

# Troilus and Criseyde

## Book II

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 mattér  
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.
- Cleo = muse of history  
my help  
finished*
- Therefore  
no experience / compose*
3. Wherefore I will have neither thanks nor blame  
Of all this work, but pray you meekely,  
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*

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<sup>1</sup> 1.4: "That my skill (*cunning*) is scarcely (*unnethes*) sufficient to steer it."

4. You know eke that in form of speech is change *also*  
 Within a thousand years, and wordès tho *then*  
 That hadden price, now wonder nice and strange *had value / now very odd*  
 Us thinketh them, and yet they spoke them so *They seem to us*  
 And sped as well in love as men now do. <sup>1</sup> *And succeeded*  
 Eke for to winnen love in sundry ages *And / various times*  
 In sundry landès, sundry been usages. *customs*
5. In May that mother is of monthès glad  
 That freshè flowers blue and white and red  
 Be quick again, that winter deadè made, *alive*  
 And full of balm is floating every mead *sweet smell / meadow*  
 When Phoebus doth his brightè beamès spread *P = the sun*  
 Right in the whitè bull -- it so betid *sign of Taurus / it happened*  
 As I shall sing, on Mayè's day the third
6. That Pandarus, for all his wisè speech  
 Felt eke his part of Lovè's shottès keen *sharp arrows*

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<sup>1</sup> 4.1-5: That the words of these five lines are true for English 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 has changed significantly in the use of written characters (e.g. **þ** and **3**), and 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 modern 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.

- That, could he ne'er so well of loving preach,<sup>1</sup>  
 It made his hue a-day full often green; *color / many times a day*  
 So shope it that him fell that day a teen *It happened / a pain*  
 In love, for which in woe to bed he went,  
 And made, ere it was day, full many a went. *toss, turn*
7. The swallow Procné with a sorrowful lay, *song*  
 When morrow came gan make her waymenting, *lament*  
 Why she forshapen was; and ever lay *transformed*  
 Pandáre a-bed, half in a slumbering,  
 Till she so nigh him made her chittering *so near*  
 How Tereus gan forth her sister take,  
 That with the noise of her he gan awake.
8. And gan to call and dress him up to rise *get ready to*  
 Remembering him his errand was to do  
 From Troilus, and eke his great emprise, *enterprise*  
 And cast, and knew in good plight was the moon *cast (a horoscope)*  
 To do viage, and took his way full soon *to start something*  
 Unto his niece's palace there beside.  
 Now Janus, god of entry, thou him guide.
9. 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 *sitting*  
 Within a pavéd parlor, and they three  
 Heard a maiden read to them the geste *story*  
 Of the siege of Thebès, while them lest.<sup>2</sup> *it pleased them*
10. Quod Pandarus: "Ma damé, God you see, *God bless you*  
 With all your book and all the company!"  
 "Eh, uncle mine, welcome iwis," quod she; *indeed*

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<sup>1</sup> 6.3: "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.

<sup>2</sup> 9.4-8: In an age of few books it was common for one person to read to a group.

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.

*in haste  
 Last night  
 I dreamed*

11. "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."<sup>1</sup>

*the better  
 prevented  
 may you teach me  
 girlfriend, beloved*

12. With that they gonnen laugh, and then she said:  
 "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>2</sup>  
 How that the bishop (as the book can tell)  
 Amphiorax, fell through the ground to hell."

*romance = geste in 9  
 stopped  
 [actually a soothsayer]*

13. 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 be this, 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."

*In "The Thebaid"  
 widow's headdress*

14. "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.

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<sup>1</sup> 11.7: 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 6 & 7 above, something of a good-natured family joke.

<sup>2</sup> 12.5: Red letters (rubrics) marked the beginnings of sections in many medieval MSS.

It sits me wel bet ay in a cave *would be more suitable*  
 To bid, and read on holy saintès' lives. *To pray*  
 Let maidens go to dances, and young wives."

15. "As ever thrive I," quod this Pandarus,  
 "Yet could I tell a thing to do you play." *to delight you*  
 "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." *5 times better*

16. "Yea, holy God!" quod she, "what thing is that?  
 What? better than such five? Eh, nay, iwis *Oh, surely not*  
 For all this world ne can I reden what *can't guess*  
 It shouldè be: some jape, I trow, is this; *some joke I guess*  
 And, but yourselfen tell us what it is, *unless yourself*  
 My wit is for t'arede it all too lean. <sup>1</sup> *interpret*  
 As help me God, I know not what you mean."

17. "And I your borrow, ne never shall, for me, *I guarantee you / my 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; *tell gladly*  
 For prouder woman were there none alive, *would be*  
 An' you it wist, in all the town of Troy.<sup>2</sup> *If you knew*  
 I japè not, as ever have I joy." *I'm not joking, honest*

18. Then gan she wonder morè than before  
 A thousandfold, and down her eyèn cast *eyes*  
 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:

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<sup>1</sup> 16.5-6: "Unless you yourself tell us what it is, my mind is too weak to interpret it."

<sup>2</sup> 17.5-6: Pandarus, deliberately rousing and teasing Criseyde's curiosity, tells her that if she only knew, she would be the proudest woman in Troy.

"Now, uncle mine, I will you not displeas,  
Nor asken more that may do you dis-ease." *cause discomfort*

19. So after this, with many wordès glad  
And friendly tales and with a merry cheer,  
Of this and that they played and gonnen wade *joked & began talk*  
In many an uncouth, glad, and deep mattér, *unusual*  
As friendès do when they be met ifere, *together*  
Till she gan asken him how Hector fared  
That was the townè's wall and Greekès' yard. *scourge of the Greeks*

20. "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, *flourishes*  
As allè truth and allè gentleness,  
Wisdom, honor, freedom and worthiness." *freedom = generosity*

21. "In good faith, eme," quod she, "that liketh me;  
They faren well, God save them bothè two, *uncle / pleases me*  
For truly I hold it great dainty, *very proper*  
A kingè's son in armès well to do,  
And be of good condition thereto; *good behavior*  
For great power and moral virtue here *here = on earth*  
Is seldom seen in one person y-fere." *together*

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

23. "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*
24. "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*
25. "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 fleen. *did flee*  
 And through the field, in every wightè's ear, *every person's*  
 There was no cry but `Troilus is there!'
26. "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*  
 Aywhere 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.
27. "Thereto, he is the friendlièstè 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*

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<sup>1</sup> 23.4: "He has even more honor than strength."

"Nay, blame have I, mine uncle," quod she then.

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

*person / then*

*discussed all they wished*

29. 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*

30. "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, iwis,  
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*

31. "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*

32. "Iwis, 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;

*Indeed / many thanks*

*benefited from*

*beholden*

*repaid*



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.

*as far as I know how  
 through my fault  
 before now*

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

*Leave off / strange  
 what you please  
 my beloved*

34. With that she gan her eyèn 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*

35. "And since the end is every talè's strength,  
 And this mattér is so bihovèly,  
 What should I paint or drawn 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*

36. 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;

*tell  
 or drag it out  
 but little satisfaction  
 She will think / deceive  
 think all is trickery  
 Where*

---

<sup>1</sup> 36.4-5: "And (she will) think (*trow*) that I deliberately (*in my will*) want to deceive (*beguile*) her."

- For-*thy* her wit to serven will I *fond*." <sup>1</sup> *Therefore*
37. And lookèd on her in a busy wise *an intent way*  
 And she was ware that he beheld her so,  
 And said: "Lord! so fast you me advise! *look at me so hard*  
 Saw you me ne'er ere now? What say you? No?" *never before now*  
 "Yes, yes," quod he, "and bet will ere I go; *better*  
 But by my truth, I thought now if that ye *if = how*  
 Be fortunate, for now men shall it see. *how fortunate you are*
38. "Be not aghast, ne quaketh not. Whereto? *Don't shake / Why?*  
 Ne changeth not for fearè so your hue *color*  
 For hardily, the worst of this is do, *certainly / is over*  
 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, *unsuitable*  
 To you would I no suchè thingè bring."
39. "Now, my good eme, for God's love I you pray, *my good uncle*  
 Quod she: "Come off, and tell me what it is;  
 For I am both aghast what you will say *afraid*  
 And eke me longeth it to wite, iwis. *also I long to know*  
 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. *now listen*
40. "Now, niece mine, the kingè's dearè son,  
 The goodly, wisè, worthy, fresh and free,  
 Which always for to do well is his wone, *his custom*  
 The noble Troilus, so loveth thee  
 That, but you help, it will his banè be. *unless you help / his death*  
 Lo, here is all, what should I morè say?  
 Do what you list to make him live or die. *what you like*
41. "If it be so that you so cruel be  
 That of his death you listè not to recche, *reck, care*

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<sup>1</sup> 36.7: "Therefore I will try (*fond*) to suit my message to her way of thinking."

- 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 cruel a deed.  
 Avisèment is good before the need. *Thought*
42. "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,  
 As high as men might on us all y-see.  
 I am thine eme; the shamé were to me  
 As well as thee, if that I should assent  
 Through mine abet that he thine honor shent. *fraud*  
*I'd rather*  
*pimp*  
*uncle*  
*my collusion / ruined*
43. "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*
44. Criseydè, which that heard him in this wise  
 Thought: "I shall feelen what he means iwis."  
 "Now, eme," quod she, "what wouldè you devise  
 What is your redde 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*  
*advise*  
*your advice*  
*proper return*
45. "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: *Age*  
*part*  
*no one will want you*  
*a lesson*

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<sup>1</sup> 43.6: "This is all I have to say, and that is our frank wish."

`Too late aware,' quod Beauty, when it passed.

`And Eldè daunteth Daunger at the last.'<sup>1</sup>

*Age overtakes aloofness*

46. "The kingè's fool is wont to cry aloud,  
When that he thinks a woman bears her high:

*accustomed  
acts haughtily  
proud (women)*

`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>

*to look in  
in the morning*

47. 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  
Redds me to love who should it me defend?"

*stopped  
into tears  
Why am I not  
do  
whom I took  
Advises / forbid it to me*

48. "Alas! I would have trusted doubtèless  
That if that I through my disáventure  
Had lovèd either him or Achilles,  
Hector, or any other creäture,  
You would have had no mercy nor measúre  
On me, but always had me in repreve:  
This falsè world, alas! who may it 'lieve?"

*bad fortune  
reproof  
believe, trust*

49. "What! is this all the joy and all the feast?  
Is this your redde? is this my blissful case?  
Is this the very meed of your behest?"

*advice  
your promised reward*

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<sup>1</sup> 45.7: "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, Age will overtake it.

<sup>2</sup> 46.7: 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'.)

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 astonéd am I that I die."

*elaborate yarn  
 purpose / Athene  
 look after me  
 amazed*

50. 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*

51. "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  
 That wickedly you do us both to die."<sup>2</sup>

*fierce  
 since  
 absolve myself  
 cause us both*

52. Criseydè, which that well nigh starved for fear,  
 So as she was the fearfulestè wight  
 That mightè be, and heard eke with her ear  
 And saw the sorrowful earnest of the knight,  
 And in his prayer saw eke no un-right,  
 And for the harm that might eke fallen more,  
 She gan to rue, and dread her wonder sore.

*died  
 timidest person  
 also  
 seriousness  
 more harm  
 to regret*

53. 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!

*misfortunes  
 Every day  
 wicked*

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<sup>1</sup> 50.7: "If only he could live, there would be no need to care about me," i.e. I don't really matter.

<sup>2</sup> 51.6-7: Since Pandarus is neither making nor hearing a confession, but accusing someone, *shrive* seems to mean "I absolve myself."

In my presénce, it will be no soláce.  
 What men would of it deem I cannot say; *judge*  
 It needeth me full slyly for to play.

54. "Of harmés two, the less is for to choose  
 Yet have I lever maken him good cheer *I'd rather be pleasant*  
 In honor, than mine emè's life to lose.-- *honorably / my uncle's*  
 You say you nothing else of me require?"<sup>1</sup>  
 "No, wis," quod he, "mine ownè niece so dear." *no indeed*  
 "Now, well," quod she, "and I will do my pain. *my best*  
 I shall my heart against my lust constrain. *a. my inclination*

55. "But that I will not holden him in hand: *not deceive him*  
 Nor love a man ne can I not nor may  
 Against my will; but elsè will I fond *I'll try to*  
 (Mine honour safe) please him from day to day.  
 Thereto would I not once have saidè nay *To that / no*  
 But that I dread, as in my fantasy. *dreaded / imagination*  
 But cease the cause, ay ceaseth malady.<sup>2</sup>

56. "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, *even if you both die*  
 Though all the world on one day be my foe,  
 Ne shall I ne'er on him have other ruth." *pity*  
 "I grant it well," quod Pandare, "by my truth.

57. "But may I trusten well thereto," quod he,  
 "That of this thing that you have hight me here, *promised*  
 You will it holden truly unto me?"

---

<sup>1</sup> 54.1-4: It would appear that Criseyde is speaking the preceding stanza and the first three lines of this to herself, the fourth line aloud to Pandarus. Criseyde's terrified timidity of 52 seems at odds with her shrewd assessment of the situation in 53.7 and 54, and with her firm, self confident declaration of 55 and 56.

<sup>2</sup> 55.7: "When the cause of the illness is removed, the illness goes away." There is no fear when the cause of fear is removed.

- "Yea, doubtéless," quod she, "mine uncle dear!"  
 "Ne that I shall have cause in this mattér,"  
 Quod he, "to 'plain or after you to preach?" *complain*  
 "Why no, pardee; what needeth morè speech?" *by God*
58. Then fellen they in other talès glad, *started talking*  
 Till at the last: "O good eme!" quod she tho, *uncle / then*  
 "For love of God, which that us both y-made,  
 Tell me how first you wisten of his woe; *you knew*  
 Wot none of it but you?" He saidè: "No."  
*Knows anyone?*  
 "Can he well speak of love?" quod she: "I pray?  
 Tell me, for I the bet me shall purvey." *better prepare myself*
59. 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, *not long ago*  
 Within the palace garden by a well  
 gan he and I well half a day to dwell,  
 Right for to speaken of an ordinance *plan*  
 How we the Greeks might do a disadvantage. *inflict a defeat*
60. "Soon after that began we for to leap  
 And casten with our darts to and fro, *spears*  
 Till at the last he said that he would sleep,  
 And on the grass adown he laid him tho; *then*  
 And I afar gan roamen to and fro,  
 Till that I heard, as that I walked alone,  
 How he began full woefully to groan.
61. "Tho gan I stalk full softly him behind,  
 And sikerly, the soothè for to sayn, *creep*  
 As I can clepe again now to my mind, *certainly / truth*  
 Right thus to Love he gan him for to 'plain. *recall*  
 He said: `O, Lord, have ruth upon my pain; *complain*  
 All have I rebel been in mine intent, *have pity*  
*Although*

Now *mea culpa*, Lord, I me repent.<sup>1</sup> *my fault*

62. `For certès, Lord, so sore hath she me wounded *certainly*  
 That stood in black with looking of her eye,<sup>2</sup>  
 That to mine heartè's bottom it is sounded,  
 Through which I wot that I must needès die. *I know*  
 This is the worst: I dare me not bewray, *give myself away*  
 And well the hotter be the gleadès red *coals*  
 That men them wry with ashes pale and dead.<sup>3</sup> *Because / cover*

63. "With that he smote his head a-down anon,  
 And gan to mutter I n'ot what truly, *I don't know*  
 And I with that gan still away to gon, *quietly walked away*  
 And let thereof as nothing wist had I, *pretended I knew nothing*  
 And came again anon and stood him by, *near him*  
 And said: `Awake, you sleepen all too long;  
 It seems me not that Love doth you to long<sup>4</sup>

64. " `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 *let you get headaches*  
 For love, and let me liven as I can.' *From being in love*  
 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.

65. "This passèd forth, till now, this other day,

---

<sup>1</sup> 61.7: *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 51.6 & 58.3 above.

<sup>2</sup> 62.2: "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, 18.1-2)

<sup>3</sup> 62.5-7: "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."

<sup>4</sup> 63.7-64.1: "It does not seem to me that love causes you to yearn, because you sleep so soundly that one cannot wake you." *Doth you to long* (63.7) = "Causes you to long for (something)".



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 coming  
 All suddenly he left his complaining.

*I did not know*

66. "Of which I took somewhat suspicion  
 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.

*greater pity  
 ingenuity nor skill  
 Scarcely*

67. "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>1</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*

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

*no other reason  
 has made us  
 Give him such hope  
 plainly / confessed  
 you know*

69. "And right good thrift, I pray to God, have ye  
 That have such one y-caught without a net,

*good fortune*

---

<sup>1</sup> 67.3-4: "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.

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."

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

71. With this he took his leave, and home he went  
 And, Lord, how he was glad and well begone! *pleased*  
 Criseyde arose, no longer she ne stent, *delayed*  
 But straight into her closet went anon, *her room*  
 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.

72. And waxed somedeal astonished in her thought *And became*  
 Right for the newè case; but when that she *when she*  
 Was full avisèd, then found she right naught *Had thought about it*  
 Of peril why she ought afearèd be; *nothing to be afraid of*  
 For man may love of possibility  
 A woman so his heartè may to-burst, *to point of heartbreak*  
 And she not love again, but if her lest.<sup>2</sup> *unless she please*

73. But as she sat alone and thoughtè thus,  
 Ascry arose at skirmish all without, *A cry*  
 And men cried in the street: "See! Troilus

---

<sup>1</sup> 69.3: "If you are as wise as you are pretty to look at."

<sup>2</sup> 72.5-7: 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 generalization." **The Medieval Poet as Voyeur**, p. 127.

Has right now put to flight the Greekè 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,

*Greek troops  
 her servants*

74. "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 routs 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*

75. 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 battaile.<sup>1</sup>

76. 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*

77. 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 might 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)*

---

<sup>1</sup> 75.6-7: He was better to look at than Mars, the god of war.

78. For which he waxed a little red for shame *blushed w. embarrassment*  
 When he the people heard upon him cry,  
 That, to behold, it was a noble game *pleasing sight*  
 How soberly he cast adown his eye. *modestly*  
 Creseyde anon gan all his cheer espy, *appearance*  
 And let so soft it in her heartè sink  
 That to herself she said: "Who gave me drink?" *love potion? alcohol?*
79. For of her ownè thought she waxed all red, *blushed*  
 Remembering her right thus: "Lo! this is he  
 Which that mine uncle swears he must be dead *he will die*  
 But I on him have mercy and pity."  
 And with that thought for pure ashamed she *Unless I*  
 gan in her head to pull, and that as fast, *embarrassment*  
 While he and all the people forth by passed.
80. And gan to cast and rollen up and down *[She] began to consider*  
 Within her thought his excellent prowèss, *achievements*  
 And his estate, and also his renown, *rank / fame*  
 His wit, his shape, and eke his gentleness;  
 But most her favour was, for his distress *because his d.*  
 Was all for her, and thought it was a ruth *and (she) thought it a pity*  
 To slayen suchè one, if he meant truth.
81. Now mighten some envious jangle thus: *complain*  
 `This was a sudden love; how might it be  
 That she so lightly lovèd Troilus?  
 Right for the firstè sightè, yea, pardee! ' *By God*  
 Now whoso says so, may he never thee,<sup>1</sup>  
 For everything beginning has it need *needs a beginning*  
 Ere all be wrought withouten any dread. *finished / doubtless*
82. For I say not that she so suddenly  
 Gave him her love, but that she gan incline

---

<sup>1</sup> 81.5: "Now, whoever says so, may he never prosper." *thee* is the verb "to prosper", not a pronoun.

To like him first, and I have told you why;  
 And after that, his manhood and his pain  
 Made love within her heartè 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*

83. 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 honour with play and with gladness  
 In honesty with such a lord to deal  
 For mine estate, and also for his heal.<sup>1</sup>

*Even though it's impossible*

*honorably  
 my good & his health*

84. "Eke well wot I my kingè's son is he,  
 And since he has to see me such delight,  
 If I would utterly his sight y-flee,  
 Paraunter he might have me in despite,  
 Through which I mightè standen in worse plight:  
 Now were I wise, me hate to purcháse  
 Withouten need, where I may stand in grace?<sup>2</sup>

*Perhaps*

*would I be  
 in favor*

85. "Now set a case, the hardest is iwis,  
 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*

86. "I think eke, how he able is to have  
 Of all this noble town the thriftiest

*the best*

---

<sup>1</sup> 83.5-7: "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."

<sup>2</sup> 84.6-7: "Would I be wise to invite hate needlessly, when I could have favor?"

To be his love so she her honour save;<sup>1</sup> *'so' = provided*  
 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 aventure. *fortune*

87. "Nor me to love a wonder is it naught,  
 For well wot I myself (so God me speed,  
 Al' would I that none wisten of this thought), *I know / as God's my judge*  
 I am one the fairest, out of dread, *I'd prefer no one knew*  
 And goodliest, whoso that taketh heed, *without doubt*  
 And so men say in all the town of Troy;  
 What wonder is though he of me have joy?

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

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

90. 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, *to move*  
 That overspread her brightè thoughtès all

---

<sup>1</sup> 86.3: *so she* ...: "provided that she kept her reputation intact."

So that for fear almost she gan to fall.

91. That thought was this: "Alas! since I am free,  
Should I now love and put in jeopardy  
My sikerness, and thrallen liberty? *security / give up*  
Alas! how durst I thinken that folly? *how dare I*  
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> *reason to complain*

92. "For love is yet the mostè stormy life  
Right of himself that ever was begun, *itself*  
For ever some mistrust or nicè strife *silly*  
There is in love; some cloud is o'er that sun;  
Thereto we wretched women nothing can, *can (do) nothing*  
When us is woe, but weep, and sit, and think. *When we're unhappy*  
Our wrecche is this, our ownè woe to drink. *unhappiness*

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

94. "How often times hath it y-knowen be  
The treason that to women has been done!  
To what fine is such love I cannot see, *To what purpose*  
Or where becometh it when it is gone. *where it goes*  
There is no wight that wot -- I trowè so -- *no one who knows, I guess*  
Where it becomes. Lo! No wight on it spurneth;<sup>2</sup>  
What erst was nothing, into nought it turneth. *What first*

---

<sup>1</sup> 91.5-7: "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."

<sup>2</sup> 94.6: "Nobody falls over it." That is, it is not lying around in an obvious place.

95. "How busy, if I love, eke must I be  
 To pleasen them that jangle of love and deem, *chatter / judge*  
 And coy them, that they say no harm of me! *cajole, persuade?*  
 For though there be no cause, yet them can seem *can seem to them*  
 All be for harm that folk their friendès queme.<sup>1</sup> *please*  
 And who may stoppen every wicked tongue,  
 Or sound of bellès while that they be rung?"
96. And after that her thought gan for to clear,  
 And said: "He which that nothing undertaketh *like it or not*  
 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, *between the two*  
 She rose her up and went her for to play. *enjoy (the company)*
97. Adown the stair anon right then she went  
 Into her garden with her nieces three,  
 And up and down there maden many a went *a turn*  
 Flexippè, she, Tharbe and Antigone  
 To playen, that it was joy to see, *To relax*  
 And other of her women a great rout *a large number*  
 Her followed in the garden all about.
98. This yard was large, and railèd all the alleys, *garden / w. railings*  
 And shadowed well with blossomy boughs green,  
 And benchèd new, and sanded all the ways, *the walks*  
 In which she walketh arm in arm between,  
 Till at the last Antigone the sheen *the beautiful*  
 gan on a Trojan song to singen clear,  
 That it a heaven was her voice to hear.

---

<sup>1</sup> 95.4-5: "It can seem suspicious to them even when people are just doing something to please their friends."



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

99. 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. *my h's joy in tribute*  
 For never yet thy gracè no wight sent *(to) no person*  
 So blissful cause as me, my life to lead *(to) me*  
 In allè joy and surety, out of dread. *without doubt*

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

101. "As he that is the well of worthiness  
 Of truth the ground, mirror of goodlihead,  
 Of wit Apollo, stone of sikerness *rock of certainty*  
 Of virtue root, of lust finder and head, *of joy the source*  
 Through which is allè sorrow from me dead.  
 Iwis, I love him best, so does he me; *Indeed*  
 Now good thrift have he, whereso that he be. *good fortune*

102. "Whom should I thank but you, O god of love,  
 Of all this bliss in which to bathe I 'gin *begin*  
 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. *put to flight*  
 This does me so to virtue for t'intend *to incline*  
 That day by day I in my will amend. *improve*

---

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

<sup>2</sup> 100.7: *Distrained*: variously glossed by editors and lexicographers: "stained, sullied, misled, overcome, oppressed."

103. "And whoso says that for to love is vice  
 Or thralldom, though he feel in it distress, *slavery*  
 He either is envious or right nice. *very silly*  
 Or is unmighty for his shrewèdness *from vice is unable*  
 To lovè, for such manner folk, I guess,  
 Defamen Love, as nothing of him know;  
 They spoken, but they never bent his bow. *i.e. never felt love*
104. "What is the sunnè worse, of kindè right, *of its nature*  
 Though that a man for feebleness of eye  
 May not endure on it to see for bright? *to look / brightness*  
 Or love the worse, though wretches on it cry? *decry it*  
 No weal is worth that may no sorrow dry.<sup>1</sup> *happiness / endure*  
 And therefore who that has a head of ver  
 From cast of stones beware him in the war. *of glass*
105. "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, *dreaded*  
 Now wot I well there is no peril in." *I know*
106. And of her song right with that word she stent, *stopped*  
 And therewithal: "Now niecè," quod Criseyde,  
 "Who made this song now with so good intent?"  
 Antigone answered anon, and said:  
 "Madame, iwis the goodliestè maid  
 Of great estate in all the town of Troy,  
 And leads her life in most honóur and joy."
107. "Forsoothè so it seemeth by her song," *In truth*  
 Quod then Criseyde, and gan therewith to sigh,  
 And saidè: "Lord! is there such bliss among  
 These lovers, as they can fair endite?" *compose, write*

---

<sup>1</sup> 104.5: "No happiness (or good fortune) is worth anything that has not cost some sorrow."

"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.

*certainly  
 have (lived)*

108. "But weenen you that every wretchè wot  
 The perfect bliss of love? Why nay, iwis.  
 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*

109. Criseyde unto the purpose naught answered,  
 But said: "Iwis 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*

110. 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.  
 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.

*departed  
 she wanted to sleep  
 Repeat*

111. 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>2</sup>  
 Of love, that made her heartè fresh and gay;

*bright*

---

<sup>1</sup> 109.5-6: The 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."

<sup>2</sup> 111.4: "By chance, in his bird's fashion, a song."

That hearkened she so long in good intent  
Till at the last the deadè sleep her hent. *took*

112. And as she slept, anon right then she mett *she dreamt*  
How that an eagle, feathered white as bone,  
Under her breast his longè clawès set,  
And out her heart he rent, and that anon; *he tore at once*  
And did his heart into her breast to gon. *and caused*  
Of which she naught agrose, ne nothing smart, *wasn't afraid or hurt*  
And forth he flew, with heartè left for heart.

113. 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 *went*  
For Pandarus, and soughten him full fast  
Till they him found, and brought him at the last.

114. 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?" *fever*  
And gan to jape, and said: "Lord so you sweat!  
But rise and let us sup and go to rest," *joke*  
And he him answered: "Do we as thee lest." *as you please*

115. With all the haste goodly that they might, *mannerly*  
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; *person / went*  
But Troilus thought that his heartè bled *where he pleased*  
For woe till that he heardè some tiding.  
He saidè: "Friend, shall I now weep or sing?"

116. Quod Pandarus: "Lie still, and let me sleep,

And don thy hood; thy needès spedde be,<sup>1</sup> *put on / have been met*  
 And choose if thou wilt sing or dance or leap:  
 At shortè wordès, thou shalt trowen me, *believe me*  
 Sir, my niecè 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> *Unless*

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

118. But right as flowers, through the cold of night  
 Y-closéd, stoopen in their stalkès low,  
 Redressen them against the sunnè bright, *recover in the bright sun*  
 And spreaden, in their kindè, course by row, *their nature / row by r.*  
 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." *praised*

119. 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, *I am healthy*  
 A thousand Troyès whoso that me gave  
 Each after other (God so wise me save)

---

<sup>1</sup> 116.2: *don thy hood; thy needes 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> 116.7: The meaning seems to be: "Unless your lazy failure to pursue the matter spoils things."

<sup>3</sup> 117.5: 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*

120. "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? *at her (house)*  
Thou mayst answer: `Abide, abide'; but he *Wait, wait*  
That hangeth by the neck, the sooth to sayn, *to tell truth*  
In great dis-ease abideth for the pain." *distress*

121. "All easily now, for the love of Mart," *Mars*  
Quod Pandarus, "for everything hath time;  
So long abide till that the night depart.  
For all so siker as thou liest here by me, *As sure*  
And, God to-forn, I will be there at prime, *as G. is my witness / in the a.m.*  
And forthy, work somewhat as I shall say,  
Or on some other wight this charge lay. *And therefore person / duty*

122. "I wot well that thou wiser art than I *I know*  
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. *I felt bad / her pity*  
Now help thyself, and leave it not for sloth.

123. "And I myself shall therewith to her go  
And when thou wost that I am with her there, *you know*  
Worth thou upon a courser right anon *Mount a horse*  
Yea, hardily right in thy bestè gear *certainly*  
And ride forth by the place, as naught ne were,  
And thou shalt find us, if I may, sitting *as if by accident*  
At some window into the street looking.

---

<sup>1</sup> 119.4-6: "Anyone giving me a thousand Troys one after the other, I declare to God, could not make me so glad."

124. 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*

125. Touching thy letter, thou art wise enough.  
 I wot thou wilt it not dignely endite.<sup>1</sup>  
 As make it with these arguments 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*

126. 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 iwis,  
 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  
 ignorance  
 wouldn't, out of disdain  
 avert*

127. 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>2</sup>

*if you please  
 go with it  
 Direct from / don't want to  
 all his life*

128. Quod Troilus: "Depardieu, I assent;  
 By God

---

<sup>1</sup> 125.2: "I know you will not write it over-elaborately."

<sup>2</sup> 127.5-7: *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."

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.

*Since you wish*  
  
*write*  
*Make it succeed*  
*skill / to compose*

129. 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*

130. And that she would have his cunníng 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*

131. 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*

132. 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: "Iwis mine heart  
 So fresh it is (although it sorè smart)  
 I may not sleepè never a May's morrow,

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



I have a jolly woe, a lusty sorrow." <sup>1</sup>

133. Criseydè, 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 penáncè;  
 How far forth be you put in lovè's dance?"

*agony*  
*What's your position in*

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

*laughed so hard*  
*something to laugh at /listen, please*

135. "Into the garden go we, and you'll hear  
 All privily of this a long sermón."  
 With that they wenten arm in arm ifere  
 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*

136. "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,

*totally & completely*

*Study it*  
*provide*

---

<sup>1</sup> 132.7: These are the oxymorons of love applied jokingly by Pandarus to himself.

<sup>2</sup> 133.2: *Dreadful* cannot here mean "filled with dread" in our sense of the word "dread." In view of the self-mockery of Pandarus's opening remark and Criseyde's own lighthearted response, it has to mean something more like "bursting with curiosity."

<sup>3</sup> 134.2: "until she thought her heart would burst."

Or, help me God so, plainly for to sayn,  
He may not longè liven for his pain."

137. 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*

138. 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?*

139. "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*

140. 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*

---

<sup>1</sup> 137.1: As with 133.2, *dreadfully* here can hardly mean "full of dread", but neither can it mean "full of curiosity" in the context. "With uncertainty? apprehension? offended modesty? "

141. Therewith she laughed, and said: "Go we dine;"  
 And he gan at himself to jape fast, *to joke*  
 And said: "Niece, I have so great a pine *pining*  
 For love, that every other day I fast;"  
 And gan his bestè japes forth to cast, *jokes*  
 And made her so to laugh at his folly  
 That she for laughter weened for to die. *expected*
142. And when that she was come into the hall,  
 "Now eme," quod she, "we will go dine anon *uncle*  
 And gan some of her women to her call,  
 And straight into her chamber gan she gon; *proceeded to go*  
 But of her businesses this was one  
 Amongest other thingès, out of dread, *without question*  
 Full privily this letter for to read.
143. Avisèd word by word in every line, *having read*  
 And found no lack, she thought he couldè good; *knew how to act properly*  
 And put it up, and went her in to dine;  
 And Pandarus, that in a study stood, *stood abstractedly*  
 Ere he was 'ware she took him by the hood,  
 And said: "You were caught ere that you wist."  
 "I vouchèsafe," quod he; "do what you list." *before you knew*  
*I agree / what you like*
144. Then washen they, and set them down and eat;  
 And after noon full slily Pandarus  
 Gan draw him to the window nigh the street, *near*  
 And said: "Niece, who hath arrayèd thus *fixed*  
 The yonder house that stands afore-gainst us?" *opposite*  
 "Which house?" quod she, and gan for to behold,  
 And knew it well, and whose it was him told.
145. And fellen forth in speech of thingès small, *made small talk*  
 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? *you know about*

Can he thereon? for by my truth I n'ot." <sup>1</sup>

146. 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*

147. "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*  
*But I don't know*

*cause him not*

148. "Depardieu!" quod she, "God leve all be well;  
 God help me so, this is the firstè letter  
 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 Disdain's prison but a lite,  
 And set her down and gan a letter write.

*Indeed / God grant*

*all or part*  
*private room*  
*to unbind*  
*a little*

149. 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*

---

<sup>1</sup> 145.7: "Does he know how to write well, for, on my word, I don't know".

<sup>2</sup> 146.7: A parchment letter would have been sewn shut.

150. 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, *gold-embroidered*  
 And said: "As wisly help me God the great, *As surely*  
 I never did a thing with morè pain  
 Than writè this, to the which you me constrain." *pressure*

151. And right as they declarèd this mattér,  
 Lo! Troilus right at the streetè's end  
 Came riding with his tenthè some ifere<sup>1</sup> *in a group of 10*  
 All softly, and thitherward gan bend *moved towards*  
 There as they sat, as was his way to wend *to travel*  
 To palace-ward, and Pandare him espied, *towards the palace*  
 And said: "Niece! See who comes herè ride!

152. "O fly not in! He sees us, I suppose,  
 Lest he may thinken that you him eschew." *avoid*  
 "Nay, nay," quod she, and waxed as red as rose. *and became*  
 With that he gan her humbly to salue *salute, greet*  
 With dreadful cheer, and oft his hues mue,<sup>2</sup>  
 And up his look he debonairly cast, *modestly*  
 And beckèd on Pandàre, and forth he passed. *nodded to*

153. God wot if he sat on his horse aright, *God knows*  
 Or goodly was beseen that ilkè day! *was good looking*  
 God wot whe'r he were like a manly knight! *God knows whether*  
 What should I dretch, or tell of his array? *delay / clothes*  
 Criseydé, which that all these thingès saw,  
 To tell in short, her likèd all ifere, *everything pleased her*  
 His person, his array, his look, his cheer, *dress / attitude*

---

<sup>1</sup> 151.3: *with his tenthè sum ifere*: *tenthè sum* is a relic of an OE idiom meaning "one of ten," i.e. he and nine others.

<sup>2</sup> 152.5: Once again the precise connotation of *dreadful* is difficult to pin down. (See 133 & 137 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.

154. 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 although*

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

*strike  
(the answer to) what / a little  
to blame  
pity*

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

*tell truth  
yonder  
3 times  
squeamishness  
cause you pain*

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

*there was humming & hawing  
unknown  
And reward*

---

<sup>1</sup> 157: 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.72.5-7). My quotation marks and punctuation could easily be changed in a number of ways. In 157.3 Riverside has *speche* for *shame*, and glosses it as '(fear of) malicious speech.'

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

159. 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*  
 That lay, as do those lovers, in a trance,  
 Betwixen hope and dark dis-èserance. *despair*  
 But Pandarus right at his in-coming  
 He sang, as who saith: "Lo! somewhat I bring."

160. 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, *attack*  
 If thou forthwith do all thy busyness."

161. "Yea, through the might of God, " quod Troilus.  
 And Pandarus gan him the letter take, *to him*  
 And said: "Pardee, God hath holpen us. *I declare / helped*  
 Have here a light, and look on all these black." *black [letters]*  
 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. *According as*

162. Wherefore I say always, that day and night  
 This Troilus gan to desiren more  
 Than he did erst through hope, and did his might *before*  
 To pressen on, as by Pandárus' lore, *advice*  
 And writen to her of his sorrows sore  
 From day to day: he let it naught refreid *grow cold*

That by Pandare he somewhat wrote or said.

163. But to Pandáre always was his recourse,  
 And piteously gan ay to him to 'plain,  
 And him besought of redde and some succourse;<sup>1</sup> *advice & help*  
 And Pándarus, that saw his woodè pain, *bitter*  
 Waxed well nigh dead for ruthè, sooth to sayn, *Grew / for pity*  
 And busily with all his heartè cast *determined*  
 Some of his woe to slay, and that as fast; *to relieve / quickly*

164. And saidè: "Lord and friend and brother dear,  
 God wot that thy dis-easè doth me woe. *causes me pain*  
 But wilt thou stinten all this woeful cheer, *If you would stop / behavior*  
 And, by my truth, ere it be dayès two,  
 And God to-forn, yet shall I shape it so *With God's help*  
 That thou shalt come into a certain place  
 Thereas thou may'st thyself her pray of grace. *ask her favor*

165. "But, Troilus, yet tell me, if thee lest, *if you will*  
 A thing now which that I shall asken thee:  
 Which is the brother that thou lovest best,  
 As in thy very heartè's privity?" *privacy*  
 "Iwis my brother Deiphebe," quod he. *Indeed*  
 "Now," quod Pandáre, "ere hourès twicè twelve  
 He shall thee ease, unwist of it himself. *unaware*

166. "Now let me alone and worken as I may,"  
 Quod he, and to Deiphebus went he tho, *then*  
 Which had his lord and greatè friend been ay; *always*  
 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." *concerns*

167. "Yes, pardee," quod Deiphebus, "well thou wost, *you know*

---

<sup>1</sup> 163.2-3: "And [Troilus] constantly to him [Pandarus] made his complaint and begged him for advice and help."



In all that e'er I may, and God to-fore, *before God*  
 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. *displease you*

168. 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."

169. Deiphebus answered him: "Oh, is not this  
 That thou speak'st of to me thus strangely, *as a stranger*  
 Criséydé, my friend?" He saidè: "Yes." *C. has 4 syllables*  
 "Then needeth," quod Deiphebus, "hardily,  
 "No more to speak; for trusteth well that I  
 Will be her champion with spur and yard: *whip*  
 I roughtè not though all her foes it heard. *I care not*

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

171. Deiphebus, which that comen was of kind *was by nature inclined*  
 To all honoúr and bounty to consent,

---

<sup>1</sup> 167.1-4: "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> 167.6: "I wasn't and I will never be, I hope"

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.

*I think  
 as she likes*

172. "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 Criseydé honour such that he  
 May say no bet, such hap to him has she.  
 It needeth not his helpé for to crave;  
 He shall be such right as we will him have.

*more than once  
 better / favor with him*

173. "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  
 meal risen*

174. He said: "O very God! so have I run,  
 Lo! niecè mine, see you not how I sweat?  
 I n'ot whether you morè thank me can;  
 Be you not 'ware how falsè Poliphét  
 Is now about eftsoonés 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*

175. "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> 175.1: "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 ifere;

*No matter / everything*

176. "Withouten that I have enough for us."  
 "Nay," quod Pandáre, "it shall be no thing so,  
 For I have been right now at Deíphibus,  
 At Hector, and mine other lordès mo',  
 And shortly makéd 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*

177. 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 would not deny,  
 But goodly gan his prayer to obey.  
 He thankéd her, and went upon his way.

*planned / to do*

*in person  
 to be his guests*

*politely*

178. 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*

179. "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;

*quickly  
 as if to relax  
 the better  
 Because*

---

<sup>1</sup> 175.4-5: 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. 15-27 below.

Soon after that, down in thy bed thee lay, *lie down in bed*  
 And say thou may'st no longer up endure,  
 And lie right there and bide thine aventure." *await your destiny*

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

181. "Lo, hold thee at thy tristè close, and I *(hunting) station*  
 Shall well the deer unto thy bowè drive."  
 Therewith he took his leave all softèly,  
 And Troilus to palace wentè blive. *at once*  
 So glad ne was he never in all his life,  
 And to Pandárus' redd gan all assent, *took P's advice*  
 And to Deiphebus' house at night he went.

182. What needeth it to tellen all the cheer *the welcome*  
 That Deiphebus to his brother made,  
 Or his access, or his sickly mannér, *Or his (T's) attack*  
 How men go him with clothès for to lade, *bedclothes to load*  
 When he was laid, and how men would him glad? *laid (on bed) / cheer up*  
 But all for naught; he held forth ay the wise *he held to the plan*  
 That you have heard Pandáre ere this devise.

183. The morrow came, and nighen gan the time *approach*  
 Of mealtide, that the fairè Queen Elaine *Helen*  
 Shope her to be an hour after prime *Prepared / about 10 a.m.*  
 With Deiphebe, to whom she would not feign,  
 But as his sister, homely, sooth to sayn, *like family, to tell truth*  
 She came to dinner in her plain intent;  
 But God and Pándare wist all what this meant. *knew*

184. 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*

185. Great honour did them Déiphebe 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*

186. Complainèd 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  
 Men curen folk; this charm I will thee lere."<sup>2</sup>  
 But there sat one, al' list her not to teach,  
 That thought: "Best could I be his leech."

*physician*  
*teach*  
*although she didn't choose to*  
*his physician*

187. 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*

188. Heard all this thing Criseydè well enough,  
 And every word gan for to notify,  
 For which with sober cheer her heartè laughed;

*to take note of*  
*w. serious face*

---

<sup>1</sup> 184.3: "The best thing for us is to avoid wordiness here."

<sup>2</sup> 186.3-5: "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.

For who is that ne would her glorify *be proud*  
 To mowen such a knight do live or die? <sup>1</sup> *enable*  
 But all pass I, lest you too longè dwell;  
 But for one fine is all that e'er I tell. *one purpose*

189. "Tell thou thy niece's case," quod Deiphebus  
 To Pandarus, "for thou canst best it tell."  
 "My lords and my ladies, it stands thus;  
 What should I longer," quod he, "do you dwell?" *why should I delay you*  
 He rung them out a process like a bell *rattled off a case*  
 Upon her foe that hight was Polyphete, *Against / was called*  
 So heinous that men mighten on it spit.

190. Spoke then Elaine, and said to Pandarus:  
 "Wot aught my lord my brother of this mattér,  
 I mean Hectór, or wot it Troilus?" *Does my b. know anything?*  
 He said: "Yea, but will you now me hear?" *does T. know?*  
 Methinketh this, since Troilus is here,  
 It werè good, if that you would assent,  
 She told herself him all this ere she went;

191. "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, *just nip in*  
 And do you wit, and that anon iwis, *And let you know & promptly indeed*  
 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." *hearse*

192. To smilen of this then gan Troilus;  
 And Pandarus, withouten reckoning, *delay*  
 Out went to Helen and Deiphebus,  
 And said them: "So there be no tarrying, *Provided there's no delay*

---

<sup>1</sup> 188.4-5: "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 warrior should live or die? 188.6: *But all ... dwell*: "But I pass over this lest you be delayed too long."

No morè press, he will well that you bring  
 Crisëydè, my lady that is here,  
 And as he may enduren, he will hear.

*no crowding / he agrees*  
*as far as he is able*

193. "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 reve."

*It's my opinion*  
*nobody but you 2*  
*Except me / in a minute*  
*Go over*  
*deprive*

194. "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>1</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*

195. Elaine in all her goodly softè wise  
 gan him salute and womanly to play,  
 And said: "Iwis you must algate arise;  
 Now, fairè brother, be all whole I pray;"  
 And gan her arm right o'er his shoulder lay,  
 And him with all her wit to recomfòrt;  
 As she best could, she gan him to disport.

*greet & joke with*  
*Indeed / at once*  
*her ability*  
*entertain*

196. So after this quod she: "We you beseech,  
 My dearè brother Déiphebe 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*

---

<sup>1</sup> 194.3-5: "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."

197. 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," quod the Queen Elaine.
- sharpen  
at once  
  
walk  
I'll be glad  
  
Good fortune*
198. 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 vouchésafe 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*
199. "To be avisèd by your redd 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 redd  
 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*
200. 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 ilké 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  
1708*
201. 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, nicè mine, my lady Queen Elaine
- look to see  
he went  
in haste*



Abideth you, and eke my lordès twain.

*Awaits / two*

202. "Rise. Take with you your niece Antigone,  
Or whom you list, or, no force hardily;<sup>1</sup>  
The less 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*

203. All innocent of Pandarus' intent  
Quod then Criseydè: "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*

204. "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 crowns 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*

205. But now to you, ye 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;"

*on the spot  
approaches my fate  
or promptly have*

---

<sup>1</sup> 202.2: "Or whomever you want. Oh, it doesn't matter really."

<sup>2</sup> 203.7: "Stay right here and entertain yourselves quietly."

<sup>3</sup> 204.6: 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. In 50.1 - 51.7 above Pandarus had said that her obdurate refusal would kill both of them.

And was the firste time he should her pray  
Of love; O mighty God! what shall he say?

*ask her ...*  
*... for her love*

Here ends Book II

Aided by Criseyde's uncle Pandarus, Troilus and Criseyde are united in love about halfway through the poem, but then she is sent to join her father in the Greek camp outside Troy. Despite her promise to return, she is loved by the Greek warrior Diomedes and comes to love him. Troilus, left in despair, is killed in the Trojan War. Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Troilus and Criseyde". Encyclopedia Britannica, 11 Mar. 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Troilus-and-Criseyde>. Accessed 4 February 2021. Troilus and Criseyde study guide contains a biography of Geoffrey Chaucer, literature essays, a complete e-text, quiz questions, major themes, characters, and a full summary and analysis. About Troilus and Criseyde Troilus and Criseyde Summary Character List Glossary Themes Quotes and Analysis Book 1 Book 2 Book 3 Book 4 Book 5 Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde Book V. A new complete downloadable English modernisation. 4. This Troilus, without plan or lore, like a man joyless and forlorn, was waiting on his lady evermore. she that was every part and more, of all his pleasure and joy before. But Troilus, farewell now all your joy, for you will never see her again in Troy. 5. The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen, That was the king Priamus sone of Troye, In lovinge, how his adventures fellen Fro wo to wele, and after out of loye, My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye. Thesiphone, thou help me for tendyte These woful vers, that wepen as I wryte! To thee clepe I, thou goddesse of torment, Thou cruel Furie, sorwing ever in peyne; Help me, that am the sorwful instrument That helpeth lovers, as I can, to pleyne! For wel sit it, the sothe for to seyne, A woful wight to han a dreary