hope and dread;

*every person  
Had pity**day or two*

91. For which he likèd in his songs to show  
 Th' encheason of his woe as he best might,  
 And made a song of wordès but a few,  
 Somewhat his woeful heartè for to light,  
 And when he was from every mannè's sight,  
 With softè voice he of his lady dear,  
 That absent was, gan sing as you may hear:

*The reason**lighten*Canticus Troili II <sup>1</sup>

92. "O star! of which I lost have all the light,  
 With heartè sore well ought I to bewail  
 That ever dark in torment, night by night,  
 Toward my death with wind in steer I sail,  
 For which the tenthè night, if that I fail

*wind astern*


---

<sup>1</sup> "Song of Troilus": For Troilus's earlier songwriting see Bk. I, 58 ff

The guiding to thy beamès bright an hour,  
My ship and me Charybdis will devour." <sup>1</sup>

*by an hour  
(whirlpool)*

93. This song when he thus sungen haddè, soon  
He fell again into his sighès old,  
And every night, as was his wont to do,  
He stood the brightè moon for to behold,  
And all his sorrow to the moon he told,  
And said: "Iwis, when thou art hornèd new <sup>2</sup>  
I shall be glad, if all the world be true.

*In truth*

94. "I saw thine hornès old eke by that morrow  
When hencè rode my rightè lady dear,  
That cause is of my torment and my sorrow,  
For which, O brightè Lucina the clear !  
For love of God run fast about thy sphere,  
For when thine hornès new begin to spring,  
Then shall she come that may my blissè bring."

*before that morning  
my v. dear lady*

*O moon bright*

95. The dayès more, and longer every night,  
Than they be wont to be, him thoughtè tho,  
And that the sunnè went his course unright,  
By longer way than it was wont to go;  
And said: "Iwis, me dredeth evermo'  
The sunnè's son, Phaethon, be alive,  
And that his father's cart amiss he drives."

*usually were / then  
wrongly*

*chariot*

96. Upon the wallès fast eke would he walk,  
And on the Greekès' host eke would he see,  
And to himself right thus then would he talk:  
"Lo! yonder is mine ownè lady free."  
Or elsè: "Yonder there the tentès be,  
And thencè comes this air that is so soot,  
That in my soul I feel it does me boote.

*look*

*gracious lady  
tents  
sweet  
good*

---

<sup>1</sup> 92.7: Charybdis was the name of a monster and her whirlpool that Odysseus's ship had to avoid in order to survive.

<sup>2</sup> 93.6: "In truth, when there is a new moon". The crescent moon, waxing or waning (*hornes old*), is thought of as having horns. See also two references in the next stanza.

97. "And hardily this wind that more and more  
 Thus stoundêmeal encreaseth in my face  
 Is of my lady's deepè sighès sore;  
 I prove it thus: for in no other space  
 Of all this town, save only in this place,  
 Feel I no wind that soundeth so like pain.  
 It says: `Alas! why twinnèd be we twain?' "

*surely  
 hour by hour*

*separated are we two*

98. This longè time he driveth forth right thus,  
 Till fully passèd was the ninthè night,  
 And ay beside him was this Pandarus,  
 That busily did all his fullè might  
 Him to comfòrt and make his heartè light,  
 Giving him hope always the tenthè morrow  
 That she shall come and stinten all his sorrow.

*And always*

*day  
 stop*

99. Upon that other side eke was Criseyde  
 With women few among the Greekès strong,  
 For which full oft a-day "Alas!" she said,  
 "That I was born! Well may mine heartè long  
 After my death, for now live I too long;  
 Alas! and I ne may it not amend,  
 For now is worse than ever yet I wend.

*`long' is a verb  
 For death*

*I thought (it would be)*

100. "My father n'ill for nothing do me grace  
 To go again for aught I can him queme,  
 And if so be that I my termè pace  
 My Troilus shall in his heartè deem  
 That I am false, and so it may well seem;  
 Thus shall I have unthank on every side.  
 That I was born so welaway the tide!

*won't allow me  
 do to please him  
 miss the agreed day  
 think*

*blame  
 alas the hour!*

101. "And if that I me put in jeopardy  
 To steal away by night, and it befall  
 That I be caught, I shall be held a spy,  
 Or elsè, lo! this dread I most of all,  
 If in the handès of some wretch I fall  
 I n'am but lost, al' be mine heartè true.  
 Now mighty God thou on my sorrow rue!"

*me = myself*

*some ruffian  
 I'm as good as lost, although  
 take pity*

102. Full pale y-waxen was her brightè face,

*had become v. pale*

Her limbs lean, as she that all the day  
 Stood when she durst, and lookèd on the place  
 Where she was born, and where she dwelled had ay;  
 And all the night weeping, alas! she lay.  
 And thus despairèd out of allè cure,  
 She led her life, this woeful creäture.

*dared  
 always*

103. Full oft a-day she sighed eke for distress,  
 And in herself she went aye portraying  
 Of Troilus the greatè worthiness,  
 And all his goodly wordès récording  
 Since first that day her love began to spring;  
 And thus she set her woeful heart afire  
 Through rémembráncé of that she gan desire.

*picturing*

*of what*

104. In all this world there n'is so cruel heart,  
 That her had heard complainen in her sorrow,  
 That n'ould have wopen for her painès smart,  
 So tenderly she wept both eve and morrow.  
 Her neededè no tearès for to borrow.  
 And this was yet the worst of all her pain,  
 There was no wight to whom she durst her 'plain.

*wept*

*no one / dared*

105. Full ruefully she lookèd upon Troy,  
 Beheld the towers high and eke the halls;  
 "Alas!" quod she, "the pleasance and the joy,  
 The which that now all turnèd into gall's,  
 Have I had oft within those yonder walls!<sup>1</sup>  
 O Troilus! what dost thou now?" she said;  
 "Lord, whether thou yet think upon Criseyde?

*into bitterness*

*do you think?*

106. "Alas! I ne had trowèd on your lore,  
 And went with you, as you me redde ere this,  
 Then had I now not sighèd half so sore:  
 Who might have said that I had done amiss  
 To steal away with such one as he is?  
 But all too late cometh the letuary  
 When men the corpse unto the gravè carry.

*trusted your judgement  
 advised*

*medicine*

---

<sup>1</sup> 105.2-5: The original rhyming forms are: *halles / gall is / wallès*.

107. "Too late is now to speak of this mattér.

Prudence, alas, one of thine eyen three

*3 eyes*

Me lackèd always ere that I came here;<sup>1</sup>

On time y-passèd, well remembered me;

*I could r. the past*

And present time eke could I well y-see;

But future time, ere I was in the snare,

*before / trap*

Could I not see. That causeth all my care.

108. "But natheless, betide what may betide,

*happen what may*

I shall to-morrow at night, by east or west,

Out of this host steal on some manner side,

*at some point*

And go with Troilus where as him lest;

*where he pleases*

This purpose will I hold, and this is best;

No force of wicked tonguès' janglery,

*No matter about*

For e'er on love have wretches had envy:<sup>2</sup>

109. "For whoso will of every word take heed,

Or rulen him by every wightès wit,

*everyone's judgement*

Ne shall he never thriven, out of dread,

*without doubt*

For that that some men blamen ever yet,

*that which*

Lo, other manner folk commenden it;

And as for me, for all such variance

Felicity clepe I my suffisance.

*Happiness is all I want (?)*

110. "For which, withouten any wordes mo'

To Troy I will, as for conclusion."

*will (go)*

But God it wot, ere fully monthès two

*G. knows, before*

She was full far from that intencion,

For bothè Troilus and Troyè town

Shall knotèless throughout her heartè slide,<sup>3</sup>

*smoothly*

For she will take a purpose to abide.

111. This Diomedè of whom you tell I 'gan,

*began*

Goes now within himself ay arguing,

*constantly*

---

<sup>1</sup> 107.2-3: Prudence has an eye on the future as well as the past and present. Criseyde has always lacked the ability to look at the future, she says.

<sup>2</sup> 108.7: "For wretched people have always shown envy of lovers."

<sup>3</sup> 110.6: *knotless*: like a thread that has no knot, and so slips out of a needle.

With all the sleight and all that e'er he can,  
 How he may best with shortest tarrying  
 Into his net Criseyde's heartè bring;  
 To this intent he couldè never fine;  
 To fishen her he laid out hook and line.

*cunning  
 with least delay*

*never give up*

112. But natheless well in his heart he thought  
 That she was not without a love in Troy,  
 For never sithen he her thencè brought,  
 Ne could he see her laugh or maken joy;  
 He n'ist how best her heart for to accoy;  
 "But for t' essay," he said, "it naught ne grieveth.<sup>1</sup>  
 "For he that naught assayeth, naught achieveth."

*lover  
 since*

*didn't know / to comfort*

*nothing venture, n. gain*

113. Yet said he to himself upon a night:  
 "Now, am I not a fool, that wot well how  
 Her woe for love is of another wight,  
 And hereupon to go essay her now?  
 I may well wit it will not be my prow,<sup>2</sup>  
 For wisè folk in bookès it express:  
 `Men shall not woo a wight in heaviness.'

*knows  
 for another man  
 try her  
 my good, advantage*

*a person in grief*

114. "But whoso mightè winnen such a flower  
 From him for whom she mourneth night and day,  
 He might well say he were a conqueror";  
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay,  
 Thought in his heart: "Happen what happen may,  
 Al' should I die, I will her heartè seek,  
 I shall no morè losen but my speech."

*always  
 Whatever happens  
 Even if*

115. This Diomedè, as bookès us declare,  
 Was in his needès prest and courageous,  
 With sternè voice, and mighty limbs square,  
 Hardy and testive, strong and chivalrous  
 Of deedès like his father Tydeus;  
 And some men say he was of tonguè large,  
 And heir he was of Calydon and Arge.

*ready  
 brave & headstrong  
 was eloquent*

---

<sup>1</sup> 112.6-7: "It doesn't hurt to try (*to essay*); he who attempts nothing achieves nothing."

<sup>2</sup> 113.5: "I have good reason to think that it will not do me any good."

116. Criseyde meanè was of her statúre.  
 Thereto so shaped of face, and eke of cheer,  
 There mighten be no fairer creäture;  
 And often timès this was her mannér  
 To go y-tressèd with her hairès clear  
 Down by her collar, at her back behind,  
 Which, with a thread of goldè, she would bind.

*of average height  
 manner*

117. And, save her browès joinèden ifere,<sup>1</sup>  
 There was no lack in aught I can espy;  
 But for to speken of her eyen clear,  
 Lo! truly, they written that her saw,  
 That paradise stood formèd in her eye,  
 And with her richè beauty evermore  
 Strove love in her ay which of them was more.

*together*

*always / greater*

118. She sober was, simple, and wise withal,  
 The best y-nourishèd eke that might be,  
 And goodly of her speech in general,  
 Charitable, stately, lusty, free,<sup>2</sup>  
 Ne nevermore ne lackèd her pity,  
 Tender-heartèd, sliding of couráge;  
 But truly, I cannot tell her age.

*was serious / also  
 well bred, well mannered*

119. And Troilus well waxen was in height,  
 And cóplete, formèd by proportion  
 So well, that Kind it naught amenden might,  
 Young, fresh, and strong, and hardy as lion,  
 And true as steel in each condition,  
 One of the best entechèd creäture  
 That is or shall while that the world may dure.

*well-grown*

*Nature couldn't improve*

*endowed  
 may last*

120. And certainly in story it is found  
 That Troilus was never to no wight,  
 As in his time, in no degree secónd  
 In derring-do that longeth to a knight;

*to nobody*

*that pertains*

---

<sup>1</sup> 117.1: "And, except that her eyebrows were joined together" -- presumably a feature considered less than perfect.

<sup>2</sup> 118.4: "Loving (?), dignified, cheerful, generous."

Al' might a giant passen him of might <sup>1</sup>  
 His heart aye with the first and with the best  
 Stood peregal to dare do what him lest.<sup>2</sup>

121. But for to tellen forth of Diomedé,  
 It fell that after on the tenthé day  
 Since that Criseyde out of the city yede,  
 This Diomedé, as fresh as branch in May,  
 Came to the tenté there as Calchas lay,  
 And feigned him with Calchas have to doon,  
 But what he meant I shall you tellen soon.

*It happened  
 went*

*pretended he had business*

122. Criseyde, at shorté wordés for to tellé,  
 Welcomed him, and down him by her set,  
 As he was ethe enough to maken dwell;<sup>3</sup>  
 And after this, withouten longer let,  
 The spices and the wine men forth them fet,  
 And forth they speak of this and that y-fere,  
 As friendés do, of which some shall you hear.

*in short*

*easy / stay  
 delay  
 fetched  
 together*

123. He gan first fallen of the war in speech  
 Betwixen them and folk of Troyé town,  
 And of the siege he gan eke her beseech  
 To tell him what was her opinion;  
 From that demand he so descended down  
 To asken her if that her strangé thought  
 The Greekés' guise and workés that they wrought,

*talk about*

*she thought it strange  
 customs / did*

124. And why her father tarrieth so long  
 To wedden her unto some worthy wight.  
 Criseydé, that was in her painés strong  
 For love of Troilus her owné knight,  
 So farforth as she cunning had or might,  
 Answered him then, but as of his intent

*as best she could*

---

<sup>1</sup> 120.5: "Although a giant might surpass him in strength." The triple negative in 2-3, "never...no wight...no degree" is acceptable emphasis in Chaucer's English.

<sup>2</sup> 120.7: "Stood fully equal to dare do what he needed to do."

<sup>3</sup> 122.3: "It was easy enough to get him to stay."



It seemèd that she wist not what he meant.

*knew*

125. But natheless this ilkè Diomedè  
Gan in himself assure, and thus he said:

*same  
Grew confident*

"If I aright have taken on you heed,<sup>1</sup>  
Me thinketh thus, O lady mine Criseyde,  
That, since I first hand on your bridle laid,  
When I came out of Troyè by the morrow,  
Ne might I never see you but in sorrow.

*in the morning*

126. "I can not say what may the causè be,  
But if for love of some Trojan it were,  
The which right sorè would a-thinken me,  
That you for any wight that dwelleth there  
Shoulden spill a quarter of a tear,  
Or piteously your selfen so beguile,  
For dreadèless it is not worth the while.

*Unless  
trouble me deeply  
person*

*deceive  
without doubt*

127. "The folk of Troy, as who saith all and some,  
In prison be, as you your selfen see,  
From thencè shall not one alivè come  
For all the gold atwixen sun and sea;  
Trusteth well this, and understandeth me,  
There shall not one to mercy go alive,  
Al' were he lord of worldès twicè five.<sup>2</sup>

*as all agree*

*between*

*Even if*

128. "Such wreak on them, for fetching of Elaine,  
There shall be take, ere that we hencè wend,  
That Manes, which that goddès be of pain,  
Shall be aghast that Greekes will them shend;  
And men shall dread unto the worldè's end  
From hencèforth to ravish any queen,  
So cruel shall our wreak on them be seen.

*vengeance  
before we go  
gods of underworld  
G. w. put them to shame*

*carry off  
vengeance*

129. "And, but if Calchas lead us with ambáges,

*unless / ambiguities*

---

<sup>1</sup> 125.3: "If I have read you correctly."

<sup>2</sup> 127-133: "Even if he were master of ten worlds." In this speech Diomedè makes at greater length and much more forcefully Troilus's point of IV, st. 212-13, but the effect of Diomedè's speech on Criseyde is strikingly different.

That is to say, with double wordès sly,  
 Such as men clepe a word with two viságes,  
 You shall well knowen that I naught ne lie,  
 And all this thing right see it with your eye,  
 And that anon, you will not trow how soon;  
 Now taketh heed, for it is for to doon.

*call / faces*

*shortly / believe  
to be done*

130. "What! weenen you that your wise father would  
 Have given Antenor for you anon,  
 If he ne wistè that the city should  
 Destroyèd be? Why, nay, so may I gon.  
 He knew full well there shall not 'scapen one  
 That Trojan is, and for the greatè fear,  
 He durst not that you dwellèd longer there.

*I assure you  
escape*

*dared not (allow)*

131. "What will you more, O lovesome lady dear!  
 Let Troy and Trojans from your heartè pace;  
 Drive out the bitter hope, and make good cheer,  
 And clepe again the beauty of your face  
 That you with saltè tearès so deface,  
 For Troy is brought in such a jeopardy  
 That it to save is now no remedy.

*call back*

132. "And thinketh well you shall in Greekès find  
 A morè perfect love, ere it be night,  
 Than any Trojan is, and morè kind,  
 And bet to serven you will do his might;  
 And if that you vouchsafe, my lady bright,  
 I will be he to serven you myself,  
 Yea, lever than be king of Greeces twelve."

*lover*

*better  
if you allow (it)*

*rather*

133. And with that word he gan to waxen red,  
 And in his speech a little while he quoke,  
 And cast aside a little with his head,  
 And stint a while, and afterwards he woke,  
 And soberly on her he threw his look,  
 And said: "I am, al' be it you no joy,  
 As gentle man as any wight in Troy.

*to blush  
shook*

*paused / opened his eyes  
seriously  
although it is not  
As well born as any person*

134. "For if my father, Tydeus," he said,  
 Y-livèd had, then I had been ere this

Of Calydon and Arge a king, Criseyde,  
 And so I hope that I shall yet, y-wis  
 But he was slain, alas! the more harm is,  
 Unhappily at Thebès all too rathe,  
 Polynices and many a man to scathe.<sup>1</sup>

*early  
 to the harm of*

135. "But heartè mine! since that I am your man,  
 And be the first of whom I seekè grace  
 To serven you as heartily as I can,  
 And ever shall while I to live have space,  
 So that, ere I depart out of this place,  
 You will me granten that I may to-morrow  
 At better leisure tell you of my sorrow."

*And (you) are (?)*

136. How should I tell his wordès that he said?  
 He spoke enough for one day at the most;  
 It provèd well; he spoke so that Criseyde  
 Granted on the morrow at his request  
 For to spoken with him at the least,  
 So that he would not speak of such mattér;  
 And thus she to him said, as you may hear,

*Provided that*

137. As she that had her heart on Troilus  
 So fast y-set that none might it arace,  
 And strangely she spoke, and saidè thus:  
 "O Diomedè! I love that ilkè place  
 Where I was born, and Jovè, of thy grace  
 Deliver it soon of all that doth it care!  
 God, for thy might so leave it well to fare!

*uproot  
 And distantly*

*all that troubles it  
 grant it do well*

138. "That Greekès would their wrath on Troyè wreak,  
 If that they might, I know it well iwis;  
 But it shall not befallen as you speak,  
 And God toforn! And further over this  
 I wot my father wise and ready is,  
 And that he me hath bought, as you me told,  
 So dear I am the more unto him hold.

*indeed*

*If it please God  
 I know*

*deeply beholden*

---

<sup>1</sup> 134: Tydeus supported the cause of Polynices against his brother Eteocles for control of Thebes. His death was a blow (*scathe*) to Polynices and many another man.

139. "That Greekès be of high condition  
 I wot eke well, but certain, men shall find  
 As worthy folk withinnè Troyè town,  
 As cunning, and as perfect, and as kind,  
 As be betwixen Orcades and Inde;  
 And that you couldè well your lady serve  
 I trow eke well, her thanks for to deserve.

*rank*  
*I know well also*

*Orkneys & India*

*I believe also*

140. "But as to speak of love, iwis," she said,  
 "I had a lord to whom I wedded was,  
 The whose mine heart was all till that he died;  
 And other love, as help me now Pallas,  
 There in my heartè n'is ne never was;  
 And that you be of noble and high kindred  
 I have well heard it tellen, out of dread.

*indeed*

*Athene*  
*isn't & never was*

*without doubt*

141. "And that doth me to have so great a wonder  
 That you will scornen any woman so;  
 Eke, God wot, love and I be far asunder;  
 I am disposèd bet, so may I go,  
 Unto my death to 'plain and maken woe:<sup>1</sup>  
 What I shall after do I cannot say,  
 But truly, as yet me list not play.

*And, God knows*  
*more disposed, I declare*

*I don't want to flirt*

142. "My heart is now in tribulation,  
 And you in armès busy day by day;  
 Hereafter, when you wonnen have the town,  
 Paraunter then so it happen may  
 That when I see what never yet I saw,  
 Then will I workè what I never wrought;  
 This word to you enough sufficen ought.

*Perhaps*

*did*

143. "To-morrow eke will I speaken with you fain,  
 So that you touchen naught of this mattér,  
 And when you list you may come here again;  
 And ere you go, thus much I say you here,  
 As help me Pallas with her hairès clear,  
 If that I should of any Greek have ruth,  
 It shouldè be your selfen by my truth.

*gladly*  
*Provided that*  
*you please*

*pity*

---

<sup>1</sup> 141.4-5: "I am more disposed, I promise you, to complain and lament until my dying day."

144. "I say not therefore that I will you love,  
 Ne say not nay, but, in conclusion,  
 I meanè well, by God that sits above."  
 And therewithal she cast her eyen down,  
 And gan to sigh, and said: "O Troyè town!  
 Yet bid I God in quiet and in rest  
 I may thee see, or do my heartè breste."

*eyes*

*pray I  
 make my h. burst*

145. But in effect, and shortly for to say,  
 This Diomede all freshly new again  
 Gan pressen on, and fast her mercy pray;  
 And after this--the soothè for to say--  
 Her glove he took, of which he was full fain,  
 And, finally, when it was waxen eve,  
 And all was well, he rose and took his leave.

*to beg her favor  
 truth  
 very glad  
 evening came*

146. The brightè Venus followed and aye taught  
 The way where broadè Phoebus down alight,<sup>1</sup>  
 And Cytherea her car-horse overwraught  
 To whirl into the Lion if she might,  
 And Signifer his candles showeth bright,  
 When that Criseyde unto her beddè went  
 Within her father's fairè brightè tent;

*and showed  
 the Sun had set  
 C. reached over (or urged on)  
 belt of the zodiac*

147. Returning in her soul ay up and down  
 The wordès of this sudden Diomede,  
 His great estate, and peril of the town,  
 And that she was alone, and haddè need  
 Of friendè's help, and thus began to breed  
 The causes why—the soothè for to tell—  
 That she took fully purpose for to dwell.

*Turning / constantly  
 His high rank  
 truth  
 decided to remain*

148. The morrow came, and ghostly for to speak,<sup>2</sup>  
 This Diomede is come unto Criseyde;  
 And, shortly, lest that you my talè break,

*truly*

---

<sup>1</sup> 146: This is a roundabout way, dear to Chaucer, of saying that the evening star (Venus) had gone down after the Sun, and the moon (Cytherea) and the stars had risen full when Criseyde went to bed.

<sup>2</sup> 148.1: *ghostly for to speak*: Different editors and glossators explain this phrase with differences in detail but agreeing that it seems to mean "to tell the truth".

So well he for himselfen spoke and said,  
 That all her sorè sighs adown he laid;  
 And, finally, the soothè for to sayn,  
 He reft her of the greatest of her pain.

*laid (to rest)*

*relieved her*

149. And after this the story telleth us  
 That she unto him gave the fair bay steed  
 The which he once had won of Troilus, <sup>1</sup>  
 And eke a brooch (and that was little need)  
 That Troilus' was, she gave this Diomedè, <sup>2</sup>  
 And eke the bet from sorrow him to relieve,  
 She made him wear a pencil of her sleeve.

*the better  
 a pennant (made) from*

150. I find eke in the stories elsèwhere,  
 When through the body hurt was Diomedè  
 Of Troilus, then wept she many a tear  
 When that she saw his widè woundès bleed,  
 And that she took to keepen him good heed,  
 And for to heal him of his woundès smart,  
 Men say — I n'ot — that she gave him her heart.

*Of = By*

*to nurse*

*I don't know*

151. But truly the story telleth us  
 There madè never woman morè woe  
 Than she when that she falsèd Troilus;  
 She said: "Alas ! for now is clean y-go  
 My name in truth of love for evermo',  
 For I have falsèd one the gentilest  
 That ever was, and one the worthiest.

*completely gone*

152. "Alas! of me unto the worldè's end  
 Shall neither be y-written nor y-sung  
 No goodè word, for these books will me shend;  
 O rollèd shall I be on many a tongue;

*attack*

---

<sup>1</sup> 149.3: According to Benoit, Diomedè had captured a horse from Troilus in battle, had presented it to Briseyda / Criseyde, and had asked for it back when he in turn lost his own horse.

<sup>2</sup> 149.5: The brooch is, presumably, the one mentioned below (V, St. 238) where we are told that Troilus had given it to her on the morning she left Troy. Earlier, there is mention of a brooch which Criseyde gave to Troilus on their last night together. (III, st. 196 . )

Throughout the worldè shall my bell be rung,<sup>1</sup>  
 And women most will haten me of all;  
 Alas, that such a case me should befall!

153. "They will say, inasmuch as in me is,  
 I have them done dishonour, welaway!  
 Al' be I not the first that did amiss,  
 What helpeth that to do my blame away?  
 But since I see there is no better way,  
 And that too late is now for me to rue,  
 To Diomedè algate I will be true.

*alas!*  
*Although*

*repent*  
*at least*

154. "But Troilus, since I no better may,  
 And since that thus departen you and I,  
 Yet pray I God so give you right good day,  
 As for the gentilestè — truly —  
 That e'er I saw to serven faithfully,  
 And best can ay his lady's honour keep,"  
 (And with that word she burst anon to weep).

*you & I separate*

*always*

155. "And certès you ne haten shall I never,<sup>2</sup>  
 And friendè's love that shall you have of me,  
 And my good word, all should I liven ever;  
 And, truly, I would right sorry be  
 For to see you in adversity;  
 And guiltèless I wot well I you leave,<sup>3</sup>  
 And all shall pass, and thus I take my leave."

*certainly*

*if I should*

*I know*

156. But truly how long it was between  
 That she forsook him for this Diomedè,  
 There is no author telleth it I ween,  
 Take every man now to his bookès heed,  
 He shall no termè finden, out of dread,

*I think*

*time period*

---

<sup>1</sup> 152.1: The meaning of the line seems clear enough, even if it is hard to translate into modern English. The ringing of the bell may signify a number of negative things: the knell for one who has died or the bell rung to excommunicate by "bell, book and candle", or, stretching a little more, even the outcast leper's bell, which figures so strongly in Henryson's sequel.

<sup>2</sup> 155.1: "And certainly I shall never hate you."

<sup>3</sup> 155.6: Presumably *guiltless* applies to Troilus, though its placing makes that uncertain.

For though that he began to woo her soon,  
Ere he her won yet was there more to doon.

*he = Diomedes  
to be done*

157. Ne me not list this silly woman chide,  
Farther than that the story will devise;  
Her name, alas! is published so wide,  
That for her guilt it ought enough suffice;  
And if I might excuse her in some wise,  
For she so sorry was for her untruth,  
Iwis, I would excuse her yet for ruth.

*I don't want to rebuke*

*her unfaithfulness  
Indeed / pity*

158. This Troilus, as I before have told,  
Thus driveth forth as well as he hath might,  
But often was his heartè hot and cold,  
And namely that ilkè ninthè night  
Which on the morrow she had him behight  
To come again; God wot full little rest  
Had he that night; nothing to sleep him lest.

*manages*

*that very  
promised  
God knows  
cared*

159. The laurel-crownèd Phoebus with his heat  
Gan in his course, ay upward as he went,  
To warm of the east sea the wavès wet,  
And Nisus' daughter sung with fresh intent,<sup>1</sup>  
When Troilus his Pandare after sent,  
And on the wallès of the town they played,  
To look if they can see aught of Criseyde.

*God of sun  
ever higher*

*sent for  
passed the time*

160. Till it was noon they stooden for to see  
Who that there came; and every manner wight  
That came from far they saiden it was she,  
Till that they couldè knowen him aright:<sup>2</sup>  
Now was his heartè dull, now was it light;  
And thus bejapèd, stooden for to stare  
Aboutè naught, this Troilus and Pandare.

*every person*

*deluded  
for nothing*

---

<sup>1</sup> 159.4: The allusion is apt: the daughter of Nisus looking down from the walls of her father's fortress, fell in love with the enemy Minos, and betrayed the city to him. She was turned into the bird here mentioned. A version of the story is in Chaucer's **Legend of Good Women**, 1894 ff.

<sup>2</sup> 160.4: They think that everyone they see moving is Criseyde until they can see the person more closely. Troilus's spirits go up and down with every hope and disappointment.



161. To Pandarus this Troilus then said:

"For aught I wot before noon sikerly  
 Into this town ne cometh not Criseyde,  
 She hath enough to do hardily  
 To twinnen from her father, so trow I;  
 Her oldè father will yet make her dine  
 Ere that she go; God give his heartè pine!"

*I know / certainly*

*to escape / I guess  
 eat midday meal  
 misery*

162. Pandare answered: "It may well be, certáin,  
 And forthy let us dine, I thee beseech,  
 And after noon then may'st thou come again."  
 And home they go withouten morè speech,  
 And came again; but longè may they seek  
 Ere that they finden what they after gape;  
 Fortune them both y-thinketh for to jape.

*And therefore*

*intends to make fools of*

163. Quod Troilus: "I see well now that she  
 Is tarried with her oldè father so  
 That ere she come it will nigh even be.  
 Come forth, I will unto the gatè go;  
 These porters be uncunning evermo',  
 And I will do them holden up the gate  
 As naught ne were, although that she come late."<sup>1</sup>

*evening*

*gatekeepers are stupid  
 make them keep open*

164. The day goes fast, and after that came eve,  
 And yet came not to Troilus Criseyde.  
 He looketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greve,  
 And far his head over the wall he laid,  
 And at the last he turned him, and said:  
 "By God I wot her meaning now, Pandare;  
 Almost iwis all newè was my care."<sup>2</sup>

*grove*

*I know*

165. "Now doubtèless this lady can her good;  
 I wot she means to riden privily;  
 I commend her wisdom, by my hood;  
 She will not maken people nicèly

*knows what is right  
 I realize / incognito*

*foolishly*

---

<sup>1</sup> 163.7: *As naught ne were*: A difficult phrase which may mean "as if there were no reason not to keep it open," or "as if there were no war on." Neither seems altogether satisfactory.

<sup>2</sup> 164.7: "Indeed my worries almost came back."

Gaure on her when she comes, but softly  
 By night into the town she thinketh ride;  
 And, dear brother! think not long t'abide.

*Gape  
 intends to  
 to wait*

166. "We have naught elsè for to do iwis;  
 And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me,  
 Have here my truth, I see her! Yond she is!  
 Heave up thine eyen man. May'st thou not see?"  
 Pandarus answered: "Nay, so may I thee;  
 All wrong by God: what say'st thou man, where art?  
 What I see yond afar is but a cart."

*indeed  
 believe me  
  
 No, as I live!  
 art (thou)*

167. "Alas ! thou sayst right sooth," quod Troilus,  
 "But hardly it is not all for naught  
 That in mine heart I now rejoicè thus;  
 It is against some good, I have a thought,  
 Wot I not how, but since that I was wrought  
 Ne felt I such a comfort dare I say.  
 She comes to-night, my life that durst I lay."

*surely  
  
 It's a good sign, I think  
 was born  
  
 I dare bet*

168. Pandarus answered: "It may be, well enough."  
 And held with him of all that e'er he said,  
 But in his heart he thought, and soft he laughed,  
 And to himself full soberly he said:  
 "From hazelwood, where Jolly Robin played  
 Shall come all that that thou abidest here;  
 Yea, farewell all the snow of fernè year."

*And agreed  
  
 From never-never land  
 all you wait for  
 yesteryear*

169. The warden of the gates began to call  
 The folk which that without the gatès were,  
 And bade them driven in their beastès all,  
 Or all the night they must bileven there;  
 And far within the night, with many a tear,  
 This Troilus gan homeward for to ride,  
 For well he sees it helpeth not t' abide.

*stay  
 And late in  
  
 to wait*

170. But natheless he gladded him in this:  
 He thought he mis-accounted had his day,  
 And said: "I understood have all amiss,  
 For thilkè night I last Criseyde saw  
 She said: `I shall be here, if that I may,

*took comfort  
 miscalculated*

Ere that the moon, O my dear heartè sweet,  
The Lion pass out of this Ariete,'<sup>1</sup>

171. "For which she may yet hold all her behest."  
And on the morrow to the gate he went,  
And up and down, by east and eke by west,  
Upon the wallès made he many a went;  
But all for naught; his hope always him blent,  
For which at night in sorrow and sighs sore  
He went him home withouten any more.

*keep her promise*

*a turn  
blinded*

172. His hope all clean out of his heartè fled,  
He n'as whereon now longer for to hang,  
But for the pain him thought his heartè bled,  
So were his throès sharp and wonder strong;  
For when he saw that she abode so long  
He wist not what he judgen of it might,  
Since she hath broken what she him beight.

*has nothing*

*his pangs  
stayed  
he didn't know  
promised*

173. The third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixthè day  
After those dayès ten of which I told,  
Betwixen hope and dread his heartè lay,  
Yet somewhat trusting on her hestès old;  
But when he saw she would her term not hold,<sup>2</sup>  
He can now see no other remedy  
But for to shape him soonè for to die.

*promises*

*prepare himself*

174. Therewith the wicked spirit, (God us bless!)  
Which that men clepe the woodè Jealousy,  
Gan in him creep in all this heaviness,  
For which, because he wouldè soonè die,  
He n' ate nor drank for his melánocholy,  
And eke from every company he fled;  
This was the life that all this time he led.

*call the mad J.*

*he wanted to*

175. He so defet was that no manner man

*disfigured*

---

<sup>1</sup> 170.6-7: "Before the moon, leaving Aries, passes into Leo." These were in fact her words in IV, st 228. He thinks he might have miscalculated by a day.

<sup>2</sup> 173.5: "But when he saw she was not going to keep her promise."

Unnethès might him knowen where he went,  
 So was he lean and thereto pale and wan,  
 And feeble, that he walkèd by potent,  
 And with his ire he thus himselfen shent;  
 But whoso askèd him whereof him smart,  
 He said his harm was all about his heart.

*Scarcely  
 and also  
 with help  
 disappointment / tortured  
 what ailed him*

176. Priam full oft,<sup>1</sup> and eke his mother dear,  
 His brethren and his sisters, gan him frayn  
 Why he so woeful was in all his cheer,  
 And what thing was the cause of all his pain.  
 But all for naught; he n'ould his cause explain,  
 But said he felt a grievous malady  
 About his heart, and fainè would he die.

*ask  
 behavior  
  
 would gladly*

177. So, on a day he laid him down to sleep,  
 And so befell it that in sleep him thought  
 That in a forest fast he walked to weep  
 For love of her that him those painès wrought,  
 And up and down as he that forest sought,  
 He mett he saw a boar with tuskès great  
 That slept against the brightè sunnè's heat;

*one day  
  
 caused  
 He dreamed  
 slept in*

178. And by this boar, fast in her armès fold,  
 Lay kissing ay his lady bright Criseyde,  
 For sorrow of which, when he it gan behold,  
 And for despite, out of his sleep he braid,  
 And loud he cried on Pandarus, and said:  
 "O Pandarus! now know I crop and root;  
 I n'am but dead; there is no other boote.

*constantly  
 rage / he woke  
 top to bottom  
 as good as dead / cure*

179. "My lady bright, Criseyde, has me betrayed,  
 In whom I trusted most of any wight;  
 She elsèwhere hath now her heart apaid;  
 The blissful goddès thorough their greatè might  
 Have in my dream y-showèd it full right:  
 Thus in my dream Criseyde have I behold;"  
 And all this thing to Pandarus he told.

*person  
 set*

---

<sup>1</sup> 176.1: Priam, king of Troy, was Troilus's father.

180. "O my Criseyde! alas! what subtlety,  
 What newè lust, what beauty, what science,  
 What wrath, of justè cause, have you to me?  
 What guilt of me, what fell experience,  
 Hath from me reft, alas! thine ádverténce? <sup>1</sup>  
 O trust! O faith ! O deepè ássurance!  
 Who hath me reft Criseyde, all my pleasance?

*trickery*  
*knowledge*  
*what just anger*  
*bad*  
*robbed / love*

181. "Alas ! why let I you from hencè go?  
 For which well nigh out of my wit I braid;  
 Who shall now trow on any oathès mo"?  
 God wot I weened, O lady bright Criseyde,  
 That every word was gospel that you said:  
 But who may bet beguile, if that him list,  
 Than he on whom men weenen best to trist?<sup>2</sup>

*went*  
*trust any oaths more*  
*God knows I thought*  
  
*better / he chooses*  
*think most trustworthy*

182. "What shall I do, my Pandarus? Alas!  
 I feelè now so sharp a newè pain,  
 Since that there is no remedy in this case,  
 That bet were it I with mine handès twain  
 My selfen slew than alway thus to 'plain,  
 For through the death my woe should have an end,  
 Where every day with life myself I shend."

*better / two*  
  
*I destroy*

183. Pandarus answered and said: "Alas the while  
 That I was born! Have I not said ere this  
 That dreamès many a manner man beguile?  
 And why? For folk expounden them amiss.  
 How dar'st thou say that false thy lady is  
 For any dream, right for thine ownè dread?  
 Let be this thought: thou cans't no dreamès read."

*many kinds of men*  
  
*For = because of*  
*Accept this:*

184. "Paraunter where thou dreamest of this boar,  
 It may so be that it may signify

*Perhaps*

---

<sup>1</sup> 180: The syntax of this stanza is a little confusing. The first two lines "O my Criseyde ... science" and line 4 go with line 5 thus: "O my Criseyde! Alas! what subtlety / What new lust, what beauty, what knowledge (*science*) / ... What guilt of mine, what bad experience, / Has robbed (*reft*) me alas! of thy loving attention (*advertence*)?" Line 3 interrupts the normal order; it means "What real cause have you to be angry with me?"

<sup>2</sup> 181.6-7: "Who can better betray people, if he wants, than the one whom people think most trustworthy?"

Her father, which that old is and eke hoar,  
 Against the sunne lies, on point to die,  
 And she for sorrow 'ginneth weep and cry,  
 And kisseth him, where he lies on the ground:  
 Thus shouldest thou thy dream aright expound."

*and white-haired  
 in the sunlight*

185. "How mightè I then do," quod Troilus,  
 "To know of this, yea, were it ne'er so lite?" <sup>1</sup>  
 "Now says't thou wisely," quod this Pandarus.  
 "My redde is this, since thou cans't well endite,  
 That hastily a letter thou her write,  
 Through which thou shalt well bringen it about  
 To know a sooth where thou art now in doubt."

*little*

*advice / write*

*the truth*

187. "Thou hast not written her since that she went,  
 Nor she to thee; and this I durstè lay,  
 There may such causè be in her intent,  
 That hardely thou wilt thyselfen say  
 That her abode the best is for you tway.  
 Now write her then, and thou shalt feelè soon  
 A sooth of all. There is no more to do."

*dare lay (a bet)*

*Her delay  
 perceive  
 The truth*

188. Accorded be to this conclusion  
 (And that anon) these ilkè lordès two,  
 And hastily sits Troilus adown  
 And rolleth in his heartè to and fro  
 How he may best describen her his woe,  
 And to Criseydè, his own lady dear,  
 He wrote right thus and said as you may hear:

*Agreed  
 promptly / same 2*

#### TROILUS'S LETTER

189. "Right freshè flower, whose I have been and shall  
 Withouten part of elsèwhere service," <sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 184.1-2: "What can I do, then, to find out even a little about this?"

<sup>2</sup> 189.2: "Without serving any other lady."

With heart and body, life, lust, thought, and all,  
 I woeful wight, in every humble wise  
 That tongue can tell or heartè may devise,  
 As oft as matter occupieth place,  
 Me recommend unto your noble grace.

*i.e. eternally*  
*(I) recommend myself*

190. "Liketh it you to witen, sweetè heart!<sup>1</sup>  
 As you well know, how longè time agone  
 That you me left in asper painès smart,  
 When that you went, of which yet bootè none  
 Have I none had, but ever worse begone  
 From day to day am I, and so must dwell  
 While it you list, of weal and woe my well.<sup>2</sup>

*in sharp bitter p.*  
*no relief*  
*worse off*

191. "For which to you with dreadful heartè true  
 I write, as he that sorrow drives to write  
 My woe, that every hour encreaseth new,  
 Complaining as I dare or can indite  
 And that defacèd is, that may you wite  
 That tearès which that from mine eyen rain,<sup>3</sup>  
 That woulden speak if that they could, and 'plain.

*filled w. dread*

*write*  
*may know*

192. "You first beseech I, that your eyen clear  
 To look on this defoulèd you not hold,<sup>4</sup>  
 And o'er all this that you, my lady dear  
 Will vouchèsafe this letter to behold,  
 And by the cause eke of my carès cold,  
 That slays my wit, if aught amiss m'astart,  
 Forgive it me, mine ownè sweetè heart!

*And also because*  
*anything wrong escapes me*

193. "If any servant dares or ought of right  
 Upon his lady piteously complain,  
 Then ween I that I ought to be that wight,

*any lover / can rightly*

*I think / that man*

---

<sup>1</sup> 190.1: "May it please you to hear ..." Standard opening for a letter in Chaucer's day. Apparently much of the rest of the letter also contains conventional tropes.

<sup>2</sup> 190.7: "While it pleases you, O my source (*well*) of joy and pain."

<sup>3</sup> 191.5: Presumably it is the letter that is "defaced" with the rain of tears.

<sup>4</sup> 192.1-2: "I first beg you not to consider your bright eyes clouded (*befouled*) by seeing this (letter)"

Considered this, that you these monthès twain  
 Have tarried where you saidè, sooth to sayn,  
 But ten days that you would in host sojourn.  
 But in two monthès yet you not return.

*Considering / two*  
*stay among the enemy*  
*you have not r.*

194. "But for as much as me must needès like  
 All that you list,<sup>1</sup> I dare not 'plain no more,  
 But humbly, with sorrowful sighès sick,  
 You write I mine unresty sorrows sore,  
 From day to day desiring evermore  
 To knowen fully, if your will it were,  
 How you have fared and done while you be there.

*(To) you I write / restless*

195. 'The whose welfare, and heal eke, God encrease  
 In honour such, that upward in degree  
 It grow always so that it never cease;  
 Right as your heart ay can, my lady free,  
 Devise, I pray to God so may it be.  
 And grantè it that you soon upon me rue  
 As wisly as in all I am you true.

*health*  
*(may) it grow*  
*Desire*  
*take pity*  
*As surely / to you*

196. "And if you liketh knowen of the fare  
 Of me, whose woe there may no wight describe,  
 I can no more, but chest of every care,<sup>2</sup>  
 At writing of this letter I was alive,  
 All ready out my woeful ghost to drive,  
 Which I delay and hold him yet in hand  
 Upon the sight of matter of your send.

*(wel) fare*  
*can (say)*  
*unhappy spirit*  
*sending, message*

197. "Mine eyen two, in vain with which I see,  
 Of sorrowful tearès salt are waxen wells;  
 My song in 'plaint of mine adversity,  
 My good in harm, mine ease eke waxen hell's,  
 My joy in woe, I can say now naught else  
 But turnèd is (for which my life I wary)

*have become*  
*in(to) / has become a hell*  
*in(to)*  
*I curse*

<sup>1</sup> 194.1-2: "But because I am obliged to be pleased by (*me must needs like*) all that you like (*list*)..."

<sup>2</sup> 196: This stanzas is, apparently, a tissue of medieval letter-writing conventions. *chest of*: container of, i.e. full of.



Every joy or ease in his contráry.<sup>1</sup>

*in = into*

198. "Which with your coming home again to Troy  
You may redress, and more a thousand sithe,  
Than e'er I had, increasen in me joy;  
For was there never heartè yet so blithe  
To have his life as I shall be, as swithe  
As I you see, and though no manner ruth  
Commovent you,— yet thinketh on your truth.

*times*

*as soon  
no kind of pity  
move you*

199. "And if so be my guilt has death deserved,  
Or if you list no more upon me see,  
In guerdon yet of that I have you served  
Beseech I you, mine ownè lady free,  
That hereupon you wouldè write to me  
For love of God, my rightè lodè-star,  
That death may make an end of all my war.

*if you wish  
In return  
noble*

*guiding star*

200. "If other cause aught doth you for to dwell,  
That with your letter you me recomfórt,<sup>2</sup>  
For though to me your absence is a hell,  
With patience I will my woe comport,  
And with your letter of hope I will disport:  
Now writeth, sweet! and let me thus not 'plain;  
With hope or death deliver me from pain.

*endure  
take comfort*

201. "Iwis, mine ownè dearè heartè true!  
I wot that when you next upon me see,  
So lost have I my heal and eke my hue,  
Criseyde shall not can knowen me;  
Iwis, mine heartè's day, my lady free!  
So thirseth aye mine heartè to behold  
Your beauty, that unneth my life I hold.

*my health & color  
not be able to*

*barely*

202. "I say no more, al have I for to say

*although*

---

<sup>1</sup> 197.4-7: "My good (is turned) into harm, my ease into hell. ... Every joy and ease is turned into its opposite—for which I curse my life." The ME spelling of rhyme words for lines 2, 4, 5 was: *welles, helle is, ellis*

<sup>2</sup> 200.1-2: "If any other reason makes you stay, assure me in your letter."

To you well morè than I tellen may;  
 But whether that you do me live or die,  
 Yet pray I God as give you right good day.  
 And fareth well, O goodly fair fresh May! <sup>1</sup>  
 As you that life or death me may command,  
 And to your truth ay I me recommend.

*you make me*

*I always*

203. "With healè such, that but you given me  
 The samè heal I shall no healè have:  
 In you lies, when you list that it so be,  
 The day in which me clothen shall my grave;  
 In you my life, in you might for to save  
 Me from dis-ease of all my paines smart:  
 And fare now well, my ownè sweetè heart!"

le vostre T."

*Yours, Troilus*

204. This letter forth was sent unto Criseyde,  
 Of which her answer in effect was this:  
 Full piteously she wrote again, and said  
 That all so soon as that she might iwis  
 She wouldè come, and mend what was amiss;  
 And, finally, she wrote and said him then  
 She wouldè come, yes, but she n'istè when.

*indeed*

*knew not*

205. But in her letter maden she such feast  
 That wonder was, and swore she loved him best,  
 Of which he found but bottomless behests.  
 But, Troilus, thou may'st now east and west  
 Pipe in an ivy leaf if that thee lest:  
 Thus goes the world. God shield us from mischance,  
 And every wight that meaneth truth advance! <sup>2</sup>

*protestations*

*empty promises*

*whistle in the wind*

206. Increasen gan the woe from day to night  
 Of Troilus for tarrying of Criseyde,  
 And lessen gan his hope and eke his might,

---

<sup>1</sup> 202.5: *may*: perhaps here means "maiden", hardly appropriate in any strict sense for a widow who has also been Troilus's lover for three years. It may mean just "young woman" or possibly the month of May, a metaphor for her youthful freshness.

<sup>2</sup> 205.7 "And every person who wishes to advance the truth."

For which all down he in his bed him laid;  
 He n'ate, nor drank, nor slept, nor word he said,  
 Imagining ay that she was unkind,  
 For which well nigh he waxed out of his mind.

*Thinking always / unfaithful  
 nearly went mad*

207. This dream, of which I told have eke befor,  
 May never come out of his rémembrance;  
 He thought ay well he had his lady lorn,  
 And that Jove of his highè purveyance  
 Him showèd had in sleep the significance  
 Of her untruth and his disáventure,  
 And that the boar was shown him in figúre;

*had indeed lost his l.  
 providence*

*bad fortune  
 as metaphor*

208. For which he for his sister Sibyl sent,  
 That callèd was Cassandra all about,  
 And all his dream he told her ere he stent,  
 And her besought assoilen him the doubt  
 Of the strong boar with tuskès stout;  
 And, finally, within a little stound  
 Cassandra gan him thus his dream expound.

*S = the prophetess*

*finished  
 asked her to resolve*

*time*

209. She gan first smile, and said: 'O brother dear,  
 If thou a sooth of this desirest know,  
 Thou must a few of oldè stories hear,  
 To purpose, how that Fortune overthrown  
 Hath lordès old; through which, within a throw,  
 Thou well this boar shalt know, and of what kind  
 He comen is, as men in bookès find.

*the truth*

*short time  
 what family*

210 'Diana, which that wroth was and in ire  
 For Greekes n'ouldè do her sacrifice,  
 Ne incense upon her altar set afire,  
 She, for that Greekès gan her so to despise,  
 Wreaked her in a wonder cruel wise.  
 For with a boar as great as ox in stall  
 She made up-fret their corn and vinès all.

*angry & furious  
 Because*

*Avenged herself*

*tear up*

211. 'To slay this boar was all the country raised,  
 Amongès which there came this boar to see,  
 A maid, one of this world the best y-praised;  
 And Meleager, lord of that country,

*called to arms*

He lovèd so this freshè maiden free,  
 That with his manhood, ere he wouldè stent,  
 This boar he slew, and her the head he sent;

*before he was done*

212. 'Of which, as oldè bookès tellen us,  
 There rose a contek and and a great envy.  
 And of this lord descended Tydeus  
 By line, or elsè oldè bookès lie,  
 But how this Meleager gan to die  
 Through his mother, will I you not tell,  
 For all too longè it were for to dwell."<sup>1</sup>

*strife*

*by his m's action*

213. She told eke how Tydeus — ere she stent —  
 Unto the strongè city of Thebes,  
 To claimè kingdom of the city went,  
 For his fellow, daun Polynices,  
 Of which the brother, daun Eteocles,<sup>2</sup>  
 Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength;  
 This toldè she by process, all by length.

*before she (C) had done*

214. She told eke how Hemonides astart  
 When Tydeus slew fifty knightès stout;  
 She told eke all the prophecies by heart,  
 And how that seven kingès with their rout  
 Besiegeden the city all about,  
 And of the holy serpent, and the well,  
 And of the furies, all she gan him tell.<sup>3</sup>

*escaped*

*army*

215. Of Archemoris' burying, and the plays,  
 And how Amphiorax fell through the ground,  
 How Tydeus was slain, lord of Argayes,  
 And how Ypomedon in little stound

*funeral games*

*short time*

---

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer might well have exercised the same discretion by omitting the following stanzas (and a paraphrase, which has been moved to an appendix); they "dwell" too long on material largely irrelevant to the story of T&C, and serve to slow up the progress of his own tale.

<sup>2</sup> 213: Eteocles refused to let his brother Polynices take his turn as ruler of Thebes. Polynices and his six allies, including Tydeus, attacked: the Seven against Thebes.

<sup>3</sup> 214: At this point in most manuscripts there is a Latin paraphrase of the **Thebaid**, book by book. See Appendix.

Was drowned, and dead Parthenope — of wounds,  
And also how Capaneus, the proud,  
With thunder-dint was slain, that crièd loud.

216. She gan eke tell him how that either brother,  
Eteocles and Polynices also,  
At a skirmish each of them slew other,  
And of Argia's weeping and her woe,  
And how the town was burnt she told eke tho;  
And so descended down from gestès old  
To Diomedé, and thus she spoke and told:

*then  
old stories*

217. "This ilké boar betokens Diomedé,  
Tydeus' son, that down descended is  
From Meleager, that made the boar to bleed,  
And thy lady, where so she be iwis,  
This Diomedé her heart has and she his.  
Weep if thou wilt, or leave, for out of doubt,  
This Diomedé is in and thou art out."

*this very boar*

*wherever / indeed*

218. "Thou sayst not sooth," quod he, "thou sorceress,  
With all thy falsé ghost of prophesy!  
Thou weenest been a great divineress;  
Now see'st thou not this fool of fantasy  
Paineth her on ladies for to lie? <sup>1</sup>  
Away!" quod he, "there Jové give thee sorrow!  
Thou shalt be false, paraunter, yet to-morrow. <sup>2</sup>

*truth  
spirit  
You think you're  
fanciful fool  
exerts herself  
may Jove*

219. "As well thou mightest lien on Alceste  
That was of creäturès, but men lie,  
That ever were, [the] kindest and the best,  
For when her husband was in jeopardy  
To die himself but if she wouldè die, <sup>3</sup>

*lie about  
unless men lie*

*Unless she*

---

<sup>1</sup> 218.4-5: Troilus turns from Cassandra to rebuke himself for even consulting her, and then returns to accuse her of lying about ladies. *thou* in line 4 refers to Troilus himself while *thou* in .3 referred to Cassandra.

<sup>2</sup> 218.7: "You'll be (proved) wrong by the outcome tomorrow."

<sup>3</sup> 219: Admetus, husband of Alceste, would escape death if either of his parents or his wife was willing to die for him.

She chose to die for him and go to hell  
And starved anon, as us the bookes tell."

*And died then*

220. Cassandra goes; and he with cruel heart  
Forgot his woe for anger of her speech,  
And from his bed all suddenly he start,  
As though all whole him had y-made a leech <sup>1</sup>  
And day by day he gan enquire and seek  
A sooth of this with all his fullè cure;  
And thus he driveth forth his áventure. <sup>2</sup>

*anger at*

*physician*

*The truth / attention*

221. Fortune, which that permutation  
Of thingès hath (as it is her committed  
Through purveyance and disposition  
Of highè Jove, <sup>3</sup> as regnès shall ben flitted  
From folk to folk, or when they shall be smitted),  
'Gan pull away the feathers bright of Troy  
From day to day, till they be bare of joy.

*change*

*providence & appointment  
kingdoms ... moved  
stricken*

222. Among all this, the fine of the paródie <sup>4</sup>  
Of Hector gan approachen wonder blive;  
The Fatè would his soulè should ún-body,  
And shapen had a means it out to drive;  
Against which Fate him helpeth not to strive;  
But on a day to fighten gan he wend,  
At which, alas! he caught his lifè's end.

*end of life span*

*very quickly*

*leave his body*

*And had planned*

*he went*

223. For which methinketh every manner wight  
That haunteth armès oughtè to bewail  
The death of him that was so noble a knight.

*who honors chivalry*

---

<sup>1</sup> 220.4: "As if a physician (*leech*) had cured him."

<sup>2</sup> 220.7: Either "he endures (ME *drieth*) his fate" or "he pursues (ME *driveth*) his business." The same line occurs at the end of Book I.

<sup>3</sup> 221.1-5: Jove (Jupiter) has given to Fortune, under Providence, control over worldly change such as the transfer of kingdoms (*regnes*) from one people to another, or their destruction. The subject of 'gan (.6) is *Fortune* (.1) which was earlier portrayed as spinning a wheel but is here seen as plucking off the victim's feathers.

<sup>4</sup> 222.1: *parodie* is the French "periode", in this case the period or extent appointed by Fortune or one of the Fates for someone's life, here that of Hector, the major Trojan hero.

For as he drew a king by th'aventail,  
 Unware of this, Achilles through the mail  
 And through the body gan him for to rive;  
 And thus this worthy knight was brought of live.

*neck armor*

*did pierce  
 b. from life, i.e killed*

224. For whom, as olden bookès tellen us,  
 Was made such woe, that tongue it may not tell;  
 And namèly the sorrow of Troilus,  
 That next him was of worthiness the well.  
 And in this woe gan Troilus to dwell,  
 That, what for sorrow and love and for unrest,  
 Full oft a day he bade his heartè brest.

*especially  
 the source*

*burst*

225. But natheless though he gan him despair  
 And dread ay that his lady was untrue.  
 Yet ay on her his heartè gan repair,  
 And, as these lovers do, he sought ay new  
 To get again Criseydè bright of hue,  
 And in his heart he went her éxcusing,  
 That Calchas causèd all her tarrying.

*always  
 return  
 again & again*

226. And often times he was in purpose great  
 Him selfen like a pilgrim to disguise  
 To see her; but he may not counterfeit  
 To be unknown of folkè that were wise,<sup>1</sup>  
 Nor find excuse aright that may suffice,  
 If he among the Greekès knowen were,  
 For which he wept full often many a tear.

227. To her he wrote yet often times all new  
 Full piteously — he left it not for sloth —  
 Beseeching her, that since that he was true,  
 That she would come again and hold her troth:  
 For which Criseyde upon a day for ruth,  
 (I take it so) touching all this mattér  
 Wrote him again, and said as you may hear:

*keep her promise  
 pity*

---

<sup>1</sup> 226.3-6: He could not disguise himself well enough to deceive perceptive people, or think up a good enough story if he were to be caught in disguise among the Greeks.

## Criseyde's Letter

228. "Cupid's son, example of goodlihead,  
 O sword of knighthood, source of gentleness!  
 How might a wight in torment and in dread  
 And heal-less, as send you yet gladness?  
 I heartless, I sick, I in distress  
 Since you with me nor I with you may deal,  
 You neither may I send nor heart nor heal.<sup>1</sup>

*a person  
 unhealthy or unhealed  
 disheartened  
 meet*

229. "Your letters full, the paper all y-plainted  
 Conceivèd hath my heartè's pietee;  
 I have eke seen with tearès all depainted  
 Your letter, and how you requiren me  
 To come again, which yet ne may not be,  
 But why, lest that this letter founden were,  
 No mentiön ne make I now for fear.<sup>2</sup>

*complaining  
 Has stirred my h's pity*

230. "Grievous to me, God wot, is your unrest,  
 Your haste, and that the goddès' ordinance  
 It seemeth not you take it for the best,  
 Nor other thing is in your rémembrance,  
 As thinketh me, but only your pleasance;  
 But be not wroth, and that I you beseech,  
 For that I tarry is all for wicked speech.

*God knows  
 decision*

*pleasure*

*The reason I delay*

231. "For I have heard well moré than I wend  
 Touching us two, how thingès have y-stood,  
 Which I shall with dissimuling amend;<sup>3</sup>  
 And, be not wroth, I have eke understood  
 How you ne do but holden me in hand;  
 But now no force; I cannot in you guess  
 But allè truth and allè gentleness.

*knew*

*angry  
 you only deceive me  
 no matter*

---

<sup>1</sup> 228.7: "I can send you neither comfort (*heart*) nor cure (*heal*)" since, as she has said, she herself is heartless and sick.

<sup>2</sup> 229.6-7: She says she cannot give the reason for her delay lest the letter be incepted.

<sup>3</sup> 231-3: Having accused Troilus of thinking only of his own pleasure, she uses her real obsession with malicious rumor to pretend that she has heard stories about them both that she will have to put right by lying (*dissumuling*), and has even heard stories about his infidelity.



232. "Comen I will, but yet in such disjoint  
 I stand as now, that what year or what day  
 That this shall be, that can I not appoint;  
 But in effect I pray you as I may  
 Of your good word and of your friendship ay,  
 For truly while that my life may dure  
 As for a friend you may in me assure.

*difficulty*

*I cannot say*

*always  
 may last*

233. "Yet pray I you on evil you ne take  
 That it is short which that I to you write;  
 I dare not where I am well letters make,  
 Ne never yet ne could I well endite.  
 Eke great effect men write in place lite.  
 Th' intent is all, and not the letter's space,  
 And fare now well; God have you in his grace!  
 Le vostre, C."

*don't be offended*

*write  
 great matter / little space  
 length*

*yours, C*

234. This Troilus the letter thought all strange  
 When he it saw, and sorrowfully he sighed;  
 Him thought it like the kalends of a change;<sup>1</sup>  
 But finally he full ne trowen might  
 That she ne would him holden what she hight,<sup>2</sup>  
 For with full evil will list him to leave<sup>3</sup>  
 That loveth well, in such case, though him grieve.

*could not fully believe  
 keep / promised*

235. But natheless, men say that at the last,  
 For any thing men shall the soothè see,  
 And such a case betid, and that as fast,  
 That Troilus well understood that she  
 Was not so kind as that her ought to be;  
 And, finally, he wot now out of doubt

*in spite of everything / truth  
 happened*

*knows*

---

<sup>1</sup> 234.3: *Kalends* was the beginning of the month in the ancient Roman calendar. Hence her letter seems to mark the beginning of a change.

<sup>2</sup> 234.4-5: Probably the meaning is: "he couldn't really believe that she would break her promise." The double negative (*ne ... ne*) is a little ambiguous here.

<sup>3</sup> 234.6: Any of the three modern equivalents of ME *leve* will make some sense here. The meaning of the couplet appears to be that only with reluctance (*evil will*) will someone who deeply loves (another) believe / grant / leave in such a case, although it hurts him.

That all is lost that he has been about.

*worked for*

236. Stood on a day in his melánocholy  
This Troilus, and in suspiciõn  
Of her for whom he weenèd for to die,  
And so befell that throughout Troyè town,  
As was the guise, y-borne was up and down  
A manner coat armóur, as says the story,  
Before Deiphebe, in sign of his victóry.<sup>1</sup>

*thought he would*

*the custom*

*T's brother*

237. The whichè coat, as telleth Lollius,<sup>2</sup>  
Deiphebe it had y-rent from Diomedè  
The samè day; and when this Troilus  
It saw, he gan to taken of it heed,  
Avising of the length and of the breadth,  
And all the work; but as he gan behold,  
Full suddenly his heartè gan to cold,

*had torn*

*became cold*

238. As he that on the collar found within  
A brooch that he Criseyde gave that morrow  
That she from Troyè mustè needès twin,<sup>3</sup>  
In rémembrance of him and of his sorrow,  
And she him laid again her faith to borrow  
To keep it ay; but now full well he wist  
His lady was no longer on to trist.

*depart*

*gave her solemn pledge  
always / knew  
be trusted*

239. He goes him home, and gan full soonè send  
For Pandarus. And all this newè chance  
And of this brooch he told him ord and end,  
Complaining of her heartè's variance,  
His longè love, his truth, and his penance;  
And after Death, withouten wordès more,  
Full fast he cried, his rest him to restore.

*beginning & end  
fickleness  
suffering  
for death*

---

<sup>1</sup> 236.6: "coat armor" like that captured by Deiphebus, was a cloth garment, often decorative, worn over armor.

<sup>2</sup> 237.1: Lollius is the author from whom Chaucer says he got the story of Troilus & Criseyde. No such author has been found.

<sup>3</sup> 238.2-3: "A brooch that he had given to Criseyde on the morning she had to leave Troy." No such gift is mentioned in the account of that morning earlier in Book V. But see V, 149.

240. Then spoke he thus: "O lady mine, Criseyde!  
 Where is your faith, and where is your behest?  
 Where is your love? Where is your truth?" he said.  
 "Of Diomedè have you now all this feast?  
 Alas ! I would have trowèd at the least  
 That since you would in truth not to me stand,  
 That you thus n'ould have holden me in hand.

*promise*

*attention, pleasure  
 have thought*

*wouldn't have deceived*

241. "Who shall now trow on any oathès mo' ?  
 Alas ! I never would have weened ere this  
 That you, Criseydè, could have changèd so,  
 Ne but I had a-guilt and done amiss.  
 So cruel weened I not your heartè iwis <sup>1</sup>  
 To slay me thus. Alas, your name of truth  
 Is now fordone, and that is all my ruth.

*trust / more  
 have thought*

*Unless I were guilty*

*ruined / regret*

242. "Was there no other brooch you list to let  
 To feoffè with your newè love," quod he,  
 "But thilkè brooch that I with tearès wet  
 You gave as for a rémembrance of me?  
 No other cause, alas ! ne hadden ye  
 But for despite, and eke for that you meant  
 All utterly to shoven your intent,

*could have used  
 To present to  
 that same  
 Gave you*

243. "Through which I see that clean out of your mind  
 You have me cast, and I ne can nor may  
 For all this world within mine heartè find  
 To unlove you a quarter of a day.  
 In cursed time I born was, welaway!  
 That you that do me all this woe endure,  
 Yet love I best of any créature.

*alas!*

244. "Now God," quod he, "me senden yet the grace  
 That I may meeten with his Diomedè,  
 And truly, if I have might and space,  
 Yet shall I make, I hope, his sidès bleed:  
 Now God," quod he, "that oughtest taken heed  
 To further truth, and wrongès to punice,  
 Why n'ilt thou do a vengeance of this vice?

*May God send me*

*punish*

---

<sup>1</sup> 241.5: "I had not thought (*weened*) your heart was indeed so cruel."

245. "O Pandarus! that in dreams for to trust  
 Me blaméd hast, and wont art oft t'upbraid,  
 Now may'st thou see thyself, if that thee list,  
 How true is now thy niecè, bright Criseyde.  
 In sundry formès, God it wot," he said,  
 "The goddès shoven bothè joy and teen  
 In sleep, and by my dream it is now seen.

*ready to rebuke  
 if you wish*

and grief

246. "And certainly, withouten morè speech,  
 From hencèforth, as farforth as I may,  
 Mine ownè death in armès will I seek,  
 I reckè not how soonè be the day;  
 But truly, Criseyde, my sweet may!  
 Whom I have ay with all my might y-served,  
 That you do thus I have it not deserved."

*lady  
 always*

247. This Pandarus, that all these thingès heard,  
 And wistè well he said a sooth of this,  
 He not a word again to him answered  
 For sorry of his friend's sorrow he is,  
 And shaméd for his niece hath done amiss,  
 And stood astonèd of these causes tway  
 As still as stone; one word ne could he say.

*knew / truth*

*stunned by*

248. But at the lastè, thus he spoke and said:  
 "My brother dear! I may do thee no more;  
 What should I say? I hate iwis Criseyde,  
 And God wot I will hate her evermore;  
 And that thou me besoughtest do of yore,  
 Having unto mine honour nor my rest  
 Right no regard, I did all that thee lest.

*what you asked me*

*all that pleased you*

249. "If I did aught that mightè liken thee  
 It is me lief, and of this treason now,  
 God wot that it a sorrow is to me,  
 And dreadèless, for heartès ease of you,  
 Right fain I would amend it, wist I how.  
 And from this world Almighty God I pray,  
 Deliver her soon! I can no morè say."

*might please you  
 I'm glad*

*to ease your heart  
 V. gladly / if I knew how*

250. Great was the sorrow and plaint of Troilus,  
 But forth her coursè Fortune ay gan to hold,  
 Criseyde loves the son of Tydeus,  
 And Troilus must weep in carès cold:  
 Such is this world, who so it can behold;  
 In each estate is little heartè's rest;  
 God leve us for to take it for the best !

*kept her steady course  
 i.e. Diomedè*

*God grant*

251. In many a cruel battle, out of dread,  
 Of Troilus this ilkè noble knight  
 (As men may in these oldè bookès read)  
 Was seen his knighthood and his greatè might,  
 And dreadèless his ire both day and night  
 Full cruelly the Greekès ay a-bought,  
 And always most this Diomedè he sought.

*certainly*

*anger  
 constantly felt*

252. And often times I findè that they met  
 With bloody strokès and with wordès great,  
 Essayng how their spearès weren whet;  
 And God it wot with many a cruel heat  
 Gan Troilus upon his helm to beat:  
 But natheless Fortúne it naught ne would  
 Of other's hand that either dien should.

*Testing / sharp  
 rush*

253. And if I had y-taken for to write  
 The armès of this ilkè worthy man,  
 Then would I of his battailès endite.  
 But for that I to writè first began  
 Of his love, I have said as I can.  
 His worthy deedès, whoso list them hear,  
 Read Dares: he can tell them all y-fere.

*had undertaken  
 military feats  
 write*

*whoever wants to*

254. Beseeching every lady bright of hue,  
 And every gentil woman, what she be,  
 That, al be that Criseyde was untrue,  
 That for that guilt she be not wroth with me.  
 You may her guilt in other bookès see;  
 And gladlier I will writen, if you lest,  
 Penelope's truth and good Alceste.

*whoever she is  
 although  
 not angry*

*if you like*

255. I say not this all-only for these men,

But most for women that betrayèd be  
 Through falsè folk. God give them sorrow, Amen!  
 That with their greatè wit and subtlety  
 Betrayen you. And this commeveth me  
 To speak, and in effect you all I pray,  
 Beware of men and hearken what I say.

*moves me*

256. Go, little book, go little my tragedy,  
 Where God thy maker yet ere that he die  
 So send me might to make some comedy.<sup>1</sup>  
 But, little book, no making thou n'envy,  
 But subject be to allè poesy,  
 And kiss the steps where as thou seest pace  
 Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, Stace.<sup>2</sup>

*maker & he = Chaucer  
 give me strength  
 making = poetry*

*walk*

257. And, for there is so great diversity  
 In English, and in writing of our tongue,  
 So pray I God that none miswritè thee,  
 Nor thee mis-meter for default of tongue;<sup>3</sup>  
 And read where so thou be, or elsè sung,  
 That thou be understood, God I beseech;  
 But yet to purpose of my rather speech.<sup>4</sup>

*thee = his poem*

*wheresoever*

258. The wrath, as I began you for to say,  
 Of Troilus the Greekekès boughten dear,  
 For thousandès his handès maden die,  
 As he that was withouten any peer,

*caused to*

---

<sup>1</sup> 256: Chaucer, the *maker*, i.e. the author of this "little book", hopes that God (a different Maker) will grant him the chance to write some comedy before he dies. The "Go, little book" is a formula for poetic closure derived probably from Ovid and other classical sources, and occurs also in Boccaccio, though Chaucer seems to have been responsible for its small vogue in England.

<sup>2</sup> 256.7: Chaucer puts himself in important company here: with Virgil, author of **The Aeneid**; Ovid, author of **The Art of Love** and **Metamorphoses**; Homer, author of **The Iliad** and **The Odyssey**; Lucan, author of **The Pharsalia**; Statius, author of **The Thebaid**. Most of these authors are mentioned by Boccaccio in the envoy to his **Filocolo**.

<sup>3</sup> 257.3-4: "And I pray God that no one miscopy you, or write you out unmetrically because of the deficiency of his dialect" (since there is the "diversity" in written English just mentioned).

<sup>4</sup> 257.7: "But to get to what I wanted to say."

Save Hector in his time, as I can hear;  
 But welaway! (save only Goddè's will)  
 Despitously him slew the fierce Achil.

*alas!*  
*A. slew him (Troilus)*

----

259. And when that he was slain in this mannér  
 His lightè ghost full blissfully is went  
 Up to the hollowness of the eighthè sphere,  
 In converse letting every element,<sup>1</sup>  
 And there he saw, with full avisèment,  
 Th'erratic stars, hearkening harmony,<sup>2</sup>  
 With soundès full of heavenish melody.

*spirit*  
*leaving below*  
*clear vision*

260. And down from thencè fast he gan advise  
 This little spot of earth that with the sea  
 Embracèd is, and fully gan despise  
 This wretched world, and held all vanity  
 In réspect of the plain felicity  
 That is in heaven above; and at the last  
 Where he was slain his looking down he cast.

*look closely at*  
  
*total happiness*

261. And in himself he laughed right at the woe  
 Of them that wepten for his death so fast,  
 And damnèd all our works that follow so  
 The blindè lust the which that may not last,  
 And shouldeñ all our heart on heaven cast;  
 And forth he wentè, shortly for to tell,  
 Where as Mercúry sorted him to dwell.

*so hard*  
*And rebuked*  
  
*Who should*  
  
*assigned*

262. Such fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,  
 Such fine hath all his greatè worthiness,  
 Such fine hath his estate royál above,  
 Such fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse.  
 Such fine hath this false worldè's brittleness!

*Such an end*

---

<sup>1</sup> 259.4: Troilus's soul is taken up to the heaven of the eighth sphere. *in converse letting*: the meaning of this phrase is obscure; it is generally glossed: "leaving below" or "leaving behind".

<sup>2</sup> 259.6: The *erratic stars* are the planets, and Troilus is listening to the music (*hearkening harmony*) of the spheres, in which the planets revolve.

And thus began his loving of Criseyde  
As I have told, and in this wise he died.

----

263. O youngè, freshè folkès, he or she!  
In which that love up groweth with your age,  
Repaireth home from worldly vanity,  
And of your hearts up casteth the visage  
To thilkè God that after his image  
You made, and thinketh all is but a fair  
This world that passeth soon as flowers fair,

*boy or girl*

*Turn back*

*just a show*

264. And loveth Him, the which that right for love  
Upon a cross, our soulès for to buy,  
First starved, and rose, and sits in heaven above;  
For He n'ill falsen no wight, dare I say,  
That will his heart all wholly on Him lay,  
And since He best to love is, and most meek,  
What needeth feignèd lovès for to seek?

*to redeem*

*First, died*

*won't deceive anyone*

*to Him devote*

265. Lo here, of pagans' cursed oldè rites;  
Lo here, what all their goddès may avail;  
Lo here, this wretched worldè's appetites;  
Lo here, the fine and guerdon of travail  
Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, of such rascail;  
Lo here, the form of oldè clerkès' speech  
In poetry, if you their bookès seek.

*end & reward of work*

*ancient authors*

266. O moral Gower, this book I direct  
To thee, and to thee, philosophical Strode,<sup>1</sup>  
To vouchèsafe, where need is, to correct,  
Of your benignity and zealès good.  
And to that soothfast Christ, that starved on rood,  
With all my heart of mercy ever I pray;  
And to the Lord right thus I speak and say:

*To be good enough*

*faithful / died on the cross*

---

<sup>1</sup> 266.1-2: The poet Gower, and Strode, an Oxford philosopher, were friends of Chaucer. The request to correct his copy is probably a conventional compliment, but in the days before a writer had the opportunity to correct the final printer's page proofs, his work was at the mercy of every scribe who chose or was employed to copy it, so the request might not have been a mere gesture. For Chaucer's awareness of this, see stanza 257 just above, and for his exasperation at his own scribe Adam, see his short comic poem execrating Adam's errors.



267. Thou one and two and three, etern alive <sup>1</sup>  
That reignest ay in three and two and one,  
Uncircumscribed, and all may'st circumscribe,  
Us from visible and invisible foes  
Defend; and to Thy mercy everyone  
So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy digne  
For love of Maid and Mother thine benign. <sup>2</sup>  
Amen.

*ever*  
*Unbounded*

*worthy*

**Here ends the book of Troilus and Criseyde**

For appendix, see next page

---

<sup>1</sup> 267: The prayer is to the Holy Trinity, the three persons of the one God who reigns eternally: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The first three of these lines are a translation of Dante's *Paradiso* 14.28-30.

<sup>2</sup> 267.7: "Make us worthy of thy mercy, for love of your benign maiden-mother," the Virgin Mary. *Digne* can be pronounced "dine".

### Appendix

In most manuscripts the following summary of the Thebaid occurs after stanza 214 above

#### ARGUMENT OF THE TWELVE BOOKS OF STATIUS'S **THEBAID**

Associat profugum Tideo primus Polynicen.  
 Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus.  
 Tertius Hemoniden canit et vates latitantes.  
 Quartus havet reges ineuntes proelia septem.  
 Mox furie Lenne quinto narratur et anguis.  
 Archemori bustum sexto ludique leguntur.  
 Dat Graios Thebes, et vatem septimus umbris  
 Octavo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis.  
 Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopeo.  
 Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur.  
 Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres.  
 Argeiam flentem narrat duodenus et ignem.

Translation -

Book I associates Tydeus and the exiled Polynices.  
 Book II: Tydeus as ambassador and the ambush [intended by Eteocles to kill him].  
 Book III: Hemonides (Maeon) and the prophecies of doom.  
 Book IV: The seven kings going into battle.  
 Then in Book V we are told about the Lemnian furies and the serpent  
 Book VI: We read of the cremation and funeral games of Archemorus.  
 Book VII delivers the Greeks to Thebes and the prophet (Amphiaraus) to the shades.  
 Book VIII: Tydeus falls, the hope and life of the Pelasgians.  
 Book IX: Hippomedon dies with Parthenopaeus.  
 Book X: Capaneus, struck by a thunderbolt, is destroyed.  
 Book XI: The brothers [Eteocles and Polynices] fatally wound each other.  
 Book XII describes the grief of Argia and the funeral pyre [of Polynices].