

TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

BOOK III

*Invocation to Love*<sup>2</sup>

1. O blissful light, of which the beamès clear  
Adorneth all the thirdè heaven fair;  
O Sun's lief, O Jovè's daughter dear,  
Pleasance of love, O goodly debonair,  
In gentle hearts ay ready to repair,  
O very cause of heal and of gladness,  
Y-heried be thy might and thy goodness.

*beloved of the Sun  
Pleasure / benign (one)  
always ready to dwell  
health  
praised*

2. In heaven and hell, in earth and saltè sea  
Is felt thy might, if that I well discern,  
As man, bird, beast, fish, herb and greenè tree  
Thee feel in timès with vapour etern.<sup>3</sup>  
God loveth, and to lovè will not wern;  
And in this world no livè creäture  
Withouten love is worth or may endure.

*influence, power  
won't forbid  
is worth [anything]*

3. You Jovè first to thilk affectès glad,  
(Through which that thingès liven all and be),  
Commeveden<sup>4</sup> and amorous him made  
On mortal thing, and, as you list, ay ye  
Gave him in love ease or adversity,  
And in a thousand formès down him sent  
For love in earth, and whom you list he hent.

*You = Love  
Impelled  
mortals / pleased / always  
success or failure  
he took whomever you pleased*

4. You fiercé Mars appeasen of his ire,

*You placate M.*

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<sup>2</sup>. 2.3-4: "As man, bird etc... feel you in the seasons (*times*) with your eternal power (*vapour*)."

<sup>3</sup>. *You* is Love, and *Jove* is the grammatical object of *commeveden*: "You impelled Jove ...."

And as you list you maken heartès digne;  
Algatès them that you will set a-fire  
They dreaden shame, and vices they resign;  
You do them courteous be, fresh and benign,  
And high or low, after a wight entends,  
The joyè that he hath, your might it sends.

*as you wish / worthy*  
*Always*

*You make them*  
*as a person inclines*

5. You holden regne and house in unity;  
You soothfast cause of friendship be also;  
You know all th'ilkè covered quality  
Of thingès which that folk on wonder so,  
When they cannot construe how it may jo  
*She loveth him, or why he loveth her,*  
As why this fish, and not that, comes to weir.

*kingdom*  
*true cause*  
*hidden nature*  
*wonder about*  
*how it happens that*  
  
*to fishtrap*

6. You folk a law have set in universe,<sup>1</sup>  
(And this know I by them that lovers be),  
That whoso striveth with you has the worse.  
Now, lady bright, for thy benignity,  
At reverence of them that serven thee,  
Whose clerk I am, so teacheth me devise  
Some joy of that is felt in thy service.

*lady b. = Venus*  
*On behalf of*  
*to tell*  
*that which*

7. You in my naked hertè sentiment  
Inhield, and do me show of thy sweetness.  
Calliope, thy voice be now présent,  
For now is need: see'st thou not my distress,  
How I must tell anon-right the gladness  
Of Troilus, to Venus' herying?  
To which gladness, who need hath, God him bring.<sup>2</sup>

*(May) you / feeling*  
*Infuse & let me show*  
*C = Muse of epic*  
  
*right now*  
*to the glory*  
*(may) God*

*At last Troilus and Criseyde meet face to face*

8. Lay all this meanwhile this sad Troilus  
Recording his lesson in this mannér,  
"My fay," thought he, "thus will I say and thus,

*On my faith*

---

6.1: "You have made a law in the world for people (*folk*)"

7.7: The syntax is: "To which gladness may God bring him who has need"

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Thus will I 'plain unto my lady dear,  
That word is good, and this shall be my cheer,  
This will I not forgotten in no wise."  
God leave him worken as he can devise.

*complain  
behavior  
as best he can*

9. And, Lord ! so that his heart began to quappe  
Hearing her come, and short gan for to sigh;  
And Pandarus, that led her by the lap,  
Came near, and gan in at the curtain peek,  
And said: "God do boot on all the sick!  
See who is here you comen to visit;  
Lo! here is she that is your death to wit."

*flutter  
sleeve  
May God heal  
to blame for*

10. Therewith it seemèd as he wept almost.  
"Ah! Ah!" quod Troilus, so ruefully,  
"Whe'r me be woe, O mighty God, thou wost: <sup>1</sup>  
Who is all there I see not truly."  
"Sir," quod Criseyde, " 'tis Pandarus and I."  
"Yea, sweetè heart, alas! I may not rise  
To kneel, and do you honour in some wise."

11. And dressed him upward; and she right tho  
Gan both her handès soft upon him lay.  
"O, for the love of God do you not so  
To me!" quod she. "Eh! what is this to see!  
Sir, come am I to you for causes tway,  
First you to thank, and of your lordship eke  
Continuance I wouldè you beseech."

*lifted himself up / then  
two  
y. protection also*

12. This Troilus, that heard his lady pray  
Of lordship him, waxed neither quick nor dead,  
Nor might one word for shame unto it say,  
Although men shouldè smiten off his head,  
But Lord! so waxed he suddenly all red;

*became n. alive nor  
embarrassment  
blushed*

---

10.3: "Whether I am sorrowful, O mighty God, thou knowest."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

And, sir, his lesson that he wend to con  
To prayen her, is through his wit y-run.

*intended to recite  
out of his head*

13. Criseyde all this espiéd well enough,  
For she was wise, and loved him ne'er the less,  
All n'ere he malapert nor made it tough,<sup>1</sup>  
Or was too bold to sing a fool a mass;  
But when his shame began somewhat to pass  
His reasons, as I may my rhymes hold,  
I will you tell as teachen bookès old.

*too grossly flattering ?  
embarrassment*

14. In changèd voice, right for his very dread,  
Which voice eke quoke, and thereto his mannér  
Goodly abashed, and now his huè red,  
Now pale, unto Criseyde his lady dear,  
With look downcast and humbly yolden cheer,  
Lo th'alderfirstè word that him astart,  
Was twicè: "Mercy, mercy, my dear heart!"

*also shook  
nicely modest / color*

*submissive manner  
very first / escaped*

15. And stint awhile, and when he might out bring,  
The nextè word was: "God wot for I have  
As farforthly as I have had conning  
Been yourès all, God so my soulè save,  
And shall, till that I, woeful wight, be grave,<sup>2</sup>  
And though I dare nor can unto you 'plain,  
I-wis I suffer not the lessè pain.

*stopped  
God knows  
as far as I knew how*

*complain  
Indeed*

16. "Thus much as now, ah womanly wife!<sup>3</sup>  
I may out bring, and if this you displease

*wife = woman*

---

13.3: "Because he was not over-aggressive or overpowering".

15.5: "until I, unhappy man, am buried".

16.1: the manuscripts have "wommanliche wif" which would mean something like "very feminine woman" with *wif* retaining its old sense of "woman" rather than "spouse." The spousal claim may be stronger in 186 below where he uses the same expression again as they are making love.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

That shall I wreak upon mine ownè life  
Right soon I trow, and do your heart an ease,  
If with my death your heart I may appease;  
But since that you have heard me something say,  
Now reck I never how soonè that I die." <sup>1</sup>

17. Therewith his manly sorrow to behold  
It might have made a heart of stone to rue,  
And Pándare wept as he to water would,  
And pokèd ever his niecè new and new,  
And saidè: "Woe-begone be heartès true!;<sup>2</sup>  
For love of God make of this thing an end,  
Or slay us both at once ere that you wend."

*to pity  
would (turn)  
again & again*

*before you go*

18. "I? What?" quod she, "By God and by my truth  
I wot not what you willè that I say."  
"I, what!" quod he;<sup>3</sup> "that you have on him ruth  
For God's love, and do him not to die."  
"Now then thus," quod she, "I would him pray  
To tellen me the fine of his intent;  
Yet wist I never well what that he meant."

*I don't know  
pity  
don't cause him*

*the goal  
knew I never*

*Troilus speaks like a model "courtly lover"*

19. "What that I mean, O sweetè heartè dear!"  
Quod Troilus, "O goodly fresh and free !  
That with the streamès of your eyen clear  
You wouldè sometimes friendly on me see,  
And then agreën that I may be he,

*noble*

*look*

---

16: Troilus's takes the abject attitude of a "servant," a courtly lover, to the point of offering to kill himself.

17.5: "True hearts are woebegone" i.e. afflicted with sorrow.

18.3: Pandarus is repeating Criseyde's exclamation apparently in exasperated mockery.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Withouten branch of vice in any wise, *taint*  
In truth always, to do you my servíce

20 "As to my lady right, and chief resort,<sup>1</sup>  
With all my wit and all my diligence,  
And I to have, right as you list, comfórt, *sentence*  
Under your yard equal to mine offence, *your rule*  
As death, if that I broken your defence, *your prohibition*  
And that you deigné me so much honoúr  
Me to commanden aught in any hour, *anything*

21. "And I to be yours, very humble, true,  
Secret, and in my painès patient,  
And ever to desiren freshly new  
To serven, and be ay like diligent, *be always equally d.*  
And with good heart all wholly your talént *your decision*  
Receiven well, how sorè that me smart – *however much it hurts*  
Lo, this mean I, mine ownè sweetè heart!"

22. Quod Pandarus: "Lo, here a hard request  
And reasonable a lady for to wern!<sup>2</sup> *refuse*  
Now nicè mine, by natal Jovè's feast,  
Were I a god you shouldè starve as yern *die at once*  
That hearen well this man will nothing yearn *desire*  
But your honoúr and see him almost starve *die*  
And be so loth to suffer him you serve."<sup>3</sup>

---

20.1: " my supreme mistress & main interest. "

22.1-2: As in 18.3 above Pandarus is being mildly sarcastic: "This is a hard request and it would be reasonable for a lady to refuse it !"

22.3-7: "By Jupiter, if I were a god, you would die at once, for you hear clearly this man who wants nothing but your honor, and you see him almost dying, and yet you are reluctant to let him serve you." Notice the persistent use of "serve" and "service" for the man's relationship to the woman. Although the man is of higher social station than the woman.

*Criseyde Responds*

23. With that she gan her eyen on him cast  
 Full easily and full debónairly,  
 Avising her, and hiéd not too fast  
 With ne'er a word, but said him softly:  
 "Mine honour safe, I will well truly,  
 And in such form as he gan now devise,  
 Receiven him fully to my servíce;

*graciously*  
*Reflecting & not hurrying*  
*(to) him = Pandarus*  
*(Provided that m.h.)*  
*as he just now said*  
*him = Troilus*

24. "Beseeching him, for Godè's love, that he  
 Would in honoúr of truth and gentleness,  
 As I well mean, eke meanen well to me,  
 And mine honoúr with wit and busyness  
 Aye keep; and if I may do him gladness  
 From hencèforth, i-wis I n'll not feign:  
 Now be all whole; no longer you ne 'plain. <sup>1</sup>

*intelligence & care*  
*Always guard*

25. "But natheless this warn I you" quod she,  
 "A kingè's son although you be i-wis,  
 Yet you shall have no more sovereignty  
 Of me in love than right in that case is;  
 Ne will I not forbear if you do amiss  
 To wrathen you, and while that you me serve  
 Cherish you right after you deserve.

*indeed*  
  
*than is proper*  
*I won't hesitate*  
*To get angry with*  
*according as you*

26. "And shortly, dearest heart, and all my knight!  
 Be glad, and draweth you to lustiness,  
 And I shall truly, with all my fullè might,  
 Your bitter turnen all into sweetness.  
 If I be she that may do you gladness;  
 For every woe you shall recover a bliss."  
 And him in arms she took and gan him kiss.

*good health(?), joy (?)*

---

24.7: At this last line she seems to turn from Pandarus to address Troilus directly : "Be well; no need to complain further."

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*Pandarus, always in the background or foreground, acts the clown*

27. Fell Pandarus on knees, and up his eye  
To heaven threw, and held his handès high.  
"Immortal God," quod he, "that mayst not die  
(Cupid, I mean) of this mayst glorify;  
And Venus, thou mayst maken melody.  
Withouten hand, meseemeth that in town  
For this marvél I hear each bellè sound. <sup>1</sup>

*hand (to pull rope)  
bell*

28. "But, ho! No more as now of this mattér,  
For why these folk will comen up anon  
That have the letter read. Lo! I them hear.  
But I conjúre thee, Créssida, and one  
And two, thou Troilus , when thou mayest gon  
That at my house you be at my warning  
For I full well shall shapen your coming.

*soon  
I call on  
both of you / can walk  
when I say*

29. "And easeth there your heartès right enough  
And let's see which of you shall bear the bell  
To speak of love aright." Therewith he laughed:  
"For there you may have leisure for to tell."  
Quod Troilus: "How longè shall I dwell  
Ere this be done?" Quod he: "When thou mayst rise  
This thing shall be right as I you devise."

*win the prize*

30. With that Elaine and also Deiphebus  
Then upward came right at the stair's end,  
And, Lord! so then gan groanen Troilus,  
His brother and his sister for to blend.  
Quod Pandarus: "It time is that we wend;  
Take, niecè mine, your leave at them all three,

*to blind  
we should go*

---

27.7: Stories of bells that rang out of their own accord at some remarkable event are known in medieval stories. (See Riverside edition, note to l. 188-9 for references). Pandarus is here clowning again.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

And let them speak, and cometh forth with me." *Speak (in private)*

31. She took her leave at them full thriftily, *politely*  
 As she well could, and they her reverence  
 Unto the fullè didn heartily,  
 And speaken wonder well in her abséncé  
 Of her, in praising of her excellence,  
 Her governance, her wit, and her mannér  
 Commendedén, that it joy was to hear.

32. Now let her wend unto her ownè place, *go*  
 And turnè we to Troilus again,  
 That gan full lightly of the letter pace *pass over*  
 That Deíphebus had in the garden seen;  
 And of Elaine and him he wouldè fain *would gladly*  
 Delivered be, and saidè that him lest *Be free of / he wanted*  
 To sleep, and after tales have rest. *talk*

33. Elaine him kissed, and took her leavè blive, *quickly*  
 Deiphebus eke, and home went every wight, *person*  
 And Pandarus as fast as he may drive  
 To Troilus then came as line aright, *direct*  
 And on a pallet all that gladdè night *straw bed*  
 By Troilus he lay with merry cheer  
 To tale, and well was them they were y-fere. <sup>1</sup> *To talk / together*

*Pandarus in a much more sober mood*

34. When every wight was voided but they two, *e. person was gone*  
 And all the doorès weren fast y-shut,  
 To tell in short, withouten wordès more,  
 This Pandarus withouten any let *delay*  
 Up rose, and on his bed's side him set,  
 And gan to speaken in a sober wise

---

33.7: "They were glad to be together."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

- To Troilus as I shall you devise. *describe*
35. "Mine alderlevest lord and brother dear, *most dear*  
God wot and thou, that it sat me so sore <sup>1</sup>  
When I thee saw so languishing to-year, *this year*  
For love, for which thy woe waxed always more, *grew*  
That I with all my might and all my lore *skill*  
Have ever sithen done my busyness *since then*  
To bringen thee to joy out of distress.
36. "And have it brought to such plight as thou wost *point / knowest*  
So that through me thou standest now in way *in a position*  
To fare well — I say it for no boast —  
And wost thou why? — For shame it is to say — *do you know why?*  
For thee have I begun a game play *to play a game*  
Which that I never do shall eft for other *again*  
Although he were a thousandfold my brother. <sup>2</sup>
37. "That is to say, for thee I am become  
(Betwixen game and earnest) such a mean *a go-between*  
As maken women unto men to come  
Al' say I nought — thou wost well what I mean — *you know well*  
For thee have I my niece (of vices clean) *my innocent niece*  
So fully made thy gentleness to trust  
That all shall be right as thyselfen list. *you wish*
- 38 "But God that all wot, take I to witness *who knows all*  
That ne'er I this for covetise wrought *didn't work for profit*  
But only for t'abridgè that distress *to lessen*

---

35.2: "God and you know I was so upset." *Brother* in line 1 is not to be taken literally.

36.7: In this and in the following stanzas Pandarus shows considerable unease at the role he has chosen to play. He fears for his own reputation (the noun and verb "pander" do come from his name), and he fears especially for Criseyde's reputation.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

For which well nigh thou diédst as me thought.<sup>1</sup> *were dying*  
 But, goodè brother, do now as thee ought  
 For God's love, and keep her out of blame  
 Since thou art wise, and save always her name.

39. "For well thou wost the name as yet of her *you know*  
 Among the people, as who saith, hallowed is; *is honored*  
 For that man is unborn, I dare well swear,  
 That ever wistè that she did amiss:<sup>2</sup> *knew / did wrong*  
 But woe is me that I that cause all this  
 May thinken that she is my niece dear,  
 And I her eme, and traitor eke, y-fere.<sup>3</sup>

40. "And were it wist that I, through my engine, *known / my management*  
 Had in my niece y-put this fantasy  
 To do thy lust and wholly to be thine, *do thy will*  
 Why, all the worldè would upon it cry  
 And say that I the worstè treachery  
 Did, in this case, that ever was begun,  
 And she for-lost, and thou right nought y-won. *for- = totally*

41. "Wherefore, ere I will further go a pace, *go a step further*  
 Yet eft I thee beseech and fully say *once again*  
 That privity go with us in this case *secrecy*  
 That is to say, that thou us never 'wray. *betray*  
 And be not wroth though I thee often pray  
 To holden secret such a high mattér.

---

38.1-4: "But I take to witness God, who knows all, that I have not done this out of love of gain (*covetise*), but only to help your distress from which I thought you were going to die."

39.1-4: "For you know well that everyone agrees (*who saith*) she has an honorable name (*name of her hallowed is.*) There is no man alive who has ever known her to do wrong."

39.7: "And I her uncle and betrayer at the same time." "Traitor" makes sense here, as Pandarus has some serious doubts about what he is doing to his niece. But Barney in *Riverside* (III, 273, n.) suggests that it is Chaucer's mistranslation of an Italian word meaning "procurer", "pimp", a pander in fact. This is the strongest reason given in the poem for secrecy.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

- For skillful is, thou wost it well, my prayer.<sup>1</sup> *reasonable*
42. “And think what woe there hath betid ere this *has happened*  
For making of avauntès as men read *boasts*  
And what mischance in this world yet there is  
From day to day, right for that wicked deed.  
For which these wisè clerkès that be dead  
Have ever yet proverbèd to us young  
That firstè virtue is to keepè tongue.<sup>2</sup>
43. “And n’ere it that I will as now t’abridge  
Diffusìon of speech,<sup>3</sup> I could almost  
A thousand oldè stories thee allege  
Of women lost through false and foolish boast.  
Proverbs can’t thysself enough and wost *you know*  
Against that vice, for to be a labbe, *to prevent you being a blabber*  
Al’ said men sooth as often as they gab. *Even if men told truth*
44. "O tongue, alas, so often herebefore *before this*  
Hast thou made many a lady bright of hue  
Say: `Welaway the day that I was born!' *Alas!*  
And many a maiden's sorrow to renew  
And for the morè part, all is untrue  
That men of yelp an' it were brought to preeve.<sup>4</sup> *An' = if*  
Of kindè, no avaunter is to 'lieve.
45. “A vaunter and a liar is all one, *Boaster*

---

41.7: "You know well that my request (*prayer*) is reasonable (*skillful* )".

42.7: The first requirement (or the greatest merit) is to control your tongue.

43.1-2: “Were it not for the fact that I wish to reduce diffuseness of speech ...”

44.5-7: *all is untrue ... 'lieve*: "and all is untrue that men boast (*yelp*) of, if (*an*) it were brought to the proof. In the nature of things (*of kinde*), no boaster is to be believed (*to 'lieve*).” Pandarus is here referring to the tendency of some men to exaggerate and boast of their sexual conquests and thus embarrass the women who trust them.

- As thus: I pose a woman grantè me *I put the case*  
 Her love, and says that other will she none,  
 And I am sworn to holden it secree,  
 And after I go tell it two or three.  
 I-wis I am a vaunter at the least, *Indeed / a boaster*  
 And liar, for I breakè my behest. *promise*
46. “Now lookè, then, if they be not to blame,  
 Such manner folk: what shall I clepe them, what? — *call them*  
 That them avaunt of women, and by name,  
 That never yet behight them this nor that *promised them*  
 Nor knew them morè than mine oldè hat?  
 No wonder is, so God me sendè heal, *. G. help me*  
 Though women dreaden with us men to deal.
47. “I say this not for no mistrust of you,  
 Ne for no wise man, but for foolès nice, *stupid fools*  
 And for the harm that in the world is now,  
 As well for folly oft as for malice.  
 For well wot I, in wisè folk, that vice  
 No woman dreads, if she be well advised,  
 For wisè be by foolès’ harm chastised.<sup>1</sup> *wise people*
48. “But now to purpose: levè brother dear *my dear brother*  
 Have all this thing that I have said in mind,  
 And keep thee close, and be now of good cheer, *be discreet*  
 For at thy day thou shalt me truè find.  
 I shall thy process set in such a kind, *start y. business*  
 And God to-forn, that it shall thee suffice. *before God*  
 For it shall be right as thou wilt devise. *wish*
49. “For well I wot thou meanest well, pardee. *I know / by God*  
 Therefore I dare this fully undertake;  
 Thou wost eke what thy lady granted thee *You know also*

---

47.7: “For wise people learn from the harm that comes to fools”

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And day is set thy charters up to make.  
Have now good night, I may no longer wake;  
And bid for me, since thou art now in bliss,  
That God me sende death or soonè liss.”

*to settle the contract*

*And pray  
comfort soon*

50. Who mightè tellen half the joy and feast  
Which that the soul of Troilus then felt  
Hearing the faith of Pandarus' behest,  
His oldè woe that made his heartè swelt  
Gan then for joy to wasten and to melt,  
And all the riches of his sighès sore  
At oncè fled, he felt of them no more.

*force of P's promise  
faint*

51. But right so as these holtès and these hayes,  
That have in winter deadè been and dry,  
Revesten them in greenè when that May is,  
When every lusty liketh best to play:  
Right in that selfè wise, sooth for to say,  
Waxed suddenly his heartè full of joy,  
That gladder was there never man in Troy.

*woods & hedges*

*Re-clothe  
lively (person)*

*Grew*

*Troilus insists on his own discretion and loyalty*

52. And gan his look on Pandarus up cast  
Full soberly, and friendly on to see,  
And saidè: "Friend, in Aprilis the last,  
As well thou wost, if it remember thee,  
How nigh the death for woe thou foundest me,  
And how thou didest all thy busyness  
To know of me the cause of my distress;

*you know  
How near*

53. "Thou wost how long I it forbore to say  
To thee that art the man that I best trust,  
And peril was it none to thee bewray,  
That wist I well; but tell me if thee list,

*You know / hesitated to  
no danger in telling you  
That I know /please*

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Since I so loth was that thyselſ it wiſt,<sup>1</sup>  
 How durſt I morè tell of this mattér  
 That quakè now and no wight may us hear?

*would I dare  
 tremble / nobody*

54. “But natheless, by that God I thee swear,  
 That as Him list may all this world govèrn,  
 And, if I lie, Achilles with his spear  
 Myn heartè cleave, al’ were my life etern,  
 As I am mortal, if I late or yern  
 Would it betray, or durſt, or shouldè con,  
 For all the good that God made under sun

*as he pleases  
 even if  
 early or late  
 dare or know how to*

55. “That rather die I would and détermine,  
 As thinketh me, now stockéd in prison,  
 In wretchedness, in filth, and in vermin,  
 Captive to cruel King Agámemnon:  
 And this in all the temples of this town,  
 Upon the goddès all, I will thee swear;  
 To-morrow day, if that it liketh her.<sup>2</sup>

*end my life  
 chained up  
 Captive*

56. “And that thou hast so muchè done for me,  
 That I ne may it never more deserve,  
 This know I well, al’ might I now for thee  
 A thousand timès in a morning starve:  
 I can no morè, but that I will thee serve  
 Right as thy knave, whither so thou wend,  
 For evermore unto my lifè's end.

*die  
 slave / you go*

57. "But here with all my heart I thee beseech  
 That never in me thou deemè such folly  
 As I shall say: methoughtè by thy speech,  
 That this which thou me dost for company

*expect  
 out of friendship*

---

53.5: "Since I was so reluctant that you should know."

55.7: Or “if it likes thee (pleases thee) here” or “if it pleases thee (to) hear.” All MSS agree in spelling the last word *here*, which can mean *her*, *hear*, or *here*. The difference is minimal.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

I shouldé ween it were a bawdery. *think / pimping*  
I am not wood, al-if I lewèd be:<sup>1</sup> *not mad / stupid*  
It is not so! That wot I well, pardee. *know I*

58. "But he that goes for gold or for richesse, *wealth*  
On such messágè, call him what thee list; *errand / you please*  
And this that *thou* dost, call it gentillesse,  
Compassiön, and fellowship, and trust.<sup>2</sup>  
Depart it so, for widè-where is wist *Distinguish / widely known*  
How that there is diversity required  
Betwixen thingès like, as I have lered. *learned*

59. "And, that thou know I thinkè not, nor ween, *or suppose*  
That this service a shamè be or a jape, *or joke*  
I have my fairè sister Polyxene,  
Cassandra, Elaine, or any of the frape: *group*  
Be she ne'er so fair or well y-shape,  
Tell me which thou wilt of every one  
To have for thine, and let me then alone. *alone (to arrange it)*

60. "But since that thou hast done me this service *reward*  
My life to save, and for no hope of meed, *enterprise*  
So for the love of God this great emprise *Finish it*  
Perform it out, for now is the most need; *big & small*  
For high and low, withouten any dread, *wishes, instructions*  
I will always all thine hestès keep.  
Have now good night, and let us bothè sleep."

*Love makes Troilus a model of valor in battle and discretion in their brief lovers' meetings*

61. Thus held them each of other well apaid, *pleased*  
That all the world ne might it bet' amend, *make it better*  
And on the morrow, when they were arrayed *dressed*

---

57.6: "I am not mad even if I am stupid."

58: "Whoever does such go-between errands for money, call him what you like. But what *you* are doing – call it gentillesse, compassion, fellowship, trust. Distinguish between these two things. Everyone knows that there is a distinction between things that are different but look similar."

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Each to his ownè needès gan attend;  
 But Troilus, though as the fire he brennd *burned*  
 For sharp desire of hope and of pleasáncè,  
 He not forgot his goodè governance; *self-control*

62 But in himself with manhood gan restrain  
 Each rakel deed and each unbridled cheer, *rash d. & uninhibited glance*  
 That allè those that livèd, sooth to sayn, *truth to tell*  
 Ne should have wist by word or by mannér *couldn't know*  
 What that he meant as touching this mattér,  
 From every wight as far as is the cloud *every person*  
 He was, so well dissimulen he could. *pretend*

63. And all the while which that I you devise *tell you about*  
 That was his life, with all his fullè might,  
 By day he was in Mars's high service,  
 That is to say, in armès as a knight,  
 And for the mostè part the longè night  
 He lay and thought how that he mightè serve  
 His lady best, her thank for to deserve.

64. N'ill I not swear, although he lay full soft,  
 That in his thought he n'as somewhat dis-eased,  
 Nor that he turnèd on his pillows oft,  
 And would of that him missèd have been seised;<sup>1</sup>  
 But in such case men be not always pleased  
 For aught I wot no morè than was he,  
 That can I deem of possibility.

65. But certain is (to purpose for to go) *to get on with it*  
 That in this while, as written is in geste, *story*  
 He saw his lady sometimes, and also  
 She with him spoke when that she durst and lest, *dared & wished*  
 And by their both advice, as was the best,  
 Appointeden full warily in this need, *Decided cautiously*  
 So as they durst, how that they would proceed. *as much as t. dared*

---

64.4: "and would rather have been in possession (*seised*) of what he lacked (*missed*)"

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

66. But it was spoken in so short a wise,  
In such await always, and in such fear,  
Lest any wight divinen or devise  
Would of them two, or to it lay an ear,  
That all this world so lief to them ne were  
As that Cupido would them gracè send  
To maken of their speech aright an end.<sup>1</sup>

*it = their conversation*  
*secrecy*  
*figure out or suspect*  
*eavesdrop*  
*so dear*  
  
*to complete properly*

*Criseyde is deeply pleased with Troilus*

67. But thilkè little that they spoke or wrought  
His wisè ghost took ay of all such heed,  
It seemèd her he wistè what she thought  
Withouten word, so that it was no need  
To bid him aught to do or aught forbid,  
For which she thought that love, al' come it late,  
Of allè joy had opened her the gate.

*that little / did*  
*spirit / always*  
*(to) her he knew*  
  
*anything*  
*although*

68. And shortly of this process for to pace,  
So well his work and wordès he beset,  
That he so full stood in his lady's grace  
That twenty thousand timès ere she let  
She thankèd God she ever with him met;  
So could he govern him in such service  
That all the world ne might it bet' devise;

*this story finish*  
*managed*  
  
*finished*  
  
*conduct himself*  
*manage better*

69. For why? She found him so discreet in all,  
So secret, and eke of such obeisánce,  
That well she felt he was to her a wall  
Of steel, and shield from every displeasánce,  
That to be in his goodè governance,  
So wise he was, she was no more afeared.  
I mean as far as aught to be required.

*respect*  
  
*in his benign power*  
*afraid*  
*no more than necessary*

70. And Pandarus to quick always the fire  
Was e'er alikè prest and diligent;

*to fan*  
*constantly eager*

---

66. 5-7: "There was nothing in the world they would rather have than that the god of love would graciously give them an opportunity to complete a proper conversation."

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

To ease his friend was set all his desire;  
 He shoved ay on; he to and fro was sent,  
 He letters bore when Troilus was absént,  
 That never man as in his friendè's need  
 Ne bore him bet' than he withouten dread.

*Was always pushing*

*behaved better w'out doubt*

71. But now paraunter some man weenè would  
 That every word, or sound, or look, or cheer  
 Of Troilus that I rehearsen should  
 In all this while unto his lady dear.  
 I trow it were a long thing for to hear;  
 Or of what wight that stands in such disjoint  
 His wordès all, or every look, to point.

*perhaps / w think*

*repeat*

*I think  
 such distress  
 to relate*

72. Forsooth, I have not heard it done ere this,  
 In story none, nor no man here, I ween;  
 And though I would, I couldè not, y-wis  
 For there was some epistle them between  
 That would, as says mine author, well contain  
 Nigh half this book, of which him list not write:  
 How should I then a line of it endite? <sup>1</sup>

*I think*

*he didn't want to*

73. But to the great effect: then say I thus  
 That standing in concórd and in quiet  
 These ilkè two, Criseyde and Troilus  
 As I have told, and in this timè sweet  
 Save only often mightè they not meet  
 Ne leisure have their speches to fulfill,  
 That it befell right as I shall you tell,

*To get on with story  
 peace & q.*

*Pandarus scheming once more*

74. That Pandarus that ever did his might  
 Right for the fine that I shall speak of here  
 And for to bringen to his house some night  
 His fairè niece and Troilus y-fere

*for the goal*

*together*

---

71-72: These two stanzas are a good example of the “prolixity” in this poem that Chaucer says at one point he ought to shun.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Thereas at leisure all this high mattér  
Touching their love were at the full upbound,  
Had, out of doubt, a time unto it found,

*Where  
would be completed  
Pandarus ... had ...found*

75. For he with great deliberation  
Had everything that hereto might avail  
Forecast and put in execution,  
And neither left for cost nor for travail;  
Come if them lest, them shouldè nothing fail;<sup>1</sup>  
And for to be in aught espièd there,  
That, wist he well, an impossiblé were.

*spotted  
he knew*

76. Dreadless it clear was in the wind  
Of every 'pie and every lettè-game: <sup>2</sup>  
Now all is well, for all the world is blind  
In this mattèrè, bothè wild and tame.  
This timber is all ready up to frame:  
Us lacketh not but that we witen would <sup>3</sup>  
A certain hour in which she comen should.

*w&t = everyone  
r. for building  
know*

77. And Troilus, that all this purveyance  
Knew at the full and waited on it ay,  
Had hereupon eke made great ordinance  
And found his cause, and thereto his array,  
If that he were missèd night or day  
There-while he was aboutè this service —  
That he was gone to do his sacrifice, <sup>4</sup>

*planning  
constantly  
careful preparations  
arranged an excuse*

78. And must at such a temple alone wake,

*keep vigil*

---

75.4-7: "and he spared neither cost nor trouble; let them come; nothing would be wanting. He knew well that it was impossible for them to be discovered there". *Impossible* (l.7) seems to have a French stress..

76.1-2: "The coast was absolutely clear of every gossip (*magpie*) and spoil sport (*lette game*)."

76.6: *we* and *us* are presumably Chaucer and his audience.

77-78: Troilus's cover story is that he has gone to pray to Apollo (in the public interest) and he should not be disturbed at his devotions: 78.6: "And for thy let him no man" = No man should disturb him.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Answered of Apollo for to be;  
 And first to see the holy laurel quake  
 Ere that Apollo speak out of the tree,  
 To tell him when the Greekès shouldeñ flee.  
 And for-thy let him no man, God forbid,  
 But pray Apollo helpen in this need.

*by Apollo*

*lift the siege  
 let = hinder*

79. Now is there little more for to be done  
 But Pandare up and, shortly for to sayn,  
 Right soon upon the changing of the moon,  
 When lightless is the world a night or twain,  
 And that the welkin shope him for to rain,  
 He straight a-morrow to his niecè went; <sup>1</sup>  
 You have well heard the fine of his intent.

*or two  
 sky gave signs of*

*the point*

80. When he was come he gan anon to play,  
 As he was wont, and of himself to jape,  
 And finally he swore, and gan her say  
 By this and that, she should him not escape,  
 Nor longer do him after her to gape,  
 But certainly that she must, by her leave,  
 Come suppen in his house with him at eve.

*at once to jest  
 accustomed / joke*

*make him run after her*

81. At which she laughed, and gan her fast excuse,  
 And said: "It raineth, lo! how should I go?"  
 "Let be," quod he, "nor stand not thus to muse;  
 This must be done, ye shall come there anon."  
 So at the last hereof they fell at one,  
 Or elsè soft he swore her in her ear —  
 He wouldè never comen where she were.

*promptly  
 they agreed*

82. Soon after this she unto him gan rown,  
 And askèd him if Troilus were there.  
 He swore her nay, for he was out of town,  
 And saidè: "Niece, I posè that he were,  
 You durstè never have the morè fear.

*whisper*

*let's suppose  
 You don't need to*

---

79.2 &.6: *But Pandare up and ... went*" This is an early instance of what became, as the OED puts it, "colloquial and dialectal" usage.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

For rather than men might him there espy  
Me lever were a thousandfold to die."

*I'd rather*

83. Naught list mine author fully to declare <sup>1</sup>  
What that she thought when that he said her so,  
That Troilus was out of town y-fare,  
And if he saidè thereof sooth or no;  
But that without await with him to go  
She granted him, sith he her that besought,  
And as his niece obeyèd as her ought.

*gone  
truth  
delay  
since he asked her*

84. But natheless yet gan she him beseech,  
Although with him to go it was no fear,  
For to beware of goosish people's speech,  
That dreamen thingès which that never were,  
And well avisen him whom he brought there;  
And said him: "Eme, since I must on you trist  
Look all be well; I do now as you list."

*foolish, goose-like  
  
And be careful  
Uncle / trust  
See that all /as you wish*

85. He swore her "Yes" by stockès and by stones,  
And by the godès that in heaven dwell,  
Or elsè were him lever soul and bones  
With Pluto, King, as deepè be in hell  
As Tantalus; what should I morè tell?  
When all was well he rose and took his leave,  
And she to supper came when it was eve <sup>2</sup>

*he would rather*

*evening*

*Criseyde arrives at Pandarus's house with her retinue*

86. With a certain of her ownè men,  
And with her fairè niece Antigone,  
And other of her women nine or ten;  
But who was glad now, who, as trowen ye  
But Troilus? that stood and might it see

*certain (number)*

*do you think*

---

83.1: "My source (*author*) doesn't choose to say."

85.6-7: These two lines are a fine example of the deft narrative speed Chaucer is capable of when he chooses.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Throughout a little window in a stew, *in a small room*  
Where he be-shut since midnight was, in mew, *cooped up*

87. Unwist of every wight but of Pandare. *Unknown to everyone*  
But to the point. Now when that she was come  
With allè joy and allè friendès fare, *in friendly fashion*  
Her eme anon in armès hath her nome, *Her uncle / taken*  
And after to the supper all and some,  
When as time was, full softly they them set.  
God wot there was no dainty fare to fet.<sup>1</sup>

88. And after supper gonnen they to rise,  
At easè well, with hearts full fresh and glad,  
And well was him that couldè best devise *found a way*  
To liken her, or that her laughen made:<sup>2</sup> *To please*  
He sang, she played; he told a tale of Wade;  
But at the last, as every thing hath end,  
She took her leave, and needès wouldè wend.<sup>3</sup>

89. But, O Fortúne! executrix of wyrd, *minister of destinies*  
O influénces of these heavens high!  
Sooth is that under God you be our hirds, *Truth / shepherds*  
Though to us beastès be the causes wry; *unclear*  
This mean I now, for she gan homeward hie; *prepared to go*  
But execute was all beside her leave *done / without her leave*  
The godès' will, for which she mustè bleve.<sup>4</sup> *remain*

90. The bentè moonè with her hornès pale, *crescent moon*

---

87.7: "God knows there was no dainty food lacking."

88.3-7: "And he was glad he knew the best way to please her or make her laugh. ... He told a story about Wade", a character, mentioned occasionally in medieval literature but about whom almost nothing is now known. There is an obscure reference to his boat in the *Merchant's Tale*, 1424.

88.7: "She said goodbye; she had to be on her way."

89.6-7: "The will of the gods was done without her leave, and so she had to stay." The will of the gods and the plans of Pandarus conveniently coincide.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Saturn and Jove in Cancer joinèd were, <sup>1</sup>  
That such a rain from heaven gan avale  
That every manner woman that was there  
Had of that smoky rain a very fear;  
At which Pandare then laughed, and saidè then:  
"Now were it time a lady to go hence?"

*Jupiter  
pour*

*What a time for!*

91. "But goodè niece, if I might ever please  
You any thing, then pray I you," quod he,  
"To do mine heart as now so great an ease  
As for to dwell here all this night with me;  
For why? This is your ownè house pardee,  
For by my truth, I say it not in game,  
To wend as now it were to me a shame."

*by God*

*(for you) to go*

92. Criseydè, which that could as muchè good  
As half a world, took heed of his prayér,  
And since it rained, and all was in a flood,  
She thought: "As good cheap may I dwellen here,  
And grant it gladly with a friendly cheer  
And have a thank, as grouch and then abide;  
For home to go it may not well betide.

*had as much sense*

*I might as well*

*as grumble & then stay  
not really possible*

93. "I will," quod she, "mine uncle lief and dear!  
Since that you list; it skill is to be so.  
I am right glad with you to dwellen here;  
I saidè but in game that I would go."  
"I-wis, grand mercy, niece," quod he tho;  
Were it in game or no, thee sooth to tell,  
Now am I glad since that you list to dwell."

*beloved*

*S. you wish / it's reasonable  
stay*

*Indeed, thanks / then  
truth  
you're pleased to stay*

*Pandarus announces where everyone will sleep*

94. Thus all is well; but then began aright  
The newè joy, and all the feast again;

---

90.1-5: The torrential rain was supposedly caused by this particular planetary conjunction of the moon, Saturn and Jupiter in Cancer. At this point the words in 75.1-3 "He ...had everything ... forecast" take on a remarkably modern meaning.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

But Pandarus, if goodly had he might,  
He would have hièd her to bed full fain,  
And said; "O Lord! this is a hugè rain,  
This were a weather for to sleepen in,  
And that I rede us soonè to begin.

*if he'd had his way  
hurried her / gladly*

*advise*

95. "And, niece, wot you where I will you lay?  
For that we shall not lien far asunder,  
And, for you neither shall, dare I say,  
Hearen the noise of rainè nor of thunder,  
By God right in my little closet yonder,  
And I will in that outer house alone  
Be warden of your women every one;

*lodge you  
So that*

*my small room  
outer room*

96. "And in this middle chamber that you see  
Shall all your women sleepen well and soft,  
And there I said [you] shall yourselven be,  
And if you lien well to-night, come oft,  
And careth not what weather is aloft.  
The wine anon, and when so that you lest,<sup>1</sup>  
So go we sleep, I trow it be the best."

*if you sleep well*

*We'll drink & when you wish  
I think*

97. There is no morè, but hereafter soon  
The voidè drunk and travers drawn anon,<sup>2</sup>  
Gan every wight that haddè naught to do  
More in the place out of the chamber go;  
And evermore so sternly it ron  
And blew therewith so wonderfully loud,  
That well nigh no man hearen other could.<sup>3</sup>

*no more (to say)*

*rained*

98. Then Pandarus, her eme, right as him ought,

*uncle*

---

96.6: "We'll drink the wine now and go to sleep when you're ready." It was a medieval custom to have a nightcap (the *voide*) of wine and spices & perhaps a small snack.

97.2-4: "When the nightcap (*voide*) had been drunk and the curtain (*travers*) drawn, everyone who had no more business there left the room."

97.6-7: "The wind blew so extraordinarily loud that people could hardly hear each other speak."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

With women such as were her most about,  
Full glad unto her beddè's side her brought,  
And took his leave, and gan full low to lout,  
And said: "Here at this closet door without,  
Right overthwart, your women lien all,  
That whom you list of them you may her call."

*bow  
outside the room door  
across / all will lie  
So that / wish*

99. So when that she was in the closet laid,  
And all her women forth by ordinance  
A-beddè weren, there as I have said,  
There was no more to skippen nor to dance,  
But bidden go to beddè, with mischance,<sup>1</sup>  
If any wight were stirring anywhere,  
And let them sleepen that a-beddè were.

*in the room in bed  
in an orderly way  
in bed*

*anyone*

*The next part of Pandarus's plan begins*

100. But Pandarus, that well could each a deal  
The oldè dance, and every point therein,  
When that he saw that allè thing was well,  
He thought he would upon his work begin,  
And gan the stewè door all soft unpin,<sup>2</sup>  
And still as stone, withouten longer let,  
By Troilus adown right he him set.

*knew every bit of  
The old game (of love)*

*little room / unlock  
delay*

101. And, shortly to the point right for to gon,  
Of all this work he told him ord and end,  
And saidè: "Make thee ready right anon,  
For thou shalt into heaven's blissè wend."  
"Now blissful Venus! thou me gracè send,"  
Quod Troilus, " for never yet no need  
Had I ere now, ne halfendeal the dread."

*to get to the point  
beginning & end*

*go*

*nor half*

102. Quod Pandarus: "Ne dread thee ne'er a deal,

*not a bit*

---

99: Anyone making noise "was told to go to bed, for heaven's sake (*with mischance*) ... and let people sleep!"

100.5: We left Troilus in the *stew* (a little room) at 86.4-7.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

For it shall be right as thou wilt desire;  
 So thrive I, this night I'll make it well,  
 Or casten all the gruel in the fire."  
 "Yet, blissful Venus! this night me inspire,"  
 Quod Troilus, "as wis as I thee serve,  
 And ever bet' and bet' shall till I starve.

*I'm betting  
 or ruin everything*

*surely  
 better & better / die*

103. "And if I had, O Venus full of mirth!  
 Aspéctès bad of Mars or of Satúrn,<sup>1</sup>  
 Or thou combust or let were in my birth,  
 Thy father pray all thilkè harm disturn  
 Of grace, and that I glad again may turn,  
 For love of him thou lovedest in the shaw,  
 I mean Adon, that with the bore was slaw.

*in the wood  
 Adonis / slain by boar*

104 "Jove, ekè for the love of fair Europe,<sup>2</sup>  
 The which, in form of bull, away thou fet;  
 Now help, O Mars, thou with thy bloody cope,  
 For love of Cypris thou me not ne let.  
 O Phoebus, think when Dane herselfen shut  
 Under the bark, and laurel waxed for dread,  
 Yet for her love, O help now at this need!

*took, fetched  
 cape  
 C = Venus / don't hinder  
 Daphne*

105. "Mercúry, for the love of Hersè eke,  
 For which Pallas was with Aglauros wroth,  
 Now help, and eke Diane, I thee beseech,  
 That this viagè be not to thee loth,  
 O fatal sisters, which, ere any cloth  
 Me shapen was, my destiny me spun:  
 So helpeth to this work that is begun."

*angry  
 this adventure / hateful  
 the Fates*

106. Quod Pandarus: "Thou wretched mouse's heart,

---

103: The substance of this stanza is to ask Venus to undo any possible bad astrological influences directed at Troilus. The longwinded prayer shows off Chaucer's control here, if not of narrative, of mythology and astronomy (all the planets/gods are mentioned). Troilus's ineptitude is also on show.

104: In this stanza T. prays to various lover gods to help him: Jove, who loved Europa; Mars who loved Venus, Phoebus Apollo who chased Daphne (Dane) until she turned into a laurel to escape him.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Art thou aghast so that she will thee bite?  
Why, don this furred cloak upon thy shirt,  
And follow me, for I will have the wite;  
But bide, and let me go before a lite;"  
And with that word he gan undo a trap,  
And Troilus he brought in by the lap.

*the blame (for what?)  
a little  
trapdoor  
sleeve (?)*

107. The sternè wind so loud began to rout  
That no wight other's noisè mighten hear,  
And they that layen at the door without  
Full sikerly they slepten all i-fere;  
And Pandarus with a full sober cheer  
Goes to the door anon withouten let  
There as they lay, and softly he it shut;

*strong / sound  
  
certainly / together  
  
quickly / w/o delay*

*Pandarus returns secretly to speak to Criseyde*

108. And as he came againward privily  
His niece awoke, and asketh: "Who goes there?"  
"Mine own dear nicè," quod he, "it am I,  
Ne wonder not, ne have of it no fear."  
And near he came, and said her in her ear:  
"No word, for love of God, I you beseech,  
Let no wight rise and hearen of our speech."

*again quietly  
  
  
  
Not a word*

109. "What! which way be you come? Ben'dicitee!"  
Quod she. "And how, thus unwist of them all?"  
"Here at this secret trappè-door," quod he.  
Quod then Criseydè: "Let me some wight call."  
"Eh! God forbid that it should so befall,"  
Quod then Pandàre, "that you such folly wrought  
They mighten deemen thing they never thought.

*Bless me!  
unknown to  
  
Let me call someone  
  
guess at*

110. "It is not good a sleeping hound to wake,  
Nor give a wight a cause for to divine.  
Your women sleepen all, I undertake,

*person / to suspect  
I assure you*

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

So that for them the house men mighten mine,<sup>1</sup> *(under)mine*  
 And sleepen will till that the sunnè shine,  
 And when my tale y-brought is to an end,  
 Unwist right as I came so will I wend. *Unnoticed / leave*

111. "Now, niece mine, you shall well understand,"  
 Quod he, "so as you women deemen all, *judge, think*  
 That for to hold in love a man in hand, *deceive*  
 And him her lief and her dear heart to call, *her beloved*  
 And maken him a hoove above a caul — *make a fool of him*  
 I mean, as love another in meanwhile —  
 She doth herself a shame, and him a guile.<sup>2</sup> *a deception*

112. "Now whereby that I tellen you all this *The reason why*  
 You wot yourself as well as any wight, *You know / person*  
 How that your love all fully granted is  
 To Troilus, that is the worthiest knight,  
 One of this world, and thereto truth y-plight, *Unique / & given your word*  
 That but it were on him along,<sup>3</sup> you n'ould *his fault*  
 Him never falsen while you liven should. *betray*

*Pandarus's message for Criseyde*

113. "Now stands it thus, that since I from you went  
 This Troilus, right platly for to sayn, *bluntly*  
 Is through a gutter by a privy went *by a private passage*  
 Into my chamber come in all this rain,

---

110:4-5: "So that, as far as they are concerned, you could put mines under the house, and they would still sleep till sunup."

111: This stanza says roughly: " All you women agree that it is a shameful trick in love to deceive a man, and call him your beloved and sweetheart, making a fool of him while loving another."

112.3-7: "that your love is fully granted and your word pledged (*truth y-plight*) to Troilus, the worthiest knight in the world, that unless he does something wrong (*but it were on him along*), you will never be unfaithful to him while you live."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Unwist of every manner wight certáin <sup>1</sup>  
Save of myself, as wisly have I joy,  
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troy.

*Unknown / person  
As surely*

114. "And he is come in such pain and distress,  
That but he be all fully wood by this,  
He suddenly must fall into woodness  
But if God help; and causè why is this:  
He says he told is of a friend of his,  
How that you should love one that hatte Horaste,<sup>2</sup>  
For sorrow of which this night shall be his last."

*If he isn't fully mad  
madness  
Unless  
he's told by a friend  
a man called*

115. Criseyde which that all this wonder heard,  
Gan suddenly about her heartè cold,  
And with a sigh she sorrowfully answered:  
"Alas! I weened, who so that talès told,  
My dearè heartè wouldè me not hold  
So lightly false. Alas! conceitès wrong!  
What harm they do! for now live I too long.

*grow cold  
I thought that whoever  
[T.] would not think me  
wrong thoughts*

116. "Horaste, alas! And falsen Troilus?  
I know him not, God help me so," quod she.  
"Alas! what wicked spirit told him thus?  
Now certès, eme, to-morrow an I him see,  
I shall thereof as full excusen me  
As ever woman did, if that him like."  
And with that word she gan full sore to sigh.

*and betray T?  
certainly uncle / if I  
exonerate*

---

113.5: "Unknown to any person certainly."

114.5-6: "He's been told by a friend that you are reputed to be in love with a man called Horaste."

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

*A pause for philosophical reflection*<sup>1</sup>

117. “O God,” quod she, “that worldly seliness,  
Which clerkès callen false felicity,  
Y-medled is with many a bitterness!  
Full anguishous than is, God wot,” quod she,  
“Condition of vain prosperity;  
For either joyès comen not y-fere,  
Or elsè no wight has them always here.
- happiness  
clerics, scholars  
mingled  
painful  
  
together  
nobody*
118. “O brittle weal of man’s joy, unstable,  
With what wight so thou be or how thou play,  
Either he wot that thou, Joy, art mutáble,  
Or wot it not—it must be one of tway.  
Now, if he wot it not, how may he say  
That he hath very joy and seliness,  
That is of ignorance ay in darkness?
- O fleeting state  
  
he knows / changeable  
of two  
  
true joy and happiness  
(he) who is*
119. “Now, if he wot that joy is transitory,  
As every joy of worldly thing must flee,  
Then every time he has that in memóry,  
The dread of losing maketh him that he  
May in no perfect selinessè be.  
And if to lose his joy he sets a mite,  
Then seemeth it that joy is worth but lite.
- happiness  
low value  
little*
120. “Wherefore I will define in this mannér  
That truly, for aught I can espy,  
There is no very weal in this world here.  
But, O thou wicked serpent jealousy,  
Thou misbelieved and envious folly,  
Why hast thou made Troilus to me untriste,  
That never yet a-guilt him that I wist.”
- distrustful  
offended him that I know of*

---

117-120: For several stanzas Criseyde turns scholastic philosopher, out of tune with the moment and with her character. Troilus does the same later at even more length. It might be possible to regard stanzas 118, 119 and the first 3 lines of 120 without quotation marks and assigned to a narrator who has been reading Boethius recently, but 117 is definitely given to Criseyde and the philosophizing has started there already. The ideas are pretty directly from Boethius.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

*Pandarus is still urging Troilus's case to Criseyde*

121. Quod Pandarus: "Thus fallen is this case."  
"Why, uncle mine," quod she, "who told him this?  
Why does my dearè heartè thus, alas?"  
"You wot, yea, niece mine," quod he, "what is.  
I hope all shall be well that is amiss,  
For you may quench all this if that you lest  
And do right so, for I it hold the best."  
*This is the situation*  
*You know how it is*  
*please*
122. "So shall I do tomorrow, i-wis," quod she  
"And God to-forn, so that it shall suffice."  
"Tomorrow! Alas, that were a fair!" quod he,  
"Nay, nay! It may not standen in this wise.  
For, niece mine, thus writen clerkès wise  
That peril is with drecching in y-draw.<sup>1</sup>  
Nay, such abodès be not worth a haw."  
*indeed*  
*before God*  
*a fine thing!*  
*hesitations / straw*
123. "Niece, allè thing hath time, I dare avow,  
For when a chamber afire is, or a hall,  
More need is it suddenly to rescue  
Than to dispute and ask amongès all  
How this candle in the straw is fall.  
Ah! ben'citee! for all among that fare  
The harm is done, and farewell fieldèfare!"  
*did fall*  
*bless us / to-do*  
*bye-bye birdie!*
124. "And, niece mine (ne take it not agrief),<sup>2</sup>  
If that you suffer him all night in this woe,  
God help me so, you had him never lief,  
That dare I say, now there is but we two.  
But well I wot that you will not do so.  
You be too wise to do so great folly  
To put his life all night in jeopardy."  
*If you allow*  
*you never held him dear*  
*now only 2 of us are here*  
*I know*

---

122.6: "that danger is by delaying drawn in", i.e. that delay involves danger.

124.1: ("Don't take this the wrong way".)

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

125. "Had I him never lief! By God, I ween <sup>1</sup>

*You* had never thing so lief," quod she.

"Now by my thrift," quod he, "that shall be seen;

For since you makè this example of me

If I all night would him in sorrow see

For all the treasure in the town of Troy,

I pray to God I never may have joy.

*so dear  
Upon my word*

126. "Now look then, if you that be his love

Shall put all night his life in jeopardy

For thing of nought, now by that God above

Not only this delay comes of folly

But of malice, if that I shall not lie.

What! platly, an you suffer him in distress,

You neither bounty do nor gentleness."

*For no good reason*

*bluntly, if you leave  
kindness nor*

127. Quod then Criseydè: "Will you do one thing,

And you therewith shall stint all his dis-ease?

Have here and beareth him this bluè ring

For there is nothing might him better please

Save I myself, nor more his heart appease;

And say to my dear heart that all his sorrow

Is causèless; that shall be seen tomorrow."

*stop his distress*

128. "A ring!" quod he; "Yea! hazel woods you shake! <sup>2</sup>

Yea, nicè mine, that ring must have a stone

That mighten a dead man alivè make. <sup>3</sup>

And such a ring, I trow, that you have none.

Discretion out of your head is gone;

That feel I now," quod he, "and that is ruth.

*I'm sure*

*pity*

---

125.1-2: "I never loved him! By God, I am sure *you* never held anything so dear."

128.1: "Hazel woods" is a favorite dismissive expression of Pandarus, and seems to mean something like "Nuts!" See also V.73.1 and V. 168.5.

128.2-3: "The ring would have to have a (magic) stone that could make dead men come alive." Precious stones were supposed to have various magical powers. Books called "lapidaries" were devoted to the topic.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Oh, timè lost! well mayst thou cursen sloth.

129. "Wot you not well that noble and high coráge  
Ne sorrows not nor stinteth eke for lite?  
But if a fool were in a jealous rage,  
I would not set his sorrow at a mite,  
But fief him with a fewè wordès white  
Another day, when that I might him find,  
But this thing stands all in another kind:

*Don't y. know / spirit  
nor stops for little (things)*

*placate him / nice words*

130 "This is so gentle and so tender of heart,  
That with his death he will his sorrows wreak.  
For trusteth well how sorè that him smart,  
He will to you no jealous wordès speak.  
And for-thy, niece, ere that his heartè break,  
To speak yourself to him of this mattér;  
For with one word you may his heartè steer.

*This (man)  
avenge  
no matter how badly he hurts*

*And therefore*

131. "Now have I told what peril he is in  
And his coming unwist to every wight  
Ne (pardee) harm may there be none, nor sin.  
I will myself be with you all this night.  
You know eke how he is your ownè knight  
And that by right you must upon him trist  
And I all prest to fetch him when you list."

*unknown  
Nor, by God*

*also  
trust  
ready / you wish*

132. This accident so piteous was to hear  
And eke so like a sooth at primè face  
And Troilus her knight to her so dear,  
His privy coming and the siker place,  
That though that she did him as then a grace,  
Considerèd all thingès as they stood,  
No wonder is, since she did all for good.

*plausible story  
truth on the face of it*

*secret / safe*

133. Criseyde answered: "As wisly God to rest  
My soulè bring, so me is for him woe.  
And, eme, y-wis fain would I do the best  
If that I haddè grace for to do so:  
But whether that you dwell or for him go,  
I am, till God me better mindè send,

*As surely  
indeed gladly*

*stay or*

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

At dulcarnon, right at my wittès end.<sup>1</sup>

*In a dilemma*

134. Quod Pandarus: "Yea, niece, will you hear?  
Dulcarnon callèd is "fleming of wretches";  
It seemeth hard, for wretches will not lere  
For very sloth and other willful tecches:  
This said by him that is not worth two fetches.  
But you be wise, and that we have on hand  
N'is neither hard nor skillful to withstand."

*learn  
faults  
weeds*

135. "Then, eme," quod she, "do hereof as you list,<sup>2</sup>  
But ere he come I will up first arise,  
And for the love of God, since all my trist  
Is on you two, and you be bothè wise,  
So worketh now, in so discreet a wise,  
That I may honour have and he pleasánce,  
For I am here all in your governance."

*uncle / wish  
But before  
trust*

*Troilus appears rather suddenly*

136. "That is well said," quod he, "my niecè dear!  
There good thrift on that wisè gentle heart!  
But lieth still, and taketh him right here,  
It needeth not no farther for him start;  
And each of you ease other's sorrows smart,  
For love of God, (and, Venus, I thee hery)  
For soon hope I that we shall all be merry."

*Good fortune  
receive him  
move  
sharp  
I praise thee*

137. This Troilus full soon on knees him set  
Full soberly right by her beddè's head,  
And in his bestè wise his lady gret;  
But Lord! so she waxed suddenly all red,  
Nay, though men shoulden smiten off her head  
She couldè not a word aright outbring

*greeted  
blushed  
coherent*

---

133.7 & 134.2: *dulcarnon* was the word for a notorious problem in Euclid which Pandarus or Chaucer confuses with still another one called *fuga miserorum*: putting the miserable (schoolboys) to flight, "fleming of wretches. In short, a problem hard to solve.

135.1: "Then, uncle," she said, "do as you wish about this."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

So suddenly, for his sudden coming.

138. But Pandarus that so well couldè feel  
In everything, to play anon began  
And saidè: "Niece, see how this lord can kneel.  
Now for your truthè see this gentle man."  
And with that word he for a cushion ran  
And saidè: "Kneeleth now while that you lest  
Where God your heartès bringè soon at rest."

*to joke*

139. Can I not say, for she bad him not rise,  
If sorrow it put out of her réembrance,  
Or elsè that she took it in the wise  
Of duèty as for his óbservance;  
But well find I she did him this pleasánce,  
That she him kissed, although she sighèd sore,  
And bade him sit adown withouten more.

*in the way ...  
...of doing his lover's duty*

*w/o. more ado*

*Pandarus steps aside but not away*

140. Quod Pandarus: "Now will you well begin  
Now do him sittè, goodè niecè dear,  
Upon your beddè's sidè there within  
That each of you the bet' may other hear."  
And with that word he drew him to the fire  
And took a light and found his countenance  
As for to look upon an old romance.

*Now make him sit*

*better*

*made a pretence*

141. Criseydè that was Troilus' lady right,  
And clear stood in a ground of sikerness,  
Al' thought she that her servant and her knight  
Ne should of right no úntruth in her guess,<sup>1</sup>  
Yet natheless, considered his distress,  
And that love is in cause of such folly,  
Thus spoke she to him of his jealousy:

*certainty  
Al(though)  
suspect  
considering  
is the cause*

---

141.3-6: "Although she thought that her 'servant', her knight, should not even suspect her of unfaithfulness, yet nevertheless, considering that he was distressed and that love causes such follies, she spoke to him about his jealousy."

*Criseyde speaks to assuage Troilus's supposed jealousy*

142. "Lo, heartè mine! as would the excellence  
 Of love, against the which that no man may,  
 Ne ought eke, goodly maken résistance,<sup>1</sup> *nor, indeed, ought*  
 And eke because I feltè well and saw *truly felt*  
 Your greatè truth and service every day,  
 And that your heart all mine was, sooth to sayn,— *truth to tell*  
 This drove me for to rue upon your pain; *to take pity*
143. "And your goodness have I found always yet,  
 Of which, my dearè heart, and all my knight,  
 I thank it you, as far as I have wit, *ability*  
 Al' can I not as much as it were right;<sup>2</sup> *Al(though) / as I should*  
 And I, emforth my cunning and my might, *according to my ability*  
 Have, and ay shall, how sorè that me smart, *always / however / hurt*  
 Be to you true and whole with all my heart;
144. "And dredèless that shall be found at preve: *doubtless / in trial*  
 But, heartè mine! what all this is to sayn  
 Shall well be told, so that you naught you grieve,  
 Though I to you right on yourself complain,  
 For therewith mean I finally the pain  
 That holds your heart and mine in heaviness  
 Fully to slay, and every wrong redress.
145. "My good heart mine, n'ot I for why nor how *I don't know*  
 That Jealousy, alas! that wicked wiver, *snake*  
 Thus causeless is copen into you, *has crept*  
 The harm of which I wouldè fain deliver: *remove*  
 Alas! that he all whole or of him sliver *a piece of him (Jealousy)*  
 Should have his refuge in so digne a place! *so worthy*  
 There Jove him soon out of your heart erase! *(may) Jove*

---

142.1-3: The syntax is a little unsatisfactory, but the meaning is reasonably clear: "because of the excellence of love which no one should resist ..."

143:3 ff: "I thank you as far as I know how, although I cannot as much as I should; and I, according to my ability and strength, have been and always will be, however much it hurts me, true to you ..."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

146 "But O thou Jove! O author of Nature!  
Is this an honour to thy deity  
That folk unguilty suffer here injure,  
And who that guilty is all quit goes he?  
O were it lawful for to 'plain of thee,  
That undeserved sufferest jealousy,  
Of that I would upon thee 'plain and cry.

*injury*  
*complain*  
*Who allow undeserved jealousy*

147. "Eke all my woe is this, that folk now use  
To say right thus; 'Yea, jealousy is love',  
And would a bushel venom all excuse,  
For that a grain of love is on it shove,  
But that wot highè God that sits above  
If it be liker love or hate or grame,  
And after that it ought to bear its name.

*bushel of*  
*God ... knows*  
*anger*

148. "But certain is, some manner jealousy  
Is excusable more than some i-wis,<sup>1</sup>  
As when cause is, and some such fantasy  
With piety so well repressed is,  
That it unnethès does or says amiss,  
But goodly drinketh up all his distress;  
And that excuse I for the gentleness.

*than others indeed*  
*sense of right*  
*scarcely*  
*his = its (?)*

149. "And some's so full of fury and despite  
That it surmounteth his repression;  
But, heartè mine! you be not in that plight,  
That thank I God, for which your passion  
I will not call it, but illusion  
Of abundance of love and busy cure,  
That doth your heartè this dis-ease endure.

*some (jealousy) is / hatred*  
*overpowers his restraint*  
*& great concern*  
*that causes*

150. "Of which I am right sorry but not wroth,  
But for my devoir and your heartès rest

*not angry*  
*out of duty*

---

148: She is becoming theoretical again, saying that some kinds of jealousy are more excusable than others: first, when there seems to be real cause; and second, when such unwarranted feeling is repressed so that it rarely leads to inappropriate act or words, but swallows its pain; that is excusable because of the self-control.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Whereso you list, by ordeal or by oath,<sup>1</sup>  
 By sort or in what wisè so you lest,  
 For love of God let prove it for the best,  
 And if that I be guilty, do me die;  
 Alas! what might I morè do or say?"

*Whatever you want  
 By drawing lots*

*have me killed*

151. With that a fewè brightè tearès new  
 Out of her eyen fell, and thus she said:  
 "Now God, thou wost, in thought nor deed, untrue  
 To Troilus was never yet Criseyde."  
 With that her head down in the bed she laid,  
 And with the sheet it wry, and sighèd sore,  
 And held her peace; not one word spoke she more.

*thou knowest*

*covered*

152. But now help God to quenchen all this sorrow:  
 So hope I that He shall, for He best may;  
 For I have seen, on a full misty morrow  
 Follow full oft a merry summer's day,  
 And after winter followeth green May.  
 Men see alday, and readen eke in stories,  
 That after sharpè showers been victories.<sup>2</sup>

*(May) God help*

*every day*

*Criseyde's response makes Troilus deeply abashed*

153. This Troilus, when he her wordès heard,  
 Have you no care, him listè not to sleep,<sup>3</sup>  
 For it thought him no strokès of a yard  
 To hear or see Criseyde his lady weep,<sup>4</sup>  
 But well he felt about his heartè creep,

---

150: She offers to prove her fidelity by any of the usual methods: "ordeal" -- by enduring some terrible experience like carrying a red hot iron without harm, or by judicial oath, or drawing of lots.

152: Another example of a stanza that might better have been omitted so that 153 could follow 151 immediately and effectively.

153.2: "You can be sure he did not want to sleep."

153.3-4: These lines appear to mean "It seemed to him that hearing Criseyde weep was not just like being beaten by the strokes of a rod, but .... "

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

For every tear which that Criseyde astart,  
The cramp of death to strain him by the heart.

*that escaped C.*

154. And in his mind he gan the time a-curse  
That he came there, and that he was y-born,  
For now is wicked turned into worse,  
And all that labour he had done befor  
He wend it lost; he thought he n'as but lorn.  
"O Pandarus!" thought he, "alas! thy wile  
Serveth of naught, so welaway the while!"

*bad into  
considered / he was finished  
trick  
Is no good / Alas!*

155. And therewithal he hung adown his head,  
And fell on knees, and sorrowfully sighed.  
What might he say? he felt he n'as but dead,  
For wroth was she that should his sorrows light;<sup>1</sup>  
But natheless when that he speaken might,  
Then said he thus: "God wot that of this game  
When all is wist, then am I not to blame."

*as good as dead  
angry / lighten  
God knows  
known*

156. Therewith the sorrow so his heartè shut  
That from his eyen fell there not a tear,  
And every spirit his vigour eke in knit,  
So they astonèd and oppressèd were;<sup>2</sup>  
The feeling of his sorrow or his fear  
Or of aught else fled were out of town;  
Adown he fell all suddenly a-swown.

*stunned  
in a swoon*

*Pandarus to the rescue after Troilus's unheroic response*

157. This was no little sorrow for to see,

---

155.4: "For she who was supposed to lighten his sorrow was angry."

156.3-7: Each of the three "spirits" in his body tightened up (*knit*) as if stunned, so that he had no feeling, and fainted. The three spirits were the "vital", the "animal", and the "natural."

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

For all was hushed and Pandare up as fast;  
 "O, niece, peace, or we be lost," quod he.  
 Be not aghast." But certain at the last  
 For this or that he into bed him cast,  
 And said: "O thief, is this a mannè's heart?"  
 And off he rent all to his barè shirt,

*jumped up or spoke up*

*afraid*

158. And saidé: "Niecè, but you help us now,  
 Alas your ownè Troilus is lorn."  
 "I-wis, so would I an I wistè how,  
 Full fain," quod she. "Alas that I was born."  
 "Yea, niece, will you pullen out the thorn  
 That sticketh in his heartè," quod Pandaré.  
 "Say `All forgiven`, and stint is all this fare"

*Unless*

*finished*

*Indeed / if I knew how*

*Very gladly*

*this fuss will be over*

159. "Yea, that to me", quod she, "full lever were  
 Than all the good the sun aboutè goth;"  
 And therewithal she swore him in his ear,  
 "I-wis, my dearè heart ! I am not wroth,  
 Have here my truth," and many another oath.  
 "Now speak to me, for it am I Criseyde;"  
 But all for naught; yet might he not abraid.

*more pleasing*

*i.e. in all the world*

*I swear*

*awake*

160. Therewith his pulse and palmès of his hands  
 They gan to frote, and wet his temples twain,  
 And to deliver him from bitter bonds  
 She oft him kissed; and, shortly for to sayn,  
 Him to revoken she did all her pain;  
 And at the last he gan his breath to draw,  
 And of his swoon soon after that a-daw,

*to rub / both temples*

*revive*

*And from / to awake*

161. And gan bet' mind and reason to him take;  
 But wonder sore he was abashed i-wis,  
 And with a sigh when he gan bet' awake  
 He said: "O mercy, God! what thing is this?"  
 "Why do you with yourselfen thus amiss?"  
 Quod then Criseyde. "Is this a man's game?  
 What, Troilus! will you do thus for shame?"

*better*

*embarrassed indeed*

*more fully awake*

*behave so stupidly?*

162. And therewithal her arm o'er him she laid,

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

And all forgave, and oftentime him kissed.  
He thanked her, and to her spoke and said  
As fell to purpose for his heartè's rest;  
And she to that him answered as her lest,  
And with her goodly words him to disport  
She gan, and oft his sorrows to comfórt.

*as she pleased  
to cheer*

*Pandarus finally leaves*

163. Quod Pandarus: "For aught I can espyen  
This light nor I ne serven here of nought.<sup>1</sup>  
Light is not good for sickè folkès eyen.  
But, for the love of God, since you be brought  
In thus good plight, let now no heavy thought  
Be hanging in the heartès of you tway."  
And bore the candle to the chimeney.

*eyes*

*situation  
two*

164 . Soon after this, (though it no needè were)  
When she such oathès as her list devise  
Had of him taken, her thoughtè then no fear  
Nor cause eke none to bid him thence arise:  
Yet lesser thing than oathès may suffice  
In many a case, for every wight I guess  
That loveth well meaneth but gentleness.

*as she chose*

*person*

165. But in effect she wouldè wit anon  
Of what man, and eke where, and also why  
He jealous was, since there was causè none,  
And eke the signè that he took it by,<sup>2</sup>  
She bade him that to tell her busily,  
Or elsè, certain, she bore him on hand  
That this was done of malice, her to fond.

*wanted to know at once*

*exactly  
would suspect  
to test*

166. Withouten morè, shortly for to sayn,  
He must obey unto his lady's hest,

*command*

---

163.1-2: "As far as I can see, neither this light nor I are doing any good here."

165.4: "And what the evidence was."

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

And for the lessè harm he mustè feign; *pretend*  
 He said her when she was at such a feast  
 She might on him have lookèd at the least;  
 N'ot I not what (all dear enough a rush) *I don't know / straw*  
 As he that needès must a causè fish. <sup>1</sup> *fish for a reason*

167. And she answered: "Sweet, al' were it so, *even if it were*  
 What harm was that, since I no evil mean?  
 For, by that God that wrought us bothè two,<sup>2</sup> *made*  
 In allè things is mine intentè clean;  
 Such arguments ne be not worth a bean:  
 Will you the childish jealous counterfeit? *act like a jealous child*  
 Now were it worthy that you were y-beat." *deserve to be spanked*

168. Then Troilus gan sorrowfully to sigh.  
 Lest she be wroth him thought his heartè died, *angry*  
 And said: "Alas! upon my sorrow's sick  
 Have mercy, O sweet heartè mine, Criseyde!  
 And if that in those wordès that I said  
 Be any wrong, I will no more trespass. *offend*  
 Do what you list; I am all in your grace." *you want / at your mercy*

169. And she answered: "Of guilt, misericord;<sup>3</sup> *mercy*  
 That is to say, that I forgive all this,  
 And evermore on this night you record, *remember*  
 And be well 'ware you do no more amiss." *And take care*  
 "Nay, dearè heartè mine! " quod he, "i-wis." *indeed*  
 "And now," quod she, "that I have done you smart *caused you pain*  
 Forgive it me, mine ownè sweetè heart!"

170. This Troilus with bliss of that surprised  
 Put all in God's hand, as he that meant

---

166.6-7: "I don't know (what else he invented), none of it worth a rush (straw), like a man who must fish around for a reason."

167.3: This is one of the comparatively few obtrusive Christian anachronisms that have found their way into the pagan milieu of the poem.

169.1: "For guilt (there is) mercy."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Nothing but well, and, suddenly avised,  
He her in armès fastè to him hent,  
And Pandarus, with full good intent  
Laid him to sleep, and said: "If you be wise,  
Swooneth not now, lest morè folk arise."<sup>1</sup>

*determined  
tightly squeezed*

171. What might or may the silly larkè say  
When that the sparrow-hawk has it in his foot?  
I can no more but of these ilkè tway,  
(To whom this talè sugar be or soot)  
Though that I tarry a year, sometime I must  
After mine author tellen their gladness,  
As well as I have told their heaviness.

*same two  
sweet or bitter (like soot)*

*According to my*

172. Criseydè, which that felt her thus y-take,  
(As writen clerkès in their bookès old)  
Right as an aspen leaf she gan to quake  
When she him felt her in his armès fold;  
But Troilus all whole of carès cold,  
Gan thanken then the blissful goddès seven.  
Thus sundry painès bringen folk to heaven.

*seized*

*planetary influences*

173. This Troilus in armès gan her strain  
And said: "O sweet, as ever may I gon,  
Now you be caught, now is there but we twain  
Now yieldeth you, for other boote is none."  
To that Criseydè answered thus anon:  
"Ne haddè I ere now, my sweet heart dear  
Been yold, i-wis I werè not now here."

*As sure as I live  
we two  
other help  
promptly  
If I hadn't before now ...  
... surrendered ...*

174. Oh, sooth is said that healèd for to be,  
As of a fever or other great sickness,  
Men mustè drink (as men may often see)  
Full bitter drink; and for to have gladness  
Men drinken often pain and great distress:

---

The presence of Pandarus throughout this scene has bothered many readers. We should, perhaps, remember the comparative lack of privacy even in large wealthy medieval households. Commentators say that in the early Middle Ages it was common for others to sleep even in royal bedrooms.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

I mean it here (as for this aventure),  
That through a pain is founden all his cure.

175. And now sweetness seemeth more sweet  
That bitterness assayèd was befor: *experienced*  
For out of woe in blissè now they fleet, *float*  
None such they felten since that they were born. *lovelorn*  
Now is this better than both two be lorn.  
For love of God, take every woman heed  
To worken thus, if it come to the need.

176. Criseyde, all quit from every dread and teen *worry*  
As she that just cause had in him to trust,  
Made him such feast that joy it was to see,  
When she his truth and clean intentè wist, *knew*  
And as about a tree with many a twist  
Betrént and writhes the sweetè woodèbine *entwines / honeysuckle*  
Gan each of them in arms the other wind.

177. And as the new abashèd nightingale, *just disturbed? always timid?*  
That stinteth first, when she begins to sing, *stops*  
When that she heareth any herdè tale, *herdsman talk*  
Or in the hedges any wight stirring, *anybody*  
And after, siker doth her voice out ring <sup>1</sup>— *more firmly*  
Right so Criseyde, when that her dreadè stent, *stopped*  
Opened her heart, and told him her intent.

178. And right as he that sees his death y-shapen, *execution prepared*  
And dien must, in aught that he may guess, *to all appearances*  
And suddenly rescue doth him escapen, *releases him*  
And from his death is brought in sikerness,— *safety*  
For all this world in such present gladness  
Was Troilus, and has his lady sweet.  
With no worse hap God let us never meet! *luck*

---

177: Criseyde is compared to a singing nightingale which is easily startled from its singing by the sound of a herdsman speaking, or anything moving in the hedge, but which sings out unrestrained when she sees there is no danger.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

179. Her armès small, her straightè back and soft,  
Her sidès long, fleshly smooth and white  
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bade full oft *and eagerly greeted*  
Her snowish throat, her breastès round and lite. *little*  
Thus in this heaven he gan him to delight  
And therewithal a thousand times her kissed,  
That what to do, for joy unnethe he wist. *he hardly knew*

*Troilus takes time out from love-making to thank the goddess of Love*

180. Then said he thus: “O Love, O Charity,  
Thy mother eke Cytherea the sweet  
After thyself, next herièd be she *praised*  
Venus mean I, the well willing planet *benevolent*  
And next that, Hymeaeus I thee greet *god of marriage*  
For never man was to you goddès hold *beholden*  
As I which you have brought from carès cold *I whom*

181. “Benigné Love, thou holy bond of things,  
Whoso will love, and list thee not honouúr, *& will not honour thee*  
Lo, his desire will flee withouten wings.  
For, n’ouldest thou of bounty them succour<sup>1</sup>  
That serven best and most always labouúr,  
Yet were all lost — that dare I well say, certes —  
But-if thy gracè passèd our deserts.<sup>2</sup>

182. “And for thou me (that couldè least deserve  
Of them that numbered been unto thy grace)  
Hast holpen where I likely was to starve,<sup>3</sup> *Has helped / to die*  
And me bestowed in so high a place,

---

181.4-5: “For if thou didst not wish (*n’ouldest*) of your bounty to help (*succour*) those who serve ...”  
In 181 & 182 Troilus turns Dantean & Boethian again.

181.7: “Unless your graciousness surpassed what we deserve”

182.1-5: “And because you (Love) have helped me (the least among those who deserve your grace) at a point where I was likely to perish (*starve*), and have put me in a place so high that no joy can pass its bounds ...”

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

That thilkè boundès may no blissè pace,  
I can no more, but laud and reverence  
Be to thy bounty and thine excellence."

*those bounds / surpass  
praise*

*And thanks to Criseyde*

183. And therewithal Criseyde anon he kissed,  
Of which certáin she feltè no dis-ease,  
And thus said he: "Now would to God I wist,  
Mine heartè sweet, how I you mightè please.  
What man," quod he, "was ever thus at ease  
As I, on which the fairest and the best  
That ere I saw, deigneth her heart to rest?"

*distress  
I knew*

*on whom*

184. "Here may men see that mercy passeth right;  
Th' experience of that is felt in me,  
That am unworthy to so sweet a wight;  
But heartè mine! of your benignity  
So thinketh, that though I unworthy be,  
Yet must I need amenden in some wise  
Right through the virtue of your high service.

*m. surpasses justice*

*improve  
by serving you*

185. "Ah, for the love of God, my lady dear!  
Since God hath wrought me for I shall you serve,  
As thus I mean that you will be my steer,  
To do me live, if that you list, or starve,<sup>1</sup>  
So teacheth me how that I may deserve  
Your thanks, that, through minè ignorance  
I do no thing that you be dísplesance:

*has made me to serve you  
steersman i.e. pilot*

*teach me (imper.)*

*may displease you*

186. "For certès, freshè womanly wife,<sup>2</sup>  
This dare I say: that truth and diligence,

---

185.2-5: "Since God has made me to serve you, I mean since he wants you to be my guide (*steer*) who will cause me to live or die (*starve*) as you choose, teach me ..."

186.1: *Wife* probably has as its primary meaning simply "woman", with strong overtones of the meaning "spouse" (see III, 16 above). The ME spelling is "*fresshè womanlichè wif*"; pronouncing the two final *-e*'s would give the two extra syllables needed to make up a pentameter line.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

That shall you finden in me all my life.  
Ne will I, certain, breaken your defence;<sup>1</sup> *your commands*  
And if I do, présent on in absénce,  
For love of God, let slay me with the deed, *have me killed for*  
If that it like unto your womanhood." *if it please*

187. "I-wis,", quod she, "mine ownè heartè's list!  
My ground of ease, and all mine heartè dear!  
Grammmércy! for on that is all my trist: *Indeed / desire*  
But let us fall away from this mattér,  
For it sufficeth this that said is here;  
And at one word, withouten répentance,  
Welcome my knight, my peace, my suffisance!" *Many thanks / trust*  
*fulfillment*

*An interjection from the narrator*

188. Of their delight or joys one of the least  
Were impossible to my wit to say, <sup>2</sup> *for my ability*  
But judgeth you that have been at the feast  
Of such gladness, if that them list to play; *if they chose to make love*  
I can no more but thus: these ilkè tway *I know / same two*  
That night, betwixen dread and sikerness, *certainty*  
Felten in love the greatè worthiness.

189. O blissful night! of them so long y-sought,  
How blithe unto them bothè two thou were! *How pleasing*  
Why n'ad I such a one with my soul bought,  
Yea, or but the least joyè that was there?<sup>3</sup>

---

186.4: "Nor will I, certainly, disobey your commands." *defence* is the French word meaning literally "prohibition".

188-89: Once more, in these stanzas the narrator draws attention to his own lack of personal experience of the joys of love, hence his inability to describe even the least of their joys.

189.3-4: "Why didn't I sell my soul for such a night or for the smallest joy they experienced?"

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

Away thou foulè Daunger and thou Fear! <sup>1</sup>  
 And let them in this heaven's blissè dwell  
 That is so high that all ne can I tell.

190. But sooth is, though I cannot tellen all,  
 As can mine author of his excellence,  
 Yet have I said, and God toforn I shall,  
 In every thing all wholly his senténce,  
 And if that I, at Lovè's reverence,  
 Have any word in ekèd for the best,  
 Do therewithal right as yourselven lest;

*truth is*

*main idea*

*added any word*

191. For minè wordès, here and every part,  
 I speak them all under correction  
 Of you that feeling have in lovè's art,  
 And put it all in your discretión  
 T' increase or maken diminution  
 Of my language; and that I you beseech.  
 But now to purpose of my rather speech.

*The lovers again*

192. These ilkè two, that be in armès left,  
 So loth to them asunder go it were,  
 That each from other wenden been bereft;  
 Or elsè, lo! this was their mostè fear,  
 That all this thing but nicè dreamès were,  
 For which full oft each of them said: "O sweet!  
 Clip I you thus? Or else do I it mete?"

*so reluctant to part  
 thought they were robbed  
 greatest  
 only foolish dreams*

*Hold I? / dream it?*

193. And, Lord! so he gan goodly on her see,  
 That ne'er his look ne blentè from her face,  
 And said: "O my dear heartè! may it be  
 That it be sooth? that you be in this place?"  
 "Yea, heartè mine! God thank I of his grace,"

*looked so intently  
 turned  
 can it be ...  
 ...true?*

---

189.5: "*Daunger*" was the personification of that part of the lady's nature or training that urged her to be "*dangerous*", that is, to keep her lover at a distance. In the **Romance of the Rose** Daunger was portrayed as an ugly (*foul*) "churl".

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Quod then Criseyde, and therewithal him kissed,  
That where her spirit was for joy she n'ist. *didn't know*

194. This Troilus full oft her eyen two  
Gan for to kiss, and said; "O eyen clear!  
It weren you that wroughtè me such woe, *caused me*  
You humble nettès of my lady dear, *nets*  
Though there be mercy written in your cheer,  
God wot the text full hard is, sooth, to find;  
How couldè you withouten bond me bind?"<sup>1</sup>

195. Therewith he gan her fast in armès take,  
And well a hundred timès gan he sigh,  
Not such sorrowful sighès as men make  
For woe, or elsè when that folk be sick,  
But easy sighès, such as be to like,  
That showed his affectiön within;  
Of suchè sighès could he not belinne. *Of = from / cease*

196. Soon after this they spoke of sundry things,  
As fell to purpose of this áventure, *various*  
And playing, interchageden their rings, *about this event*  
Of which I cannot tellen no scripture, *inscription*  
But well I wot a brooch, gold and azure, *I know*  
In which a ruby set was, like a heart,  
Criseyde him gave, and stuck it on his shirt.

197. Lord! trow you that a covetous or a wretch *a greedy person*  
That blameth love, and holds of it despite, *& despises it*  
That of those pence that he can mucker and catch *hoard & grab*  
Was ever yet y-given him such delight  
As is in love -- in one point, in some plight? *at any time, in any way?*  
Nay, doubtèless, for all so God me save,  
So perfect joy ne may no niggard have. *no miser*

198. They will say 'Yes.' But Lord, so that they lie!  
Those busy wretches full of woe and dread

---

194: The metaphors in this stanza seem quite confused, but the meaning is reasonably clear.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

That callen love a woodness or folly;  
 But it shall fall them as I shall you redde,  
 They shall forego the white and eke the red,  
 And live in woe, there God give them mischance!  
 And every lover in his truth advance.

*a madness  
 (be)fall / tell you  
 wine (?), silver & gold (?)*

199. As would to God those wretches that despise  
 Service of love, had earès all so long  
 As haddè Midas, full of covetise,  
 And thereto drunken had as hot and strong  
 As Crassus did for his affectès wrong,<sup>1</sup>  
 To teachen them that they be in the vice,  
 And lovers not, although they hold them nice.<sup>2</sup>

200. These ilkè two of whom that I you say,  
 When that their heartès well assurèd were,  
 Then they began to speaken and to play,  
 And eke rehearsen how, and when, and where,  
 They knew them first, and every woe or fear  
 That passèd was; but all such heaviness,  
 I thank it God, was turnèd to gladness.

*& to unwind  
 each other*

201. And evermore when that they fell to speak  
 Of any thing of such a time agone,  
 With kissing all that talè shouldè break,  
 And fallen in a newè joy anon,  
 And didn all their might, since they were one,  
 For to recover bliss and be at ease,  
 And passèd woe with joy [they] counterpoise.

*would interrupt  
 past woe*

202. Reason will not that I speak of sleep,  
 For it accordeth not to my mattér;  
 God wot they took of it full little keep,

*doesn't go with  
 G. knows / notice*

---

*Midas* the legendary king who wanted everything he touched to turn to gold. *Crassus*:. Defeated in battle, Crassus, a super-rich Roman had molten gold poured down his mouth (*hot and strong drink*). A truly awful fate to wish on anyone, especially for a trivial reason

199.7: Although they (*wretches*) consider them (*lovers*) to be foolish (*nice*).

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

But lest this night that was to them so dear  
Ne should in vain escape in no mannér,  
It was beset in joy and busyness  
Of all that souneth into gentleness.<sup>1</sup>

*accords with*

203. But when the cock, common astrologer,  
Gan on his breast to beat and after crow;  
And Lucifer, the day's messenger,  
Gan for to rise, and out her beams [to] throw,  
And eastward rose -- to him that could it know,  
Fortuna Major<sup>2</sup> — then anon Criseyde  
With heartè sore to Troilus thus said:

*everyone's star-reader*

*L = Venus as morning star*

*a star group*

Aubade<sup>3</sup>

204. "Mine heartè's life, my trust, all my pleasance!  
That I was born, alas! that me is woe,  
That day of us must make disseverance,  
For time it is to rise and hence to go,  
Or elsè I am lost for evermo'.  
O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou o'er us hove

*between us / parting*

*evermore*

*hover*

---

202.4-7: These four lines would appear to mean something like this: " But lest this night , so dear to them, should slip away from them, they packed it busily with joy of every kind that accorded with 'gentleness' . "

203.3-6: *Lucifer ... Fortuna Major*: A rather pretentious "scientific" way, following the farmyard way, of saying that dawn was approaching in the east.

204: Here begins the *aubade* or *alba*, a version of the dawn song where the lovers lament the coming of day to interrupt their joy. In this double *alba* Criseyde complains against the Night for being too short; Troilus against the Day for coming too soon. This poetic genre goes back at least to Ovid, and was very popular in medieval French and German lyric verse, where it is known as *aube*, *aubade* or *tagelied*. Act 3, Sc.5 of **Romeo and Juliet** is part of this tradition. So is John Donne's poem "Busy Old Fool". See also below stanzas (243-4 in full ver.; 174 -176 abbrev. version).

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

As long as when Alcmena lay by Jove? <sup>1</sup>

205. "O blackè Night! as folk in bookès read,  
 That shapen art by God this world to hide *are created*  
 At certain timès with thy darkè weed, *clothing*  
 That under that men might in rest abide,  
 Well oughten beasts to plain and folk thee chide,  
 That there as day with labour would us brest, *oppress*  
 That thou thus fleest and deignest us not rest. *don't allow us*

206. "Thou dost, alas! so shortly thine office,  
 Thou rakel Night,<sup>2</sup> that God, maker of Kind, *quickly thy job*  
 Thee for thine haste, and thine unkindè vice *hasty / m. of nature*  
 So fast ay to our hemispherè bind,  
 That never more under the ground thou wind;  
 For now, for thou so hiest out of Troy *because you hurry*  
 Have I foregone, thus hastily, my joy."

207. This Troilus, that with those wordès felt  
 -- As thought him then, for piteous distress -- *it seemed to him*  
 The bloody tearès from his heartè melt,  
 As he that never yet such heaviness  
 Assayèd had out of so great gladness,<sup>3</sup>  
 Gan therewithal Criseyde his lady dear  
 In armès strain, and said in this mannér: *to squeeze*

208. "O cruel Day! accuser of the joy *exposer*  
 That Night and Love have stole and fast i-wrien, *covered*

---

204.6-7: Alcmena, the mother of Hercules, was one of Jove's many lovers. Jove made their love-night three times longer than usual.

206: "Because, hasty Night, you do your work in such a hurry, may God who made all of Nature (*Kind*), tie you because of that haste and unnatural vice, so tightly to our hemisphere that you may never again go under the earth. Now, because you are in such a hurry to be away from Troy, I have had to forego my joy."

207.4-5: *As he ... sadness* may mean "like a man who had never experienced such depression after such great joy."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Accursèd be thy coming into Troy!  
For every bore has one of thy bright eyen:  
Envious Day! what list thee so to spyen?  
What hast thou lost? why seekest thou this place?  
There God thy light so quenchè, for his grace!

*every chink / eyes  
Why do you want to spy?*

*May God quench*

209. "Alas! what have these lovers thee aguilt? <sup>1</sup>  
Despitous Day! thine be the pain of hell,  
For many a lover hast thou slain, and wilt;  
Thy poring in will nowhere let them dwell:  
What! profferest thou thy light here for to sell?  
Go, sell it them that smallè sealès grave; <sup>2</sup>  
We will thee not; us needeth no day have."

*Cruel  
and will again  
peering  
offerest  
engrave  
We want*

210. And eke the sunnè Titan gan he chide, <sup>3</sup>  
And said; "O fool! well may men thee despise,  
That hast all night the Dawning by thy side,  
And sufferest her so soon up from thee rise,  
For to dis-easen lovers in this wise;  
What! hold your bed there, thou and eke thy Morrow;  
I biddè God so give you bothè sorrow."

*Tithonus  
  
Aurora  
And (you) allow  
to distress  
Morning (Aurora)  
pray*

211. Therewith full sore he sighed, and thus he said:  
"My lady bright, and of my weal or woe  
The well and root! O goodly mine, Criseyde,  
And shall I rise, alas! and shall I go?  
Now feel I that mine heartè must a-two;  
And how should I my life an hourè save,  
Since that with you is all the life I have?"

*joy  
The source  
  
must (break) in two*

212. "What shall I do? for certès I n'ot how  
Nor when, alas, I shall the timè see

*certainly I don't know how*

---

209.1: "How have these lovers offended thee?"

209.6: Craftsmen who do fine detailed engraving on small seals need good light.

210.1: Titan is the sun. It would seem from the following lines that Titan is being confused with Tithonus, the mortal lover of the goddess of dawn, Aurora.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

That in this plight I may be eft with you,  
 And of my life God wot how shall that be,  
 Since that desire right now so burneth me  
 That I am dead anon but I return:  
 How should I long, alas! from you sojourn?

*situation / again*

*soon unless I  
 stay away*

213. "But natheless, mine ownè lady bright!  
 Yet were it so that I wist utterly  
 That I your humble servant and your knight  
 Were in your heart y-set so firmly  
 As you in mine, the which thing truly  
 Me lever were than have these worldès twain,  
 Yet should I bet' endure all my pain."

*Yet if I knew*

*I'd rather / two  
 better*

214. To that Criseyde answered right anon,  
 And with a sigh she said: "O heartè dear!  
 The game i-wis so far forth now is gone,  
 That first shall Phoebus fallen from the sphere,  
 And every eagle be the dovè's fere,  
 And every rock out of his placè start,  
 Ere Troilus go out of Cressid's heart.

*the Sun  
 companion  
 his = its*

215. "You be so deep within mine heartè grave,  
 That though I would it turn out of my thought,  
 As wisly very God my soulè save,  
 To dien in the pain I couldè not;<sup>1</sup>  
 And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,  
 Let in your brain no other fantasy  
 So creepen, that it causè me to die.

*engraved*

*surely  
 under torture*

*may cause*

216. "And that you me would have as fast in mind  
 As I have you, that would I you beseech,  
 And if I wistè soothly that to find,<sup>2</sup>  
 God might not one point of my joyès eche.

*increase*

---

215.1-4: "You are so deeply engraved in my heart that even if I wanted to erase you from my thoughts under the pain death from torture, I could not, as sure as I hope God will save my soul."

216.3: "If I knew for certain that I would find that."

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But, heartè mine! withouten morè speech,  
Be to me true, or elsè were it ruth,  
For I am thine, by God and by my truth.

*it would be a shame*

217. "Be glad forthy, and live in sikerness,  
Thus said I ne'er ere this, ne shall to mo';  
And if to you it were a great gladness  
To turn again soon after that you go,  
As fain would I as you that it were so,  
As wisly God mine heartè bring to rest";  
And him in armès took, and often kissed.

*therefore / in certainty  
never before*

*glad*

*Troilus finally has to leave*

218. Against his will, sith it must needès be,  
This Troilus up rose, and fast him clad,  
And in his armès took his lady free  
A hundred times, and on his way him sped,  
And with such words as though his heartè bled,  
He said: "Farewell, my dearè heartè sweet!  
That God us grantè sound and soon to meet."

*since  
dressed  
gracious  
prepared to leave*

*safe*

219. To which no word for sorrow she answered,  
So sorè gan his parting her distrain,  
And Troilus unto his palace fared,  
As woebegone as she was, sooth to sayn,  
So hard him wrung of sharp desire the pain  
For to be eft there he was in pleasance,  
That it may never out of his rémembrance.

*distress*

*truth*

*back again where  
never (go) out*

220. Returnèd to his royal palace soon,  
He soft unto his bed gan for to shrink,  
To sleepè long, as he was wont to do;  
But all for naught; he may well lie and wink,  
But sleep may there none in his heartè sink,  
Thinking how she, for whom desire him brend,  
A thousand fold was worth more than he wend.

*close his eyes*

*burned  
imagined*

221. And in his thought gan up and down to wind  
Her wordès all, and every countenance,

*review  
look*

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

And firmly impressen in his mind  
 The leastè point that to him was pleasáncè,  
 And verily of thilkè rémembrance *at that memory*  
 Desire all new him burned, and lust to breed  
 Gan more than erst, and yet took he no heed.<sup>1</sup> *more than before*

222. Criseyde also right in the samè wise  
 Of Troilus gan in her heart to shut *to treasure*  
 His worthiness, his lust, his deedès wise, *lust = his passion (for her)*  
 His gentleness, and how she with him met, *who had so favored her*  
 Thanking Love he so well her beset, *again / sweetheart*  
 Desiring eft to have her heartè dear *place / delight him*  
 In such a plight that she durst make him cheer.<sup>2</sup>

*Enter Pandarus again, clowning in poor taste*

223. Pandar, which that a-morrow comen was *in the a.m.*  
 Unto his niece and gan her fair to greet,  
 Said: "All this night so rainèd it alas!  
 That all my dread is that you, nicè sweet!  
 Have little leisure had to sleep and mete. *dream*  
 All night," quod he, "hath rain so do me wake, *kept me awake*  
 That some of us I trow their headès ache." *I guess*

224. And near he came and said: "How stands it now  
 This merry morrow, niece, how can you fare?" *are you doing*  
 Criseyde answered: "Never the bet' for you, *better*  
 Fox that you be; God give your heartè care.  
 God help me so, you causèd all this fare, *this business*  
 Trow I," quod she, "for all your wordès white. *I guess / innocent words*  
 Oh, whoso sees you, knoweth you full lite." *very little*

225. With that she gan her facè for to wry *to cover*

---

221.6-7: *and lust ... heed*: This has nothing to do with a desire (in Troilus) to produce progeny. The syntax is: *lust (desire) gan to breed (grow) more than before*. The meaning of the last clause: *and yet took he no heed* is obscure.

222.6-7: "Hoping to have her sweetheart where she could give him delight."

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With the sheet, and waxed for shame all red,  
And Pandarus gan under for to pry  
And saidè: "Niece, if that I shall be dead,  
Here, have a sword, and smiteth off my head."  
With that, his arm all suddenly he thrust  
Under her neck, and at the last her kissed.

*blushed in embarrassment*

226. I pass all that which chargeth not to say  
What! God forgave His death, and she also  
Forgave, and with her uncle gan to play,  
For other causè was there none than so.  
But of this thing right to the effect to go  
When timè was, home to her house she went,  
And Pandarus has fully his intent.<sup>1</sup>

*doesn't matter*

*to joke  
nothing else to be done  
To make a long story short*

*Pandarus goes to Troilus's house*

227. Now turnè we again to Troilus,  
That restèless full long a-beddè lay,  
And privily sent after Pandarus  
To him to come in all the haste he may:  
He came anon, not oncè said he nay,  
And Troilus full soberly he gret,  
And down upon the beddè's side him set.

*secretly sent for*

*greeted*

228. This Troilus with all th' affection  
Of friendly love that heartè may devise  
To Pandarus on knees fell he adown;  
And ere that he would of the place arise  
He gan him thanken in his bestè wise  
A hundred sithe; and gan the timè bless  
That he was born, to bring him from distress.

*And before / from*

*100 times*

---

Some recent critics have seen more than hints of incest in stanzas 225 & 226. Certainly the action of 225 seems odd, but Pandarus is not noted for his sensitivity and good taste. Reading deliberate ambiguity into lines 226.1 & .7 and into a word like *play* (.3) could partly justify a determined reader in such a suspicion which is, however, dismissed by the Riverside editor as "baseless & absurd." The scene is not in Boccaccio, and stanza 226 is not in the Corpus MS, the source MS for both Riverside and Windeatt's editions.

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229. He said; "O friend! of friends the alderbest  
 That ever was, the soothè for to tell,  
 Thou hast in heaven y-brought my soul at rest  
 From Phlegethon, the fiery flood of hell,  
 That though I might a thousand times sell  
 Upon a day my life in thy service,  
 It mightè not a mote in that suffice.

*best of all  
truth  
river  
an iota*

230. "The sunnè, which that all the world may see,  
 Saw never yet (my life that dare I lay)  
 So inly fair and goodly as is she  
 Whose I am all, and shall till that I die;  
 And that I thus am hers, dare I well say,  
 That thankèd be the highè worthiness  
 Of Love, and eke thy kindè busyness.

*So totally  
effort*

231. "Thus hast thou me no little thing y-give;  
 For which to thee obligèd be for ay  
 My life; and why? For through thy help I live,  
 Or elsè dead had I been many a day."  
 And with that word down in his bed he lay,  
 And Pandarus full soberly him heard  
 Till all was said, and then he him answered:

*given  
for ever*

*Pandarus gets serious again*

232. "My dearè friend! if I have done for thee  
 In any case, God wot it is me lief,  
 I am as glad as man may of it be,  
 God help me so. But take it not agrief  
 What I shall say. Beware of this mischief,  
 That where as now thou brought art into bliss  
 That thou thyself ne cause it not to miss.

*God knows, I'm pleased  
thou art brought  
Don't ruin it*

233. "For of Fortúna's sharp adversity  
 The worstè kind of infortune is this,  
 A man to have been in prosperity,  
 And it remember when it passèd is:  
 Thou'rt wise enough; forthy do not amiss;  
 Be not too rakel though that thou sit warm,

*therefore  
rash*

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For if thou be, certain it will thee harm.

234. "Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therein,  
For all so sure as red is every fire,  
As great a craft is keepè well as win.  
Bridle always thy speech and thy desire,  
For wordly joy holds not but by a wire;  
That proveth well -- it bursts alday so oft,  
Forthy is need to worken with it soft."

*as great a skill*

*every day  
Therefore... treat it gently*

*Troilus re-assures him*

235. Quod Troilus: "I hope, and God toforn,  
My dearè friend, that I shall so me bear  
That, in my guilt, there shall be nothing lorn,  
N'I n'ill not rakel [be] to grieven her.<sup>1</sup>  
It needeth not this matter oft to steer,  
For, wistest thou my heartè well, Pandare,  
God wot, of this thou wouldest little care."

*before God*

*through my fault / lost  
Nor will I be so rash as to  
talk about  
if you knew  
God knows / worry*

236. Then gan he tell him of his gladdè night,  
And whereof first his heartè dread and how,  
And saidè: "Friend, as I am a true knight,  
And by that faith I shall to God and you,  
I had it never half so hot as now,  
And ay the morè that desire me biteth  
To love her best the more it me delighteth.

*dreaded*

*I owe*

*And ever the more*

237. "I n'ot myself not wisly what it is,  
But now I feel a newè quality,  
Yea, all another than I did ere this."  
Pandárus answered and said thus, that "he  
That oncè may in heaven's blissè be,  
He feeleth other wayès, dare I lay,  
Than thilkè time he first heard of it say."

*I really don't know*

*other than*

*I bet  
that time / heard of it*

---

<sup>1</sup> 235.4: *N'I n'ill not* = nor I won't not. The triple negative, here simply emphatic, would now be grammatically impossible.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

238. This is a word for all, this Troilus  
 Was never full to speak of this mattér,  
 And for to praisen unto Pandarus  
 The bounty of his rightè lady dear,  
 And Pandarus to thank and maken cheer:  
 This tale was ay span-newè to begin  
 Till that the night departed them a-twin.

*n. tired of speaking*

*always brand new  
separated / in two*

*The lovers together again*

239. Soon after this, for that Fortúne it would,  
 Y-comen was the blissful timè sweet  
 That Troilus was warnèd that he should  
 There he was erst, Criseyde his lady meet,<sup>1</sup>  
 For which he felt his heart in joyè fleet,  
 And faithfully gan all the goddès hery;  
 And let's see now if that he can be merry.

*wished it*

*Where he first  
float  
praise*

240. And holden was the form and all the wise  
 Of her coming, and eke of his also,  
 As it was erst, which needeth not devise;<sup>2</sup>  
 But plainly to th'effect right for to go:  
 In joy and surety Pandarus them two  
 A-beddè brought when that them bothè lest;  
 And thus they be in quiet and in rest.

*kept / manner*

*before / not tell  
to the point*

*both wished*

241. Naught needeth it to you, since they be met,  
 To ask of me if that they blithè were,  
 For if it erst was well, then was it bet  
 A thousand fold, this needeth not inquire;  
 A-gone was every sorrow and every fear,  
 And both i-wis they had, and so they wend  
 As muchel joy as heart may comprehend.

*happy  
at first / better*

*indeed / experienced*

---

239.3-4: "Troilus was told to meet his lady again at the same place as before," i.e. Pandarus's house.

240.1-3: "The arrangements for her arrival and for his were the same as before, which I don't need to tell you about."

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242. This is no little thing of for to say, *to speak of*  
This passeth every wit for to devise, *describe*  
For each of them gan other's lust obey. *each other's wishes*  
Felicity, which that these clerkès wise  
Commenden so, ne may not here suffice;  
This joy ne may not written be with ink;  
This passeth all that any heart may think. *surpasses*

243. But cruel day, so welaway the stound! *alas, the moment*  
Gan for t'approach, as they by signès knew,  
For which them thought they felten deathè's wound:  
So woe was them that changen gan their hue, *So sad they were / color*  
And day they gonnen to despise all new, *they began / anew*  
Calling it traitor, envious, and worse,  
And bitterly the day's light they curse.<sup>1</sup>

244. Quod Troilus "Alas! now am I ware *aware*  
That Pyrois, and those swift steedès three *P = one of the sun's horses*  
Which that drawn forth the Sunnè's car *chariot*  
Have gone some by-path in despite of me, *short cut*  
And maketh it so soonè day to be;  
And for the Sun him hasteth thus to rise  
Ne shall I never do him sacrifice."

245. But needès day departen them must soon; *day must separate*  
And when their speechè done was and their cheer, *& their goodbye's ?*  
They twin anon, as they were wont to do, *separate soon*  
And setten time of meeting eft i-fere. *again together*  
And many a night they wrought in this mannér:  
And thus Fortúna led a time in joy *(for) a time*  
Criseyde and eke this kingè's son of Troy.

*The effects of love*

246. In suffisance, in bliss, and in singings, *In satisfaction*

---

243.7 & 244: Another short *alba* or *aubade*. In what follows we are given only Troilus's words, not Criseyde's. In the earlier more elaborate one they both participate, Criseyde berating Night and Troilus Day. See above, III, st. 204 ff.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

This Troilus gan all his life to lead;  
 He spendeth, jousteth, maketh eke feastings;  
 He giveth freely oft, and changeth weed;  
 He held about him always, out of dread,<sup>1</sup>  
 A world of folk, as came him well of kind,  
 The freshest and the best that he could find,

*clothes*  
*I assure you*  
*came naturally to him*

247. That such a voice was of him and a steven  
 Throughout the world, of honour and largesse,  
 That it up rang unto the gate of heaven;  
 And as in love he was in such gladness  
 That in his heart he deemèd as I guess  
 That there n'is lover in this world at ease  
 So well as he, and thus gan love him please.

*So that his fame & reputation*  
*for h. & generosity*

*judged*  
*is not*

248. The goodlihead or beauty which that kind  
 In any other lady had y-set,  
 Can not the mountance of a knot unbind  
 About his heart of all Criseyde's net;<sup>2</sup>  
 He was so narrow y-meshèd and y-knit  
 That it undone in any manner side  
 That will not be, for aught that may betide.

*nature*  
*as much as a knot*  
*tightly enmeshed & knit*  
*in any way*

249. And by the hand full often he would take  
 This Pandarus, and into garden lead,  
 And such a feast and such a process make  
 Him of Criseyde, and of her womanhood,  
 And of her beauty, that withouten dread,  
 It was a heaven his wordès for to hear,

*praise & long account*  
*without doubt*

---

246.5-7: Again *out of dread* does not mean "out of fear". The lines say: "I assure you , he kept around him a group of people who were the finest that he could find, as was natural for him (*came him well of kind*)."

The good effect of human sexual love on a man's manners and military prowess, mentioned here and earlier and below in stanzas 254 & 5, was a commonplace of medieval romance

<sup>2</sup> 248. "The goodness or beauty that Nature had bestowed on any other woman could not untie a single knot in the net of his affection for Criseyde. He was so tightly enmeshed that there was no possibility that he could be untied in any way."

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And then he wouldè sing in this mannér:

CANTICUS TROILI <sup>1</sup>

250. "Love, that of earth and sea hath governance,  
Love, that his hestès hath in heaven high, *commands*  
Love, that with a wholesome álliance  
Holds people joinèd as him list them gie, *pleases to guide*  
Love, that knitteth law of company, *of association*  
And couples doth in virtue for to dwell, *causes*  
Binds this accord that I have told and tell.
251. "That that the world with faith, which that is stable, *w. regularity*  
Diverseth so its stoundès concording *Changes its seasons so smoothly*  
That elements that be so discordable *that are so discordant*  
Holden a bond perpetually during, *ever lasting*  
That Phoebus must his rosy day forth bring, *(So) that*  
And that the moon has lordship o'er the nights —  
All this does Love; ay heried be his mights! *ever praised*
252. "That that the sea, that greedy is to flow, *(That=Love) which restrains ...*  
Constraineth to a certain endè so *Restrains*  
His floodès, that so fiercely they ne grow  
To drenchen earth and all, for evermo', *To drown*  
And if that Love aught let his bridle go,  
All that now loves asunder shouldè leap,  
And lost were all that Love holds now to-heap. *together*

---

<sup>1</sup> Troilus's hymn to love is based on Boethius's **Consolations of Philosophy**, II, meter 8. The substance of it is that Love holds all things working together: marriages, societies, the heavens, the oceans, everything. See also the Invocation at the opening of this book III.

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

253. "So would to God that author is of Kind,<sup>1</sup>  
 That with his bond Love of his virtue list  
 To circle heartès all and fast to bind,  
 That from his bond no wight the way out wist,  
 And heartès cold them would I that he twist  
 To make them love, and that list them ay rue  
 On heartès sore, and keep them that be true."

*who made Nature  
 his power would choose  
 no one / would know  
 and always take pity*

-----

254. In allè needès for the townè's war  
 He was — and ay — the first in armès dight,  
 And certainly — but if that bookès err —  
 Save Hector most y-dread of any wight;  
 And this increase of hardiness and might  
 Came him of love, his lady's thank to win,  
 That alterèd his spirit so within.

*always first armed  
 unless  
 most feared by every (enemy)  
 Came to him from love*

255. In time of truce on hawking would he ride,  
 Or elsè hunt the boar, bear, or lion,  
 The smallè beastès let he go beside;  
 And when that he came riding into town,  
 Full oft his lady from her window down  
 As fresh as falcon comen out of mew,  
 Full ready was him goodly to salue.

*didn't bother with  
 cage  
 greet*

256. And most of love and virtue was his speech,  
 And in despite had he all wretchedness;  
 And doubtèless no need was him beseech  
 To honour them that haddè worthiness,  
 And easen them that weren in distress;  
 And glad was he if any wight well fared  
 That lover was, when he it wist or heard.

*in contempt all bad conduct  
 (to) beseech  
 to help  
 anyone did well  
 knew*

---

<sup>1</sup> 253. "I wish that God, who is the author of nature (*kind*), would cause Love to use his power (*virtue*) to encircle all hearts and tie them fast so that no one would know the way out of that bond. And I wish that He would change cold hearts to make them love and take pity on suffering people, and that He would guard those people who are true (in love)." It has been remarked that the intricate syntax is something of an entangling net itself.

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257. For, sooth to say, he lost held every wight  
But if he were in Lovè's high service,  
I meanè folk that ought it be of right;  
And o'er all this so well could he devise  
Of sentiment, and in so uncouth wise  
All his array, that every lover thought  
That all was well what so he said or wrought.

*he thought everyone  
Unless he  
who rightfully ought  
speak  
so unusual  
his whole presentation  
or did*

258. And though that he be come of blood royál  
Him list of pride at no wight for to chase;  
Benign he was to each in general,  
For which he got him thanks in every place:  
Thus would Love, (y-heried be his grace!)  
That pride and envy, ire and avarice,  
He gan to flee, and every other vice.<sup>1</sup>

*out of pride / to despise*

*Love wished, (praised be h.g.)  
(So) that anger*

259. Thou lady bright, the daughter of Dione!  
Thy blind and wingèd son eke, Dan Cupide!  
You Sisters Nine eke, that by Helicon  
In hill Parnassus list for to abide,  
That you thus far have deigné me to guide,  
I can no more, but since that you will wend,  
You heried be for ay withouten end!

*Venus*

*9 muses  
choose to live  
me = the poet  
go (away)  
(May) you be praised*

260. Through you have I said fully in my song  
Th'effect and joy of Troilus's service,  
Al' be that there was some dis-ease among,  
As to mine author listeth to devise:<sup>2</sup>  
My Thirde Book now end I in this wise,  
And Troilus in lust and in quiet  
Is with Criseyde, his ownè lady sweet.

*Although / mixed in*

*in pleasure*

---

<sup>1</sup> 258.5-7: "This was the will of Love (may He be praised), so that he [Troilus] began to flee pride, envy, anger, avarice and every other vice" — more of the good effects of love; see second half of note to 246 above.

260.4: "As my source chooses to tell it."

BOOK III TROILUS AND CRISEYDE BOOK III

**Here ends Book III**