

Troilus and Criseyde

Book II

The beginnings of hope for Troilus

1. Out of these blackè wavès for to sail,
O wind, O wind, the weather 'ginneth clear, *begins to*
For in this sea the boat hath such travail, *difficulty*
Of my cunning that unnethes I it steer.¹
This sea clepe I the tempestuous mattér *I call*
Of dis-espair that Troilus was in. *despair*
But now of hope the Kalendès begin. *Kalendes = first days*

*Invocation to the Muse, and appeal to the audience.
In different times and places, people speak and woo differently*

2. O lady mine that callèd art Cleo, *Cleo = muse of history*
Thou be my speed from this forth, and my muse *my help*
To rhymè well this book, till I have do. *finished*
Me needeth here no other art to use;
For-why to every lover I me excuse *Therefore*
That of no sentiment I this endite *no experience / compose*
But out of Latin in my tongue it write.

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; *Don't blame*
For as my author said, so say I.
Eke, though I speak of love unfeelingly, *Also*
No wonder is, for it no thing of new's: *is nothing new*
A blind man cannot judgen well in hues. *colors*

4. You know eke that in form of speech is change *also*
Within a thousand years, and wordès tho *then*

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

That hadden price, now wonder nice and strange
Us thinketh them, and yet they spoke them so
And sped as well in love as men now do.¹
Eke for to winnen love in sundry ages
In sundry landès, sundry been usages.

had value / now very odd
They seem to us
And succeeded
And / various times
customs

Pandarus to the rescue in spite of this his own problem

5. 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

6. That Pandarus, for all his wisè speech
Felt eke his part of Lovè's shottès keen

sharp arrows

¹ 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,¹
 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.² *it pleased them*

A playful dialogue between Pandarus and Criseyde

10. Quod Pandarus: "Ma damè, God you see, *God bless you*

¹ 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.

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

With all your book and all the company!"
 "Eh, uncle mine, welcome iwis," quod she; *indeed*
 And up she rose, and by the hand in hie *in haste*
 She took him fast, and saidè: "This night thrice -- *Last night*
 To goodè may it turn, -- of you I mett." *I dreamed*
 And with that word she down on bench him set.

11. "Yea, niece, you shall farè well the bet, *the better*
 If God will, all this year," quod Pandarus.
 "But I am sorry that I have you let *prevented*
 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." *may you teach me*
 "Uncle," quod she, "your mistress is not here."¹ *girlfriend, beloved*

12. With that they gonne laugh, and then she said:
 "This rómance is of Thebès that we read; *romance = geste in 9*
 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,² *stopped*
 How that the bishop (as the book can tell) *[actually a soothsayer]*
 Amphiorax, fell through the ground to hell."

13. Quod Pandarus: "All this I know myself.
 And all the siege of Thebès and the care;
 For hereof been there makèd bookès twelve. *In "The Thebaid"*
 But let be this, and tell me how you fare. *widow's headdress*
 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."

14. "I? God forbid," quod she. "Be you mad?
 Is that a widow's life, so God you save?"

¹ 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.

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

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."

*it would be more suitable
 To pray*

15. "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

16. "Yea, holy God!" quod she, "what thing is that?
 What? better than such five? Eh, nay, iwis
 For all this world ne can I reden what
 It shouldè 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.¹
 As help me God, I know not what you mean."

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

17. "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.²
 I japè not, as ever have I joy."

I guarantee you / my me

*tell gladly
 would be
 If you knew
 I'm not joking, honest*

18. Then gan she wonder morè than before
 A thousandfold, and down her eyèn cast
 For never, since the time that she was born,

eyes

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

² 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.

To know a thing desired 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."
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
 In many an uncouth, glad, and deep matter,
 As friendès do when they be met ifere,
 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

Pandarus begins (gently) to press Troilus's case

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 second,
 In whom that every virtue list abound,
 As allè truth and allè gentleness,
 Wisdom, honor, freedom and worthiness."
flourishes
freedom = generosity

21. "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 y-fere."
uncle / pleases me
very proper
good behavior
here = on earth
together

22. "In good faith, that is sooth," quod Padarus;
 "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

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.¹
 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)*

¹ 23.4: "He has even more honor than strength."

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.

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, *person / then*
 That heardè that, gan far away to stand
 While they two had all that them list in hand. *discussed all they wished*

Pandarus teases Criseyde's curiosity

29. When that their tale all brought was to an end *business*
 Of her estate and of her governance, *management*
 Quod Pandarus: "Now is it time I wend; *went away*
 But yet, I say, ariseth, let us dance,
 And cast your widow's habit to mischance: *discard your w's gown*
 What list you thus yourself to disfigure, *Why do you want?*
 Since you is tid thus fair an aventure?" *to you has happened*

30. "Ah! Well bethought, for love of God," quod she, *Oh, yes indeed!*
 "Shall I not witen what you mean of this?" *not know*
 "No. This thing asketh leisure," then quod he,
 "And eke me wouldè muchè grieve, iwis, *indeed*
 If I it told and you it took amiss.
 Yet were it bet my tonguè for to still *better to keep quiet*
 Than say a sooth that were against your will. *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, *Except for lovers / knowledge*
 That I best love, and loathest am to grieve; *most reluctant*
 And that you witen well yourself, I 'lieve." *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;
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*
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 niece, what you list."
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."
- 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.¹
- tell
or drag it out
but little satisfaction
She will think / deceive*

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

For tender wits weenen all be wile
 Thereas they cannot plainly understand;
 For-thy her wit to serven will I fond." ¹

*think all is trickery
 Where
 Therefore*

Pandarus still delays his news

37. 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*

38. "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*

39. "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 wite, iwis.
 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*

Finally, Pandarus gets to the point

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

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

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*
 That is so true and worthy, as you see, *(A man) who is so*
 No more than of a japer or a wretch -- *joker*
 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. *fraud*
 For me were lever thou and I and he *I'd rather*
 Were hangèd, than that I should be his bawd, *pimp*
 As high as men might on us all y-see.
 I am thine eme; the shamè were to me *uncle*
 As well as thee, if that I should assent
 Through mine abet that he thine honor shent. *my collusion / ruined*

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

44. Criseydè, which that heard him in this wise
 Thought: "I shall feelen what he means iwis." *feel out / indeed*
 "Now, eme," quod she, "what wouldè you devise *advise*
 What is your redde that I should do of this?" *your advice*
 "That is well said," quod he; "certain best is
 That you him love again for his loving

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

As love for love is skilfull guerdoning. *proper return*

45. "Think, eke, how Eldè wasteth every hour *Age*
 In each of you a party of beauty, *part*
 And therefore ere that Agè thee devour,
 Go love; for, old, there will no wight of thee. *no one will want you*
 Let this provèrb a lore unto you be: *a lesson*
 `Too late aware,' quod Beauty, when it passed.
 `And Eldè daunteth Daunger at the last.'¹ *Age overtakes aloofness*

46. "The kingè's fool is wont to cry aloud, *accustomed*
 When that he thinks a woman bears her high: *acts haughtily*
 `So longè may you liven, and all proud, *proud (women)*
 Till crowè's feet be grown under your eye,
 And send you then a mirror in to pry *to look in*
 In which that you may see your face a-morrow.' *in the morning*
 Niece, I biddè wish you no more sorrow."²

Criseyde's response

47. With this he stint, and cast a-down the head, *stopped*
 And she began to burst a-weep anon, *into tears*
 And said: "Alas for woe! why n'ere I dead? *Why am I not*
 For of this world the faith is all agone:
 Alas! what should a stranger to me don, *do*
 When he that for my bestè friend I wend *whom I took*
 Redds me to love who should it me defend? *Advises / forbid it to me*

48. "Alas! I would have trusted doubtèless
 That if that I through my disáventure *bad fortune*

¹ 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 at a distance waiting endlessly without any erotic satisfaction. If this attitude of hers prevails long enough, Age will overtake it.

² 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'.)

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 reprove:
 This falsè world, alas! who may it 'lieve?

*reproof
 believe, trust*

49. "What! is this all the joy and all the feast?
 Is this your rede? 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*

Pandarus reacts

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.¹

*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."²

*fierce
 since
 absolve myself
 cause us both*

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

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

Criseyde revises her first response

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!
 In my preséncè, 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*
54. "Of harmès two, the less is for to choose
 Yet have I lever maken him good cheer
 In honor, than mine emè's life to lose.--
 You say you nothing else of me require?"¹
 "No, wis," quod he, "mine ownè niece so 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*
55. "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*

¹ 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.

But cease the cause, ay ceaseth malady.¹

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?"
"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?" *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*

Pandarus's version of how he discovered Troilus's love

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*

¹ 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.

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, *creep*
 And sikerly, the soothè for to sayn, *certainly / truth*
 As I can clepe again now to my mind, *recall*
 Right thus to Love he gan him for to 'plain. *complain*
 He said: `O, Lord, have ruth upon my pain; *have pity*
 All have I rebel been in mine intent, *Although*
 Now *mea culpa*, Lord, I me repent.¹ *my fault*

62. `For certès, Lord, so sore hath she me wounded *certainly*
 That stood in black with looking of her eye,²
 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.³ *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*

¹ 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.

² 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)

³ 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."

And said: `Awake, you sleepen all too long;
It seems me not that Love doth you to long¹

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
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*

65. "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 coming
All suddenly he left his complaining.

I did not know

66. "Of which I took somewhat suspiciõn
And near I came, and found he weptè sore,
And God so wise be my salvatiõn,
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.²

*God knows
to any person
his physician*

¹ 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)".

² 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.

But now to you rehearsen all his speech *to re-tell*
 Or all his woeful wordès for to sound
 Ne bid me not but you will see me swoon. *Don't ask me unless*

68. "But for to save his life, and elsè nought, *no other reason*
 And to no harm of you, thus am I driven;
 And for the love of God that us hath wrought *has made us*
 Such cheer him do that he and I may liven. *Give him such hope*
 Now have I plat to you my heartè shriven; *plainly / confessed*
 And since you wot that mine intent is clean, *you know*
 Take heed thereof, for I no evil mean.

69. "And right good thrift, I pray to God, have ye *good fortune*
 That have such one y-caught without a net,
 An' you be wise as you be fair to see,¹
 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 niecè dear." *angry / my kin*
 "Now, well," quod she, "forgiven be it here."

Pandarus leaves. Criseyde considers what she has heard and said

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

¹ 69.3: "If you are as wise as you are pretty to look at."

That he had said as it came to her mind.

72. 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.¹

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

A fortunate coincidence

73. 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*

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

¹ 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.

To look on Mars, that god is of bataille.¹

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

77. His helm to-hewen was in twenty places, *hacked*
 That by a tissue hung his back behind, *by a sliver it hung*
 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; *pierced / sinew / hide*
 And ay the people cried: "Here comes our joy, *constantly*
 And, next his brother, holder up of Troy!" *2nd only to (Hector)*

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." *Unless I*
 And with that thought for pure ashamed she *embarrassment*
 gan in her head to pull, and that as fast,
 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*

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

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,¹
 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
 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 *to dig deep*
 For which, by process and by good service *by degrees*
 He got her love, and in no sudden wise.

Criseyde's soliloquy. The pros and cons of love

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 *Even though it's impossible*
 To grant him love, yet for his worthiness
 It were honour with play and with gladness
 In honesty with such a lord to deal *honorably*
 For mine estate, and also for his heal.² *my good & his health*

84. "Eke well wot I my kingè's son is he,

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

² 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."

And since he has to see me such delight,
 If I would utterly his sight y-flee,
 Paraunter he might have me in despite, *Perhaps*
 Through which I mightè standen in worse plight:
 Now were I wise, me hate to purcháse *would I be*
 Withouten need, where I may stand in grace?¹ *in favor*

85. "Now set a case, the hardest is iwis, *even the worst*
 Men mighten deemen that he loveth me; *might think*
 What dishonour were it to me this?
 May I him let of that? Why nay, pardee; *Can I help that? / by God*
 I know also, and alday hear and see, *every day*
 Men loven women all this town about.
 Be they the worse? Why nay, without a doubt.

86. "I think eke, how he able is to have
 Of all this noble town the thriftiest *the best*
 To be his love so she her honour save;² *'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 áventure. *fortune*

87. "Nor me to love a wonder is it naught,
 For well wot I myself (so God me speed, *I know / as God's my judge*
 Al' would I that none wisten of this thought), *I'd prefer no one knew*
 I am one the fairest, out of dread, *without doubt*
 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?

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*

¹ 84.6-7: "Would I be wise to invite hate needlessly, when I could have favor?"

² 86.3: *so she* ...: "provided that she kept her reputation intact."

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
 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.¹ *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*

¹ 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."

- 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 off 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;¹
 What erst was nothing, into nought it turneth. *What first*
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.² *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
 Nothing achieveth, be him loth or dear;" *like it or not*
 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)*

¹ 94.6: "Nobody falls over it." That is, it is not lying around in an obvious place.

² 95.4-5: "It can seem suspicious to them even when people are just doing something to please their friends."

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.

Antigone's Song ¹

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 desire 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
 Imaginen ne could how to be bet. *better*
 For, lord, withouten jealousy or strife
 I love one which that is most ententife *attentive*
 To serven well, unwearly or unfeigned

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

That ever was, and least with harm distrained,¹

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

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 speaken, 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.² *happiness / endure*
 And therefore who that has a head of ver
 From cast of stones beware him in the war. *of glass*

¹ 100.7: *Distrained*: variously glossed by editors and lexicographers: "stained, sullied, misled, overcome, oppressed."

² 104.5: "No happiness (or good fortune) is worth anything that has not cost some sorrow."

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 niece," 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*
 "Yea, wis," quod fresh Antigone the white, *certainly*
 For all the folk that have or be alive *have (lived)*
 Ne could not well the bliss of love describe.

108. "But weenen you that every wretchè wot *think you / knows*
 The perfect bliss of love? Why nay, iwis. *indeed*
 They weenen all be love if one be hot; *They think it's love*
 Do way, do way! they wot nothing of this:
 Men must ask at saintès if it is *'at' = of*
 Aught fair in heaven. And why? For they can tell;
 And asken fiends if it be foul in hell" *devils*

The effects on Criseyde. She sleeps and dreams

109. Criseyde unto the purpose naught answered, *nothing*
 But said: "Iwis it will be night as fast." *certainly / soon*
 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 *to terrify*
 Than it did erst, ¹ and sinken in her heart, *at first*
 That she waxed somewhat able to convert. *she grew capable of change*

110. So when it likèd her to go to rest,
 And voided weren they that voiden ought, *departed*
 She saidè that to sleepen well her lest; *she wanted to sleep*
 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. *Repeat*

111. A nightingale upon a cedar green
 Under the chamber wall there as she lay,
 Full loudè sang against the moonè sheen, *bright*
 Paraunter, in his birdè's wise, a lay ²
 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. *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.

Back to Troilus and Pandarus

113. Now let her sleep, and we our talè hold

¹ 109.5-6: 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."

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

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!" *joke*
 But rise and let us sup and go to rest,"
 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, *person / went*
 And where him list upon his way he sped; *where he pleased*
 But Troilus thought that his heartè bled
 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,¹ *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 nicè will do well by thee
 And love thee best, by God and by my troth,
 But lack of pùrsuit mar it in thy sloth."² *Unless*

117. "For thus far forth I have thy work begun
 From day to day, till this day by the morrow *in the morning*

¹ 116.2: *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."

² 116.7: The meaning seems to be: "Unless your lazy failure to pursue the matter spoils things."

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."¹
 What should I longer sermon of it hold?
 As you have heard before, all he him told.

pledged herself
make a long story of it

118. But right as flowers, through the cold of night
 Y-closed, 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

119. And to Pandàre 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)
 Ne might not me so gladden.² Lo! my heart
 It spreadeth so for joy it will to-start.

I am healthy
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?
 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
distress

121. "All easily now, for the love of Mart,"
 Quod Pandarus, "for everything hath time;

Mars

¹ 117.5: 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.

² 119.4-6: "Anyone giving me a thousand Troys one after the other, I declare to God, could not make me so glad."

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, *And therefore*
 Or on some other wight this charge lay. *person / duty*

Pandarus devises a plan to help the lovers

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, *as if by accident*
 And thou shalt find us, if I may, sitting
 At some window into the street looking.

124. And if thee list, then mayst thou us salue *If you like / greet*
 And upon me make thy countenance; *look at me*
 But by thy life, beware and fast eschew *carefully avoid*
 To tarry aught, God shield us from mischance. *to delay at all*
 Ride forth thy way, and hold thy governance. *control your behavior*
 And we will speak of thee somewhat, I trow, *I guess*
 When thou art gone, to do thine earès glow. *to make*

Tips on the art of letter-writing

125. Touching thy letter, thou art wise enough. *About*
 I wot thou wilt it not dignely endite.¹

¹ 125.2: "I know you will not write it over-elaborately."

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.

*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 ashamed 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." ¹

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

128. 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 sat him down, and wrote right in this wise.

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

Troilus's first love letter

¹ 127.5-7: *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."

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 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*

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*

Pandarus is postman and intermediary

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,
 I have a jolly woe, a lusty sorrow." ¹

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

133. Criseydè, when that she her uncle heard,

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

With dreadful heart, and désirous to hear¹
 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

134. "By God," quod he, "I hop always behind."
 And she to-laughed it thought her heartè burst.²
 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
s'thing 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,
 Or, help me God so, plainly for to sayn,
 He may not longè liven for his pain."

totally & completely

Study it
provide

¹ 133.2: *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."

² 134.2: "until she thought her heart would burst."

Criseyde is "daungerous"

137. Full dreadfully then gan she standen still,¹
 And took it not, but all her humble cheer *manner*
 Gan for to change, and saidè: "Scrip nor bill, *writing nor letter*
 For love of God, that toucheth such mattér, *deals with*
 Ne bring me none; and also, uncle dear!
 To mine estate have more regard, I pray, *my position*
 Than to his lust: what should I morè say?" *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: *stop this foolishness*
 To deathè may I smitten be with thunder
 If for the city which that standeth yonder *to gain the city*
 Would I a letter to you bring or take
 To harm of you! What list you thus it make? *why do you take it so?*

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

Under pressure, she relents

140. And said to her: "Now cast it away anon
 That folk may see and garen on us tway." *stare at us both*
 Quod she: "I can abide till they be gone," *I can wait*
 And gan to smile, and said him: "Eme, I pray, *Uncle*
 Such answer as you list, yourself purvey, *as you please, carry*
 For truly I will no letter write."

¹ 137.1: 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?" For "daungerous", see 45.7 note

"No! then will I," quod he, "so you endite." *provided you dictate*

141. Therewith she laughed, and saidè: "Go we dine;"
 And he gan at himself to jape fast, *to joke*
 And said: "Niece, I have so great a pine *pinning*
 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
 Amongèst 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 sitten in the window bothè tway. *two*
 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." ¹

146. Therewith all rosy hued then waxed she, *she blushed*
 And gan to hum, and saidè: "So I trow." *I guess so*
 "Acquit him well for God's love," quod he, *Reward*
 Myself to-meedès will the letter sew;" *as reward (to me/you?)*
 And held his handès up, and fell on knee.
 "Now, goodè niece, be it ne'er so lite, *little*
 Give me the labor it to sew and plite."² *fold*

147. "Yea, for I can so writè," quod she tho, *I can indeed*
 "And eke I n'ot what I should to him say." *But I don't know*
 "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! *cause him not*
 Now for the love of me, my niece dear
 Refuseth not at this time my prayér."

She answers Troilus's letter

148. "Depardieu!" quod she, "God leve all be well; *Indeed / God grant*
 God help me so, this is the firstè letter
 That e'er I wrote, yea all or any deal," *all or part*
 And into a closet for t'avise her better *private room*
 She went alone, and gan her heart unfetter *to unbind*
 Out of Disdain's prison but a lite, *a little*
 And set her down and gan a letter write.

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 *deceive him*

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

² 146.7: A parchment letter would have been sewn shut.

She would not, ne make herself bound *nor bind herself*
 In love, but as his sister him to please
 She would ay fain, to do his heart an ease. *would always gladly*

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 more pain
 Than writè this, to the which you me constrain." *pressure*

Troilus rides by on cue

151. And right as they declarèd this mattér,
 Lo! Troilus right at the streetè's end
 Came riding with his tenthè some ifere ¹ *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, ²
 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*

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

² 152.5: 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.

God wot whe'r he were like a manly knight!
 What should I dretch, or tell of his array?
 Criseydé, which that all these thingès saw,
 To tell in short, her likèd all ifere:
 His person, his array, his look, his cheer,

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

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 folly,
 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,

*there was humming & hawing
 unknown*

And guerdon him with nothing but with sight.¹

And reward

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

squeamish attitude

*accept this situation
agree to this result*

Pandarus leaves

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

in bed

despair

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,
If thou forthwith do all thy busyness."

attack

161. "Yea, through the might of God, " quod Troilus.
And Pandarus gan him the letter take,
And said: "Pardee, God hath holpen us.

to him

I declare / helped

¹ 157: 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.'

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*

Troilus writes regularly but needs moral support

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;¹ *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*

Another devious plan

165. "But, Troilus, yet tell me, if thee lest, *if you will*
 A thing now which that I shall asken thee:

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

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 Pandàre, "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,
 In all that e'er I may, and God to-fore, *you know*
 Al n'ere it but for the man that I love most, *before God*
 My brother Troilus.¹ But say wherefore
 It is; for since that I was bore,
 I n'as, ne nevermore to be, I think,²
 Against a thing that mightè thee for-think. *displease you*

168. Pandàrus 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 strangèly, *as a stranger*
 Crisèydè, my friend?" He saidè: "Yes." *C. has 4 syllables*

¹ 167.1-4: "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."

² 167.6: "I wasn't and I will never be, I hope"

"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.

*& whip
I care not*

170. "But tell me, thou that wost all this matter,
 How I might best availen." "Now let's see,"
 Quod Pandarus. "If you, my lord so dear,
 Would as now do this honour 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*

171. 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

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 Criseydè 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*

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*

Pandarus back at Criseyde's

174. 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; *don't know*
 Be you not 'ware how falsè Poliphet
 Is now about eftsoonès for to plead, *immediately*
 And bringen on you advocacies new?" *legal claims*
 "I? No," quod she, and changèd all her hue. *color*
175. "What! Is he more about me for to dretch,¹ *to vex*
 And do me wrong? What shall I do? alas!
 Yet of himselfen nothing would I reck *wouldn't care*
 N'ere it for Antenor and Aeneas, *Were it not*
 That be his friends in such a manner case;²
 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 Pandàre, "it shall be no thing so,
 For I have been right now at Déiphibus,
 At Hector, and mine other lordès mo',
 And shortly makèd each of them his foe,
 That, by my thrift, he shall it never win *if I can help it*
 For aught he can, when so that he begin." *whenever he begins*
177. And as they casten what was best to don, *planned / to do*
 Deiphebus, of his ownè courtesy,
 Came her to pray in his proper persón *in person*
 To hold him on the morrow company *to be his guests*

¹ 175.1: "Is he about to annoy me again?"

² 175.4-5: Benoit de Saint-Maure and Guido delle Colonne (two 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.

At dinner, which she would not deny,
 But goodly gan his prayer to obey. *politely accepted h. invitation*
 He thankèd her, and went upon his way.

Pandarus back to Troilus's house. The rest of the plan

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

179. "Thou shalt go overnight, and that as blive, *quickly*
 To Deiphebus' house, as thee to play, *as if to relax*
 Thy malady away the bet to drive; *the better*
 For why thou seemest sick, the sooth to say; *Because*
 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 áventure." *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.

Part One of Pandarus's plan in action

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,¹
 For love of God, and let us fast y-go
 Right to th' effect withouten talès mo', *to the point / words*
 Why all this folk assembled in this place,
 And let us of their saluingès pace. *pass up their greetings*

185. 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 *is confined to bed*
 Them as he might, and cheerè good he made. *took pains to entertain*

186. Complained eke Elaine of his sickness
 So faithfully, that pity was to hear,

¹ 184.3: "The best thing for us is to avoid wordiness here."

And every wight gan waxen for access *for fevers*
 A leech anon, and said: "In this mannér *physician*
 Men curen folk; this charm I will thee lere." ¹ *teach*
 But there sat one, al' list her not to teach, *although she didn't choose to*
 That thought: "Best could I be his leech." *his physician*

187. After complaint, him 'gonnen they to praise, *they began*
 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, *that = that which*
 He naught forgot their praising to confirm.

188. Heard all this thing Criseyde well enough,
 And every word gan for to notify, *to take note of*
 For which with sober cheer her heartè laughed; *w. serious face*
 For who is that ne would her glorify *be proud*
 To mowen such a knight do live or die? ² *enable*
 But all pass I, lest you too longè dwell;
 But for one fine is all that e'er I tell. *one purpose*

Pandarus holds forth on Criseyde's property predicament

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.

¹ 186.3-5: "Everyone began to turn into a doctor (*leech*) of fevers (*access*): 'This is the way to cure people. I'll show you a charm.'" *Access* is fever or sudden illness.

² 188.4-5: "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."

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?
 does T. know?*
 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;

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*

Pandarus even choreographs people's movements

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*
 No morè press, he will well that you bring *no crowding / he agrees*
 Criséyde, my lady that is here,
 And as he may endure, he will hear. *as far as he is able*

193. "I say for me, best is as I can know, *It's my opinion*
 That no wight in ne wentè but you tway, *nobody but you 2*
 But it were I, for I can in a throw *Except me / in a minute*
 Rehearse her case unlike what she can say, *Go over*
 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." *deprive*

194. "And eke, for she is strange, he will forbear *she is not related*
 His easè, which that him thar not for you; *need not do for you*

Eke other thing that toucheth not to hear ¹
 He will it tell, I wot it well right now, *I know*
 That secret is, and for the townè's prow." *benefit*
 And they, that nothing knew of his intent,
 Withouten more to Troilus in they went.

195. Elaine in all her goodly softè wise
 gan him salute and womanly to play, *greet & joke with*
 And said: "Iwis you must algate arise; *Indeed / at once*
 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; *her ability*
 As she best could, she gan him to disport. *entertain*

196. So after this quod she: "We you beseech,
 My dearè brother Deíphebe and I, *brother-in-law*
 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." *far better*

197. This Pándarus gan new his tongue affile, *sharpen*
 And all her case rehearse, and that anon. *at once*
 When it was said, soon after in a while
 Quod Troilus: "As soon as I may gon, *walk*
 I will right fain with all my might be one, *I'll be glad*
 (Have God my truth), her causè to sustain."
 "Good thrift have you," quod the Queen Elaine. *Good fortune*

198. Quod Pandarus: "An' it your willè be *If*
 That she may take her leave ere that she go?" *say goodbye before*
 "O, elsè God forbid it," then quod he,
 "If that she vouchèsafe for to do so." *If she wants*
 And with that word quod Troilus: "You two,

¹ 194.3-5: "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."

Deiphebus and my sister lief and dear,
To you have I to speak of one mattér,

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 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

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

Pandarus the puppet-master in his element. His plan is almost there

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
Abideth you, and eke my lordès twain.

look to see
he went
in haste

Awaits / two

202. "Rise. Take with you your niece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or, no force hardily;¹
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

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

203. All innocent of Pandarus' intent
 Quod then Criseydè: "Go we, uncle dear!"
 And arm in arm inward with him she went, *inside*
 Avising well her wordès and her cheer; *considering*
 And Pandarus in earnestful mannér
 Said: "Allè folk, for God's love I pray,
 Stinteth right here, and softèly you play. ¹
204. "Aviseth you what folk be here within, *Consider*
 And in what plight one is, God him amend! *God cure him*
 And inward thus : "Full softèly begin, *And privately (he said):*
 Niece, I conjúre and highly you defend, *I ask and firmly charge you*
 On his behalf which that soul all us sends, *i.e. in God's name*
 And in the virtue of the crowns twain, ²
 Slay not this man that has for you this pain."
205. But now to you, ye lovers that be here,
 Was Troilus not in a cankédort, *on the spot*
 That lay and might the whispering of them hear?
 And thought: "O Lord! right now runneth my sort *approaches my fate*
 Fully to die or have anon comfórt;" *or promptly have*
 And was the firstè time he should her pray *ask her ...*
 Of love; O mighty God! what shall he say? *... for her love*

Here ends Book II

¹ 203.7: "Stay right here and entertain yourselves quietly."

² 204.6: 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.