

Criseyde's Departure from Troy

1. APPROACHEN gan the fatal destiny
 That Jovè hath in disposition, *has contol of*
 And to you, angry Parcae, sisters three, *the 3 Fates*
 Committeth to do execution,¹
 For which Criseydè must out of the town, *must (go)*
 And Troilus shall dwellen forth in pain
 Till Lachesis his thread no longer twine.
2. The golden tresséd Phoebus high aloft *the Sun*
 Thrice had allè with his beamès clean
 The snows melted,² and Zephirus as oft *west wind of Spring*
 Y-brought again the tender leavès green
 Since that the son of Hecuba the Queen *Troilus*
 Began to love her first for whom his sorrow
 Was all that she departen should a-morrow. *next day*
3. Full ready was at primè Diomede³ *early in a.m.*
 Criseyde unto the Greekès' host to lead;
 For sorrow of which she felt her heartè bleed,
 As she that n'istè what was best to rede. *didn't know / to do*
 And truly, as men in bookès read,
 Men wistè never woman have the care, *knew*

¹ 1.1-4: "There began to approach the fatal destiny which Jove has control of, and which he delegates to the three Fates to carry out (*to do execution*).\" The three Parcae or Fates -- Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos -- spin (*twine*) the thread of human life and decide when it is to be cut.

² 2.1-5: A roundabout way of saying that it has been three years since Troilus fell in love with Criseyde whose impending departure was causing his present pain.

³ 3.1: Diomede, a prominent Greek warrior, and the fourth major character in the story, arrives early in the morning (*at prime*) to escort Criseyde to the Greek camp.

Nor was so loath out of a town to fare.¹

Troilus watches nearby

4. This Troilus withouten rede or lore, *plot or plan*
 As man that hath his joyès eke forlore, *lost*
 Was waiting on his lady evermore,
 As she that was the soothfast crop and more *root & branch*
 Of all his lust or joyès herebefore; *his desire*
 But Troilus, now farewell all thy joy!
 For shalt thou never see her eft in Troy. *again*
5. Sooth is, that while he bode in this mannér *waited*
 He gan his woe full manly for to hide,
 That well unnethe it seen was in his cheer,² *scarcely / behavior*
 But at the gatè where she should out ride
 With certain folk he hoved, her to abide, *lingered to wait for her*
 So woe-begone, al' would he not complain, *although he*
 That on his horse unneth he sat for pain. *could barely sit*
6. For ire he quoke, so gan his heartè gnaw,
 When Diomedè on horse gan him to dress, *w. anger he shook*
 And said unto himself this ilké saw: *to mount*
 "Alas! " quod he, "thus foul a wretchedness *these words*
 Why suffer I it? why n'ill I it redress? *he = Troilus*
 Were it not better at oncè for to die *why don't I put it right?*
 Than evermore in languor thus to drye? *to suffer*
7. "Why n'ill I make at oncè rich and poor *Why don't I*
 To have enough to do ere that she go?
 Why n'ill I bring all Troy upon a roar?
 Why n'ill I slay this Diomedè also?

¹ 3.6-7: "No one ever knew a woman who had so much sorrow (*care*) or was so reluctant to leave the town."

² 5.3: "So that it was scarcely perceptible in his behavior."

Why n'll I rather with a man or two
Steal her away? why will I this endure?
Why n'll I helpen to mine ownè cure?"

8. But why he would not do so fell a deed
That shall I say, and why him list it spare:
He had in heart always a manner dread
Lest that Criseyde, in rumour of this fare,
Should have been slain. Lo! this was all his care,
And elsè, certain, as I saidè yore,
He had it done withouten wordès more.

terrible
he chose to refrain
in chaos of the disturbance
concern
otherwise / earlier
would have done

9. Criseydè, when she ready was to ride,
Full sorrowfully she sighed, and said "Alas!"
But forth she must for aught that may betide:¹
There is no other remedy in this case.
And forth she rode full sorrowfully a pace;
What wonder is though that her sorè smart
When she forgoes her ownè dearè heart.

suffers sorely
o.d. heart = Troilus

10. This Troilus in wise of courtesy,
With hawk on hand, and with a hugè rout
Of knightès, rode and did her company,
Passing all the valley far without,
And farther would have ridden out of doubt
Full fain, and woe was him to go so soon,
But turn he must, and it was eke to doon.²

by way of
crowd
kept her company
doubtless
v. gladly

Troilus bids Antenor welcome and Criseyde farewell

11. And right with that was Antenor y-come
Out of the Greekès' host, and every wight

¹ 9.3: "But forth she must (go), no matter what happens."

² 10.5-7: "And he would very gladly (*full fain*) have ridden further -- no doubt about that -- and sad he was (*woe was him*) to go so soon, but he had to turn back; there was no way out of that."

Was of it glad, and said he was welcome;
 And Troilus, al' n'ere his heartè light,
 He painèd him with all his fullè might
 Him to withhold of weeping at the least,
 And Antenor he kissed and made great feast.

*although his h. wasn't l.
 He forced himself
 keep from
 made v. welcome*

12. And therewithal he must his leavè take,
 And cast his eye upon her piteously,
 And near he rode, his causè for to make,
 To take her by the hand all soberly;
 And Lord! so she gan weepen tenderly,
 And he full soft and slily gan her say:
 "Now hold your day, and do me not to die."

don't cause me to die

13. With that his courser turnèd he about
 With facè pale, and unto Diomede
 No word he spoke, nor none of all his rout,
 Of which the son of Tydeus took heed,
 As he that couldè morè than the creed
 In such a craft,¹ and by the rein her hent;
 And Troilus to Troy homeward he went.

his horse

i.e. Diomede

grasped

Criseyde's Greek escort, Diomede, promptly makes his advances to her

14. This Diomede, that led her by the bridle,
 When that he saw the folk of Troy away,
 Thought: "All my labour shall not be on idle
 If that I may, for somewhat shall I say,
 For at the worst it may yet short our way;
 I have heard said eke timès twicè twelve,
 He is a fool that will forget himself."

wasted

shorten

15. But natheless this thought he well enough:
 "That certainly I am abouten naught

I will get nowhere

¹ 13.5-6: "Like a man that knew (*could*) more than the elementary stages (*creed*) in this business (*craft*) [of love]." That is, he was a practiced lover.

If that I speak of love, or make it tough,
 For doubtéless if she have in her thought
 Him that I guess, he may not be y-brought
 So soon away; but I shall find a mean
 That she not wit as yet shall what I mean."

*a method
 will not guess*

16. This Diomedé, as he that could his good,
 When timé was, gan fallen forth in speech
 Of this and that,¹ and asken why she stood
 In such dis-ease, and gan her eke beseech,
 That if that he increasen might or eche
 With any thing her easè, that she should
 Command it him, and said he do it would.

*distress
 or add to
 her comfort*

17. For truly he swore her as a knight
 That there n'as thing with which he might her please
 That he n'ould do his pain and all his might
 To do it, for to do her heart an ease,
 And prayed her she would her sorrow appease,
 And said: " I-wis we Greekès can have joy
 To honour you as well as folk of Troy."

*there was nothing ...
 ... he wouldn't take pains*

assuage

18. He said eke thus: "I wot you thinketh strange
 (No wonder is) for it is to you new,
 Th'acquaintance of these Trojans for to change
 For folk of Greece, which that you never knew,
 But wouldè never God, but if as true
 A Greek you should among us allè find
 As any Trojan is, and eke as kind.

I know to you it seems

God forbid

19. "And by the cause I swore you, lo! right now
 To be your friend, and help you to my might,
 And for that more acquaintance eke of you

as best I can

¹ 16.1-3: "like a man who knew what was best for himself, when the opportunity arose, he began to chat about one thing and another."

Have I had than another stranger wight,
 So from this forth I pray you day and night
 Commandeth me, how sore so that me smart,
 To do all that may like unto your heart:

however it pains me

20. "And that you me would as your brother treat,
 And taketh not my friendship in despite;
 And though your sorrows be for thingès great --
 N'ot I not why but out of more respite ¹
 Mine heart hath for t'amend it great delight,
 And if I may your harmès not redress
 I am right sorry for your heaviness.

high regard

cure

sadness

21. "For though you Trojans with us Greekès wroth
 Have many a day been, always yet pardee
 One god of Love in sooth we serven both:
 And for the love of God, my lady free,
 Whom so you hate, as be not wroth with me,
 For truly there can no wight you serve
 That half so loath your wrathè would deserve.²

angry

by God

in truth

my gracious lady

Whomsoever / angry

your anger

22. "And n'ere it that we be so near the tent
 Of Calchas, which that see us bothè may,
 I would of this you tell all mine intent,
 But this ensealed is till another day.
 Give me your hand; I am and shall be ay,
 God help me so, while that my life may dure,
 Your own, aboven every creäture.

And were it not

who can see us

always

may last

23. "Thus said I ne'er ere now to woman born,

never before now

¹ 20.4-7: "I don't know why (*N'ot I not why*), but out of high regard (*more respite*), I would be heartily pleased to improve things, and if I cannot cure your troubles, I am at least sorry for your sadness."

² 21.5-7: "And whomsoever you hate, do not be angry with me, because no one who wants to serve you would be half so unwilling as I to earn your anger."

For, God my heart as wisly gladden so,¹
 I lovèd never woman herebeforn
 As paramour, ne never shall no mo';
 And, for the love of God, be not my foe,
 Al' can I not to you, my lady dear,
 Complain aright, for I am yet to lere.²

*Although
to learn*

24. "And wonder naught, mine ownè lady bright,
 Though that I speak of love to you thus blive,
 For I have heard ere this of many a wight
 That lovèd thing he never saw his life;
 Eke I am not of power for to strive
 Against the god of Love, but him obey
 I will always, and mercy I you pray.

*so soon
person
(in) his life*

25. "There be so worthy knightès in this place,
 And you so fair, that ever each of them all
 Will painè him to standen in your grace;
 But might to me so fair a grace befall
 That me as for your servant you would call,
 So lowly nor so truly you serve
 Will none of them as I shall till I starve."

*so = such
every one
take pains / your favor*

die

26. Criseyde unto that purpose lite answered,
 As she that was with sorrow oppressèd so,
 That in effect she naught his talès heard,
 But here and there, now here a word or two;
 Her thought her sorrowful heartè burst a-two,
 For when she gan her father far espy
 Well nigh down off her horse she gan to sye.

little

to sink

27. But natheless she thankèd Diomede

¹ 23.2: "For, as surely as I hope God may gladden my heart, ..."

² 23.6-7: "although I cannot make my (love) complaint to you properly, my dear lady, because I am only a learner." Diomede, the practiced seducer, pretends he is a clumsy amateur.

And piteously he cried upon Criseyde,
And to himself right thus he spoke and said:

32. "Where is mine ownè lady lief and dear?
Where is her whitè breast? Where is it? Where?
Where be her armès and her eyen clear
That yesternight this timè with me were?
Now may I weep alonè many a tear,
And grasp about I may, but in this place
Save a pillow naught find I to embrace.

beloved

33. "How shall I do? When shall she come again?
I n'ot, alas! Why let I her to go?
As woulde God I had as then been slain!
O heartè mine, Criseyde! O sweetè foe!
O lady mine! That I love and no mo',
To whom for evermore mine heart I dow,
See how I die; you n'ill me not rescue!

I don't know

endow

34. "Who sees you now, my rightè lodèstar?
Who sits right now or stands in your preséncè?
Who can comfórten now your heartè's war,
Now I am gone? whom give you audience?
Who speaks for me right now in my abséncè?
Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wot I, as ill as I you fare. ¹

guiding star

nobody

35. "How should I thus ten dayès full endure
When I the firstè night have all this teen?
How shall she do eke, sorrowful créature,
For tenderness how shall she eke sustain
Such woe for me? O! piteous, pale, and green,
Shall be your freshè womanlicè face
For languor ere you turn unto this place."

vexation

*For = because of
and sickly
womanly*

From pain (of longing)

¹ 34.7: "I know well you are as badly off as I am."

36. And when he fell in any slumberings
 Anon begin he wouldè for to groan,
 And dremen of the dreadfullestè things
 That mightè be: as mete he were alone
 In place horrible, making aye his moan,
 Or meten that he was amongès all
 His enemies, and in their handès fall.

dream that he

Or dream

37. And therewithal his body wouldè start,
 And with the start all suddenly awake,
 And such a tremor feel about his heart,
 That of the fear his body wouldè quake,
 And therewithal he would a noisè make,
 And seem as though he wouldè fallè deep,
 From high aloft; and then he wouldè weep,

38. And ruen on himself so piteously,
 That wonder was to hear his fantasy;
 Another time he wouldè mightily
 Comfórt himself, and say it was folly
 So causèless such dread and woe to drie,
 And eft begin his aspre sorrows new,
 That every man might on his painès rue.

And take pity

*to suffer
 his bitter
 take pity*

39. Who couldè tell aright, or full describe
 His woe, his 'plaint, his languor, and his pain?
 Not all the men that have or be alive:
 Thou, Reader, may'st thyself full well divine
 That such a woe my wit cannot define;
 On idle for to write it should I swink
 When that my wit is weary it to think.

imagine

*In vain / I s. labor
 My mind*

40. On heaven yet the starrès werè seen,
 Although full pale y-waxen was the moon,
 And whiten gan the horizontè sheen
 All eastwards, as it is wont to do,
 And Phoebus with his rosy cartè soon
 Gan after that to dress him up to fare,

*the m. had grown
 bright horizon*

*the Sun / chariot
 got ready to go*

When Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

Pandarus arrives. Troilus's "last will and testament."

41. This Pandare, that of all the day befor
Ne might have comen Troilus to see,
Although he on his head it had y-sworn,
For with King Priam all the day was he,
So that it lay not in his liberty
Nowhere to go, but on the morrow he went
To Troilus, when that he for him sent;

*could not come
solemnly promised*

42. For in his heartè he could well divine
That Troilus all night for sorrow woke,
And that he wouldè tell him of his pine;
This knew he well enough withouten book,
For which to chamber straight the way he took,
And Troilus then soberly he gret,
And on the bed full soon he gan him set.

*could guess
he wanted to / agony*

quietly greeted T

43. "My Pandarus!" quod Troilus, "the sorrow
Which that I drye I may not long endure;
I trow I shall not liven till to-morrow;
For which I would always on aventure
To thee devisen of my sépulture
The form, and of my moble thou dispone
Right as thee seemeth best is for to done:

*suffer
I think
in preparation
give orders for my tomb
my goods / dispose*

44. "But of the fire and flame funereal
In which my body burn shall into gleed,
And of the feast and playès palestral
At my vigil I pray thee take good heed
That all be well, and offer Mars my steed,
My sword, my helm, and, levè brother dear,
My shield to Pallas give, that shineth clear.

*coals, ashes
funeral games*

beloved brother

45. "The powder to which my heartè burned shall turn,
That pray I thee thou take, and it conserve

In a vessel that men clepe an urn *call*
 Of gold, and to my lady that I serve,
 For love of whom thus piteously I starve, *die*
 So give it her, and do me this pleasánce
 To pray her keep it for a rémembrance.

46. "For well I feelè by my malady,
 And by my dreamès now and yore ago, *in the past*
 All certainly that I must needès die;
 The owl eke, which that hight Ascalapho, *which is called*
 Hath shriekèd after me these nightès two.
 And, god Mercury, of me now woeful wretch
 The soulè guide, and when thee list, it fetch."¹ *when you please*

Pandarus tries to reason with him

47. Pandáre answered and saidè: "Troilus,
 My dearè friend, as have I told thee yore *in the past*
 That it is folly for to sorrow thus,
 And causèless, for which I can no more.
 But whoso will not trowen redde nor lore *heed advice & teaching*
 I cannot see in him no remedy,
 But let him worthen with his fantasy. *remain with*

48. "But, Troilus, I pray thee tell me now
 If that thou trow ere this that any wight *believe that anyone*
 Hath lovèd paramours as well as thou?
 Yea, God wot, and from many a worthy knight
 Hath his lady gone a fortènight *two weeks*
 And he not yet made halfendel the fare. *half the fuss*
 What need is thee to maken all this care? *this noise*

49. "Since day by day thou mayst thyselfen see
 That from his lover or else from his wife
 A man must twinnen of necessity. *must part*

¹ 46.6: Mercury assigned spirits their place after death. See below 261.7.

Yea, though he love her as as his ownè life,
 Yet n'ill he with himself thus maken strife;
 For well thou wost, my levè brother dear,
 That always friendès may not been y-fere.

*you know
together*

50. "How do these folk that see their lovers wedded
 By friendès' might, as it betides full oft
 And see them in their spouses' bed y-bedded?
 God wot, they take it, wisly, fair and soft.
 For-why good hope holds up their heart aloft
 And for they can a time of sorrow endure;
 As time them hurt, a timè doth them cure.

By family pressure

*G. knows / indeed
Because
And because*

51. "So shouldest thou endure, and letten slide
 The time, and fonden to be glad and light.
 Ten days is not so long for to abide.
 And since she thee to comen has behight
 She will her hest not broken for no wight;
 For dread thee not that she n'ill finden way
 To come again; my life that durst I lay.

and try to be

*has promised
promise / nobody*

dare I bet

52. "Thy swevens eke and all such fantasy
 Drive out, and let them faren to mischance;
 For they proceed of thy meláncholy,
 That doth thee feel in sleep all this penáncé.
 A straw for all swevens' significance!
 God help me so, I count them not a bean;
 There wot no man aright what dreamès mean.

*dreams
go to the devil*

causes you to feel

No man knows

53. "For priestès of the temple tellen this,
 That dreamès be the revelatïons
 Of gods; and as well they tell, i-wis,
 That they be infernál illusïons.
 And leeches ween that of complexïons

indeed

doctors believe

Proceeden they, or fast, or gluttony.¹
Who wot in sooth thus what they signify?

Who knows in truth

54. "Eke others say that through impressiõns
(As if a wight has fast a thing in mind),
That thereof cometh such avisiõns;
And others say, as they in bookès find,
That after timès of the year by kind
Men dream, and that th' effect goes by the moon.
But 'lieve no dream, for it is nought to do.

a person

by kind = by nature

believe / is worthless

55. "Well worth of dreamès aye these oldè wives,
And truly eke augury of these fowls;
For fear of which men weenen lose their lives,
As raven's qualm or shrieking of these owles.
To trowen on it bothè false and foul is.
Alas! Alas! So noble a creäture
As is a man, shall dreadè such ordüre!

are for old wives

soothsaying

think they will

raven's croaking

To believe in

rubbish

Pandarus suggests some pleasant diversion

56. "For which with all my heart I thee beseech
Unto thyself that all this thou forgive;
And rise up now withouten morè speech,
And let us cast how forth may best be drive
This time, and eke how freshly we may live
When that she comes, the which shall be right soon.
God help me so, the best is thus to do.

think / spent

This is the best thing to do

57. "Rise, let us speak of lusty life in Troy
That we have led, and forth the timè drive,
And eke of timè coming us rejoice,

pass the time

¹ 53: Medieval thinkers explained dreams in different ways. Clerical commentators acknowledged that dreams could be of divine origin, as with the Josephs of the Old and New Testaments, but warned that they could also be of diabolical origin. Physicians (*leeches*) held that dreams often came from the body's predominant "complexion" or "humor" of the moment, in this case melancholy; or that they came from eating or drinking too much or too little.

That bringen shall our blissè now so blive,
 And languor of these twicè dayès five
 We shall therewith so forget or oppress,
 That well unneth it do shall us duress.

*very soon
 10-day tedium
 or defeat
 scarcely bother us*

58. "This town is full of lordès all about,
 And trucè lasteth all this meanè while;
 Go we play us in some lusty rout,¹
 To Sarpedon, not hencè but a mile,
 And thus thou shalt the timè well beguile,
 And drive it forth unto that blissful morrow
 That thou her see that cause is of thy sorrow.

*pass
 you (will) see*

59. "Now rise, my dearè brother Troilus!
 For certès it no honour is to thee
 To weep, and in thy bed to jouken thus,
 For truly, of one thing trust to me,
 If thou thus lie a day or two or three,
 The folk will say that thou for cowardice
 Thee feignest sick, and that thou dar'st not rise."

to lie

60. This Troilus answer'd; "O brother dear!
 This knowen folk that have y-suffered pain,
 That though he weep and makè sorrowful cheer
 That feeleth harm and smart in every vein
 No wonder is; and though I ever 'plain
 Or always weep, I am nothing to blame,
 Since I have lost the cause of all my game.

my joy

61. "But since of finè force I must arise,
 I shall arise as soon as e'er I may,
 And God, to whom mine heart I sacrifice,
 So send us hastily the tenthè day,
 For was there never fowl so fain of May
 As I shall be when that she comes in Troy

of necessity

bird so happy

¹ 58.3: "Let's go amuse ourselves in some lively company."

That cause is of my torment and my joy.

62. "But whither is thy redde," quod Troilus,
 "That we may play us best in all this town?"
 "By God, my counsel is," quod Pandarus
 "To ride and play us with King Sarpedoun."
 So long of this they speken up and down
 Till Troilus gan at the last assent
 To rise; and forth to Sarpedoun they went.

*advice
 find distraction*

The diversion is not a success

63. This Sarpedoun, as he that honourable
 Was e'er his life, and full of high largesse
 With all that might y-servéd be on table
 That dainty was, all cost it great richesse,
 He fed them day by day, that such noblesse —
 As saiden both the most and eke the least —
 Was ne'er ere that day wist at any feast.

*hospitality
 even if it cost
 generosity
 known*

64. Nor in this world there is no instrument
 Delicious through wind or touch of chord,
 As far as any wight hath ever went,¹
 That tonguè tell or heartè may record
 But at that feast it was well heard accord;
 Nor of ladies eke so fair a company
 On dance ere then was never seen with eye.

*any person ... thought
 in harmony*

65. But what availeth this to Troilus,
 That for his sorrow nothing of it raught,²
 But ever in one his heartè piteous
 Full busily Criseyde, his lady, sought?
 On her was e'er all that his heartè thought,
 Now this, now that so fast imagining

*But continually
 ever, always*

¹ 64: *Went* might be the past participle of either *wenen*: think or *wenden*: go.

² 65.2 : 'who because of his sorrow, cared nothing about it.'

That glad i-wis can him no festying.

no festivity can gladden him

66. These ladies eke that at this feastè be,
 Since that he saw his lady was away,
 It was his sorrow on them for to see,
 Or for to hear on instruments so play;
 For she that of his heartè bore the key
 Was absent, lo! this was his fantasy,
 That no wight shouldè maken melody.¹

to look

67. Nor there n'as hour in all the day or night,
 When he was there as no man might him hear,
 That he ne said, "O lovesome lady bright!
 How have you farèd since that you were here?
 Welcome i-wis, mine ownè lady dear!"
 But welaway! All this n'as but a maze;
 Fortune his houve intended but to glaze.²

where no one could

alas / imagination

68. The letters eke that she of oldè time
 Had him y-sent he would alonè read
 A hundred sithe atwixen noon and prime,³
 Refiguring her shape, her womanhood
 Within his heart, and every word or deed
 That passèd was; and thus he drove to an end
 The fourthè day, and said that he would wend;

100 times between

wished to leave

69. And saidè: "Levè brother, Pandarus!
 Intendest thou that we shall herè bleve
 Till Sarpedoun will forth congeyen us?
 Yet were it fairer that we took our leave;

Dear brother

stay

throw us out

¹ 66.5-7: Since his beloved was absent, he had the idea that nobody should make music.

² 67.7: Fortune just intended to give him a glass hood, i.e. to delude him.

³ 68.3: *Betwixt noon and prime* could be a kind of inversion meaning "between about 9 a.m. and noon", or it could be literally between noon one day and 9 a.m. the next day, hence most of any 24-hour day.

For God's love, now let us soon at eve
 Our leavè take, and homeward let us turn,
 For truly I will not thus sojourn."

70. Pandarus answered: "Be we comen hither
 To fetchen fire and runnen home again?
 God help me so I can not tellen whither
 We mighten go, if I shall soothly sayn,
 Where any wight is of us morè fain
 Than Sarpedoun; and if we hencè hie
 Thus suddenly, I hold it villainy,

*more glad of us
 hurry
 bad manners*

71. "Since that we saiden that we wouldè bleve
 With him a week, and now thus suddenly
 The fourthè day to take of him our leave!
 He wouldè wonder on it truly.
 Let us hold forth our purpose firmly,
 And since that you behighten him to bide
 Hold forward now, and after let us ride."

stay

*promised to stay
 Keep your word now*

72. This Pandarus with allè pain and woe
 Made him to dwell; and at the weekè's end
 Of Sarpedoun they took their leavè tho,
 And on their way they speden them to wend.
 Quod Troilus: "Now, Lord, me gracè send
 That I may finden at my home-coming
 Criseyde come." And therewith gan he sing.

Made him stay

prepared to leave

73. "Yea, hazelwoodè!" thoughtè this Pandare,
 And to himself full soberly he said:
 "God wot, refreyden may this hot fare
 Ere Calchas send to Troilus Criseyde!"
 But natheless he japèd thus and played,
 And swore i-wis his heart him well behight
 She wouldè come as soon as e'er she might.

A likely tale!

t. hot affair will cool

*joked
 indeed / told him*

74. When they unto the palace were y-come
 Of Troilus, they down off horse alight,

And to the chamber their way then have they nome,
 And until time that it began to night
 They speaken of Criseyde the bright,
 And after this, when that them bothè lest,
 They speed them from the supper unto rest.

*taken
 to get dark
 "Cris-é-y-de": 4 syllables
 it pleased them both*

Troilus wants to visit Criseyde's empty house

75. On morrow, as soon as day began to clear,
 This Troilus gan of his sleep t'abraid,
 And to Pandarus, his own brother dear,
 "For love of God," full piteously he said,
 "As go we see the palace of Criseyde,
 "For since we yet may have no other feast,
 So let us see her palace at the least!"

*In the morning
 to wake*

76. And therewithal his meinie for to blind
 A cause he found into the town to go,
 And to Criseyde's palace they gan wend;
 But Lord! this sely Troilus was woe,
 Him thought his sorrowful heartè burst a-two
 For when he saw her doorès sparrèd all
 Well nigh for sorrow down he gan to fall.

to deceive his household

*made their way
 poor T.*

barred

77. Therewith when he was 'ware, and gan behold
 How shut was every window of the place,
 As frost him thought his heartè gan to cold,
 For which with changèd deadly palè face
 Withouten word he forth began to pace,
 And, as God would, he gan so fast to ride
 That no wight of his countenance espied.

aware

get cold

78. Then said he thus: "O palace desolate! ¹

¹ 78-9: Troilus's address is known as a "paraclausithyron", a convention of classical love poetry where the desolate lover addresses the beloved's house, especially the door. It extends to other places that bring up memories of the beloved. See M. Bloomfield's article in *NM* 73 (1972), 15-24.

O house of houses whilom best y-hight!
 O palace empty and disconsolate!
 O thou lantern, of which quenched is the light!
 O palace whilom day, that now art night!
 Well oughtest thou to fall and I to die,
 Since she is went that wont was us to gie.

once called the best

that once was day

gone / used to guide

79. "O palace whilom crown of houses all!
 Enlumined with the sun of allè bliss,
 O ring from which the ruby is out fall!
 O cause of woe that cause hast been of liss!
 Yet since I may no bet, fain would I kiss
 Thy coldè doors, if I durst for this rout;¹
 And farewell shrine of which the saint is out!"

once the crown

joy
do no better, gladly

80. Therewith he cast on Pandarus his eye
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold,
 And when he might his time aright espy,
 Aye as he rode to Pandarus he told
 His newè sorrow, and his joyès old
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Constantly

color
take pity

Special landmarks

81. From thencè forth he rideth up and down,
 And every thing came him to rémembrance
 As he rode forth by places of the town
 In which he whilom had all his pleasánce:
 "Lo! yonder saw I last my lady dance,
 And in that temple with her eyen clear
 Me caughtè first my rightè lady dear.²

¹ 79.6: "If I dared in front of this crowd." No crowd has been mentioned. Perhaps it simply means "in public".

² 81.6-7: "My very dear lady first caught me with her bright eyes."

82. "And yonder have I heard full lustily
 My dearè heartè laugh, and yonder play
 Saw I her oncè eke full blissfully,
 And yonder oncè to me gan she say:
 `Now goodè sweet, love me well, I pray,'
 And yon so goodly gan she me behold
 That to the death my heart is to her hold.

sweet(heart)
yon(der) so lovingly
bound

83. "And at the corner in the yonder house
 Heard I mine alderlevest lady dear
 So womanly with voice melodious
 Singen so well, so goodly and so clear,
 That in my soul methinketh yet I hear
 The blissful sound. And in that yonder place
 My lady first me took unto her grace."

dearest lady of all

her favor

84. Then thought he thus: "O blissful lord, Cupid,
 When I the process have in memory
 How thou me hast werreyed on every side,
 Men might a book make of it like a story.
 What need is thee to seek on me victory,
 Since I am thine and wholly at thy will?
 What joy hast thou thine ownè folk to spill?"

attacked

victory over me

destroy

85. "Well hast thou, lord, y-wroke on me thine ire,
 Thou mighty God, and dreadful for to grieve,
 Now mercy, lord, thou wost well I desire
 Thy gracè most of allè lustès leve.¹
 And live and die I will in thy belief;
 For which I n'ask in guerdon but a boon,
 That thou me send again Criseyde soon.

wreaked your anger
offend
knowest well

in return one favor
send C. to me

86. "Distreyn her heart as fastè to return
 As thou dost mine to longen her to see;

constrain

¹ 85.3-4: *thou wost ... leve*: "You know well that of all my deepest desires (*lustès leve*) I want thy favor most."

Then wot I well that she will not sojourn. *delay*
 Now, blissful lord, so cruel thou ne be
 Unto the blood of Troy I prayè thee
 As Juno was unto the blood Thebane,¹
 For which the folk of Thebès caught their bane. ” *their destruction*

87. And after this he to the gatès went *(city) gates*
 There as Criseyde out rode a full good pace,
 And up and down there made he many a went, *a turn*
 And to himself full oft he said: "Alas!
 From hencè rode my bliss and my solace;
 As wouldè blissful God now for his joy *I wish to God*
 I might her see again come into Troy!

88. "And to the yonder hill I gan her guide, *escorted her*
 Alas! and there I took of her my leave,
 And yond I saw her to her father ride, *yonder*
 For sorrow of which my heartè shall to-cleave, *split apart*
 And hither home I came when it was eve,
 And here I dwell, out cast from every joy,
 And shall, till I may see her eft in Troy." *again*

Troilus's fantasies

89. And of himself imaginèd he oft
 To be defet and pale and waxen less *disfigured / become thinner*
 Than he was wont, and that men saiden soft, *quietly*
 "What may it be? Who can the soothè guess
 Why Troilus hath all this heaviness?"
 And all this n'as but his meláncholy, *was nothing but*
 That he had of himself such fantasy.

90. Another time imaginen he would
 That every wight that wentè by the way *every person*
 Had of him ruth, and that they sayen should: *Had pity*

¹ Juno was hostile to the people of Thebes because of Jove's infidelities with Theban women.

"I am right sorry Troilus will die;"
 And thus he drove a day yet forth or tway,
 As you have heard; such life right gan he lead
 As he that stood betwixen hope and dread;

day or two

91. For which he likèd in his songs to show
 Th' encheason of his woe as he best might,
 And made a song of wordès but a few,
 Somewhat his woeful heartè for to light,
 And when he was from every mannè's sight,
 With softè voice he of his lady dear,
 That absent was, gan sing as you may hear:

The reason

lighten

Canticus Troili II ¹

92. "O star! of which I lost have all the light,
 With heartè sore well ought I to bewail
 That ever dark in torment, night by night,
 Toward my death with wind in steer I sail,
 For which the tenthè night, if that I fail
 The guiding to thy beamès bright an hour,
 My ship and me Charybdis will devour." ²

wind astern

*by an hour
 (whirlpool)*

93. This song when he thus sungen haddè, soon
 He fell again into his sighès old,
 And every night, as was his wont to do,
 He stood the brightè moon for to behold,
 And all his sorrow to the moon he told,
 And said: "I-wis, when thou art hornèd new" ³
 I shall be glad, if all the world be true.

In truth

¹ "Song of Troilus": For earlier songwriting by Troilus see Bk. I, 58 ff

² 92.7: Charybdis was the name of a monster and her whirlpool that Odysseus's ship had to avoid.

³ 93.6: "In truth, when there is a new moon". The crescent moon, is thought of as having horns, waxing or waning (*horned new, hornes old*). See also two references in the next stanza.

94. "I saw thine hornès old eke by that morrow
 When hencè rode my rightè lady dear,
 That cause is of my torment and my sorrow,
 For which, O brightè Lucina the clear !
 For love of God run fast about thy sphere,
 For when thine hornès new begin to spring,
 Then shall she come that may my blissè bring."
- before that morning
my v. dear lady

O moon bright*
95. The dayès more, and longer every night,
 Than they be wont to be, him thoughtè tho,
 And that the sunnè went his course unright,
 By longer way than it was wont to go;
 And said: "I-wis, me dreadeth evermo'
 The sunnè's son, Phaethon, be alive,
 And that his father's cart amiss he drives."
- usually were / then
wrongly

chariot*
96. Upon the wallès fast eke would he walk,
 And on the Greekekès' host eke would he see,
 And to himself right thus then would he talk:
 "Lo! yonder is mine ownè lady free."
 Or elsè: "Yonder there the tentès be,
 And thencè comes this air that is so soot,
 That in my soul I feel it does me boote.
- look

gracious lady
tents
sweet
good*
97. "And hardily this wind that more and more
 Thus stoundèmeal increaseth in my face
 Is of my lady's deepè sighès sore;
 I prove it thus: for in no other space
 Of all this town, save only in this place,
 Feel I no wind that soundeth so like pain.
 It says: `Alas! why twinnèd be we twain?' "
- surely
hour by hour

separated are we two*
98. This longè time he driveth forth right thus,
 Till fully passèd was the ninthè night,
 And ay beside him was this Pandarus,
 That busily did all his fullè might
 Him to comfòrt and make his heartè light,
 Giving him hope always the tenthè morrow
- And always

day*

That she shall come and stinten all his sorrow.

stop

Criseyde in the Greek camp

99. Upon that other side eke was Criseyde
 With women few among the Greekès strong,
 For which full oft a-day "Alas!" she said,
 "That I was born! Well may mine heartè long
 After my death, for now live I too long;
 Alas! and I ne may it not amend,
 For now is worse than ever yet I wend.

*'long' is a verb
 For death*

I thought (it would be)

100. "My father n'ill for nothing do me grace
 To go again for aught I can him queme,
 And if so be that I my termè pace
 My Troilus shall in his heartè deem
 That I am false, and so it may well seem;
 Thus shall I have unthank on every side.
 That I was born so welaway the tide!

*won't allow me
 do to please him
 miss the agreed day
 think*

*blame
 alas the hour!*

101. "And if that I me put in jeopardy
 To steal away by night, and it befall
 That I be caught, I shall be held a spy,
 Or elsè, lo! this dread I most of all,
 If in the handès of some wretch I fall
 I n'am but lost, al' be mine heartè true.
 Now mighty God, thou on my sorrow rue!"

me = myself

*some ruffian
 I'm as good as lost, although
 take pity*

102. Full pale y-waxen was her brightè face,
 Her limbs lean, as she that all the day
 Stood when she durst, and looked on the place
 Where she was born, and where she dwelled had ay;
 And all the night weeping, alas! she lay.
 And thus despairèd out of allè cure,
 She led her life, this woeful creäture.

had become v. pale

*dared
 always*

103. Full oft a-day she sighed eke for distress,
 And in herself she went aye portraying

picturing

Of Troilus the greatè worthiness,
 And all his goodly wordès récording
 Since first that day her love began to spring;
 And thus she set her woeful heart afire
 Through rémembráncé of that she gan desire.

of what

104. In all this world there n'is so cruel heart,
 That her had heard complainen in her sorrow,
 That n'ould have wopen for her painès smart,
 So tenderly she wept both eve and morrow.
 Her neededè no tearès for to borrow.
 And this was yet the worst of all her pain,
 There was no wight to whom she durst her 'plain.

wept

no one / she dared

105. Full ruefully she lookèd upon Troy,
 Beheld the towers high and eke the halls;
 "Alas!" quod she, "the pleasance and the joy,
 The which that now all turnèd into gall's,
 Have I had oft within those yonder walls!¹
 O Troilus! what dost thou now?" she said;
 "Lord, whether thou yet think upon Criseyde?"

into bitterness

do you think?

106. "Alas! I ne had trowèd on your lore,
 And went with you, as you me redde ere this,
 Then had I now not sighèd half so sore:
 Who might have said that I had done amiss
 To steal away with such one as he is?
 But all too late cometh the letuary
 When men the corpse unto the gravè carry.

*trusted your judgement
 advised*

medicine

107. "Too late is now to speak of this mattér.
 Prudence, alas, one of thine eyen three
 Me lackèd always ere that I came here;²

3 eyes

¹ 105.2-5: The original rhyming forms are: *hallès / gall is / wallès*.

² 107.2-3: Prudence has an eye on the future as well as the past and present. Criseyde has always lacked the ability to look at the future, she says.

On time y-passéd, well remembered me;
 And present time eke could I well y-see;
 But future time, ere I was in the snare,
 Could I not see. That causeth all my care.

I could r. the past

before / trap

108. "But natheless, betide what may betide,
 I shall to-morrow at night, by east or west,
 Out of this host steal on some manner side,
 And go with Troilus where as him lest;
 This purpose will I hold, and this is best;
 No force of wicked tonguès' janglery,
 For e'er on love have wretches had envy:¹

happen what may

*at some point
 where he pleases*

No matter about

109. "For whoso will of every word take heed,
 Or rulen him by every wightès wit,
 Ne shall he never thriven, out of dread,
 For that that some men blamen ever yet,
 Lo, other manner folk commenden it;
 And as for me, for all such variance
 Felicity clepe I my suffisance.

*everyone's judgement
 without doubt
 that which*

Happiness is all I want (?)

110. "For which, withouten any wordes mo'
 To Troy I will, as for conclusiön."
 But God it wot, ere fully monthès two
 She was full far from that intencion,
 For bothè Troilus and Troyè town
 Shall knotèless throughout her heartè slide,²
 For she will take a purpose to abide.

will (go)

G. knows, before

smoothly

Diomede again

111. This Diomede of whom you tell I 'gan,
 Goes now within himself ay arguing,
 With all the sleight and all that e'er he can,

*began
 constantly
 cunning*

¹ 108.7: "For wretched people have always shown envy of lovers."

² 110.6: *knotless*: like a thread that has no knot, and so slips out of a needle.

How he may best with shortest tarrying
 Into his net Criseyde's heartè bring;
 To this intent he couldè never fine;
 To fishen her he laid out hook and line.

with least delay

never give up

112. But natheless well in his heart he thought
 That she was not without a love in Troy,
 For never sithen he her thencè brought,
 Ne could he see her laugh or maken joy;
 He n'ist how best her heart for to accoy;
 "But for t' essay," he said, "it naught ne grieveth.¹
 "For he that naught assayeth, naught achieveth."

lover

since

didn't know / to comfort

nothing venture, n. gain

113. Yet said he to himself upon a night:
 "Now, am I not a fool, that wot well how
 Her woe for love is of another wight,
 And hereupon to go essay her now?
 I may well wit it will not be my prow,²
 For wisè folk in bookès it express:
 'Men shall not woo a wight in heaviness.'

knows

for another man

try her

my good, advantage

a person in grief

114. "But whoso mightè winnen such a flower
 From him for whom she mourneth night and day,
 He might well say he were a conqueror";
 And right anon, as he that bold was ay,
 Thought in his heart: "Happen what happen may,
 Al' should I die, I will her heartè seek,
 I shall no morè losen but my speech."

always

Whatever happens

Even if

115. This Diomedè, as bookès us declare,
 Was in his needès prest and courageous,
 With sternè voice, and mighty limbès square,
 Hardy and testive, strong and chivalrous
 Of deedès like his father Tydeus;

ready

Brave & headstrong

¹ 112.6-7: "It doesn't hurt to try (*to essay*); he who attempts nothing achieves nothing."

² 113.5: "I have good reason to think that it will not do me any good."

And some men say he was of tonguè large,
And heir he was of Calydon and Arge.

was eloquent

Pen portraits of Criseyde and of Troilus

116. Criseyde meanè was of her stature.
Thereto so shaped of face, and eke of cheer,
There mighten be no fairer creature;
And often times this was her mannér
To go y-tressed with her hairès clear
Down by her collar, at her back behind,
Which, with a thread of goldè, she would bind.

*of average height
manner*

117. And, save her browès joinèden i-fere,¹
There was no lack in aught I can espy;
But for to speaken of her eyen clear,
Lo! truly, they written that her saw,
That paradise stood formèd in her eye,
And with her richè beauty evermore
Strove love in her ay which of them was more.

together

always / greater

118. She sober was, simple, and wise withal,
The best y-nourishèd eke that might be,
And goodly of her speech in general,
Charitable, stately, lusty, free,²
Ne nevermore ne lackèd her pity,
Tender-heartèd, sliding of couráge;
But truly, I cannot tell her age.

*was serious / also
most well bred*

119. And Troilus well waxen was in height,
And cóplete, formèd by proportiön
So well, that Kind it naught amenden might,
Young, fresh, and strong, and hardy as lion,

well-grown

Nature couldn't improve

¹ 117.1: "And, except that her eyebrows were joined together" -- presumably a feature considered less than perfect.

² 118.4: "Loving (?), dignified, cheerful, generous."

And true as steel in each condition,
 One of the best entechéd creätúres
 That is or shall while that the world may dure.

*endowed
 may last*

120. And certainly in story it is found
 That Troilus was never to no wight,
 As in his time, in no degree secónd
 In derring-do that longeth to a knight;
 Al' might a giant passen him of might ¹
 His heart aye with the first and with the best
 Stood peregal to dare do what him lest.²

*to nobody
 that pertains*

Diomede visits Criseyde

121. But for to tellen forth of Diomede,
 It fell that after on the tenthè day
 Since that Criseyde out of the city yede,
 This Diomede, as fresh as branch in May,
 Came to the tentè there as Calchas lay,
 And feignèd him with Calchas have to doon,
 But what he meant I shall you tellen soon.

*It happened
 went
 pretended he had business*

122. Criseyde, at shortè wordès for to tellè,
 Welcomed him, and down him by her set,
 As he was ethe enough to maken dwell;³
 And after this, withouten longer let,
 The spices and the wine men forth them fet,
 And forth they speak of this and that y-fere,
 As friendès do, of which some shall you hear.

*in short
 easy / stay
 delay
 fetched
 together*

123. He gan first fallen of the war in speech

talk about

¹ 120.5: "Although a giant might surpass him in strength." The triple negative in 2-3, "never...no wight...no degree" is acceptable emphasis in Chaucer's English.

² 120.7: "Stood fully equal to dare do what he needed to do."

³ 122.3: "It was easy enough to get him to stay."

Betwixen them and folk of Troyè town,
 And of the siege he gan eke her besech
 To tell him what was her opinion;
 From that demand he so descended down
 To asken her if that her strangè thought
 The Greekès' guise and workès that they wrought,

*she thought it strange
 customs / did*

124. And why her father tarrieth so long
 To wedden her unto some worthy wight.
 Criseydè, that was in her painès strong
 For love of Troilus her ownè knight,
 So farforth as she cunning had or might,
 Answered him then, but as of his intent
 It seemèd that she wist not what he meant.

*as best she could
 knew*

125. But natheless this ilkè Diomedè
 Gan in himself assure, and thus he said:
 "If I aright have taken on you heed,¹
 Me thinketh thus, O lady mine Criseyde,
 That, since I first hand on your bridle laid,
 When I came out of Troyè by the morrow,
 Ne might I never see you but in sorrow.

*same
 Grew confident*

in the morning

126. "I can not say what may the causè be,
 But if for love of some Trojan it were,
 The which right sorè would a-thinken me,
 That you for any wight that dwelleth there
 Shoulden spill a quarter of a tear,
 Or piteously your selfen so beguile,
 For dreadèless it is not worth the while.

*Unless
 trouble me deeply
 person*

*deceive
 without doubt*

Diomedè's blunt warning

127. "The folk of Troy, as who saith all and some,
 In prison be, as you your selfen see,

as all agree

¹ 125.3: "If I have read you correctly."

From thencè shall not one alive come
 For all the gold atwixen sun and sea; *between*
 Trusteth well this, and understandeth me,
 There shall not one to mercy go alive,
 Al' were he lord of worldès twicè five.¹ *Even if*

128. "Such wreak on them, for fetching of Elaine, *vengeance*
 There shall be take, ere that we hencè wend, *before we go*
 That Manès, which that goddès be of pain, *gods of underworld*
 Shall be aghast that Greekès will them shend; *G. w. put them to shame*
 And men shall dread unto the worldè's end
 From hencèforth to ravish any queen, *carry off*
 So cruel shall our wreak on them be seen. *vengeance*

129. "And, but if Calchas lead us with ambáges, *unless / ambiguities*
 That is to say, with double wordès sly,
 Such as men clepe a word with two viságes, *call / faces*
 You shall well knowen that I naught ne lie,
 And all this thing right see it with your eye,
 And that anon, you will not trow how soon; *shortly / not believe*
 Now taketh heed, for it is for to doon. *to be done*

130. "What! weenen you that your wise father would *What! Do you think*
 Have given Antenor for you anon,
 If he ne wistè that the city should
 Destroyèd be? Why, nay, so may I gon. *I assure you*
 He knew full well there shall not 'scapen one *escape*
 That Trojan is, and for the greatè fear,
 He durst not that you dwellèd longer there. *dared not (allow)*

131. "What will you more, O lovesome lady dear!
 Let Troy and Trojans from your heartè pace;
 Drive out the bitter hope, and make good cheer,

¹ 127-133: "Even if he were master of ten worlds." In this speech Diomedes makes at greater length and much more forcefully Troilus's point of IV, st. 212-13, but the effect of Diomedes's speech on Criseyde is strikingly different.

And clepe again the beauty of your face *call back*
 That you with saltè tearès so deface,
 For Troy is brought in such a jeopardy
 That it to save is now no remedy.

132. "And thinketh well you shall in Greekes find
 A morè perfect love, ere it be night, *lover*
 Than any Trojan is, and morè kind,
 And bet' to serven you will do his might; *better*
 And if that you vouchsafe, my lady bright, *if you allow (it)*
 I will be he to serven you myself,
 Yea, lever than be king of Greeces twelve." *rather*

Diomede changes tactic

133. And with that word he gan to waxen red, *to blush*
 And in his speech a little while he quoke, *shook*
 And cast aside a little with his head,
 And stint a while, and afterwards he woke, *paused / opened his eyes*
 And soberly on her he threw his look, *seriously*
 And said: "I am, al' be it you no joy,
 As gentle man as any wight in Troy. *although it is not*
As well born as any person

134. "For if my father, Tydeus," he said,
 Y-livèd had, then I had been ere this
 Of Calydon and Arge a king, Criseyde,
 And so I hope that I shall yet, y-wis
 But he was slain, alas! the more harm is,
 Unhappily at Thebès all too rathe,
 Polynices and many a man to scathe. ¹ *early*
to the harm of

135. "But heartè mine! since that I am your man,
 And be the first of whom I seekè grace *And (you) are (?)*
 To serven you as heartily as I can,

¹ 134: Tydeus supported the cause of Polynices against his brother Eteocles for control of Thebes. His death was a blow (*scathe*) to Polynices and many another man.

And ever shall while I to live have space,
 So that, ere I depart out of this place,
 You will me granten that I may to-morrow
 At better leisure tell you of my sorrow."

136. How should I tell his wordès that he said?
 He spoke enough for one day at the most;
 It provèd well; he spoke so that Criseyde
 Granted on the morrow at his request
 For to spoken with him at the least,
 So that he would not speak of such mattér;
 And thus she to him said, as you may hear,

Provided that

Criseyde's response to Diomedè's advances

137. As she that had her heart on Troilus
 So fast y-set that none might it arace,
 And strangèly she spoke, and saidè thus:
 "O Diomedè! I love that ilkè place
 Where I was born, and Jovè, of thy grace
 Deliver it soon of all that doth it care!
 God, for thy might so leave it well to fare!

*uproot
 And distantly*

*all that troubles it
 grant it do well*

138. "That Greekès would their wrath on Troyè wreak,
 If that they might, I know it well i-wis;
 But it shall not befallen as you speak,
 And God tofor! And further over this
 I wot my father wise and ready is,
 And that he me hath bought, as you me told,
 So dear I am the more unto him hold.

indeed

*If it please God
 I know*

deeply beholden

139. "That Greekès be of high condition
 I wot eke well, but certain, men shall find
 As worthy folk withinnè Troyè town,
 As cunning, and as perfect, and as kind,
 As be betwixen Orcades and Inde;
 And that you couldè well your lady serve
 I trow eke well, her thanks for to deserve.

rank

I know well also

Orkneys & India

I believe also

140. "But as to speak of love, i-wis," she said, *indeed*
 "I had a lord to whom I wedded was,
 The whose mine heart was all till that he died;
 And other love, as help me now Pallas, *Athene*
 There in my heartè n'is ne never was; *isn't & never was*
 And that you be of noble and high kindred
 I have well heard it tellen, out of dread. *without doubt*

141. "And that doth me to have so great a wonder
 That you will scornen any woman so;
 Eke, God wot, love and I be far asunder;
 I am disposèd bet, so may I go, *And, God knows*
 Unto my death to 'plain and maken woe:¹ *more disposed, I declare*
 What I shall after do I cannot say,
 But truly, as yet me list not play. *I don't want to flirt*

142. "My heart is now in tribulation,
 And you in armès busy day by day;
 Hereafter, when you wonnen have the town,
 Paraunter then so it happen may *Perhaps*
 That when I see what never yet I saw,
 Then will I workè what I never wrought; *did*
 This word to you enough sufficen ought.

The first crack in Criseyde's resolution

143. "To-morrow eke will I speaken with you fain, *gladly*
 So that you touchen naught of this mattér, *Provided that*
 And when you list you may come here again; *you please*
 And ere you go, thus much I say you here,
 As help me Pallas with her hairès clear,
 If that I should of any Greek have ruth, *pity*
 It shouldè be your selfen by my truth.

144. "I say not therefore that I will you love,

¹ 141.4-5: "I am more disposed, I promise you, to complain and lament until my dying day."

Ne say not nay, but, in conclusion,
 I meanè well, by God that sits above."
 And therewithal she cast her eyen down,
 And gan to sigh, and said: "O Troyè town!
 Yet bid I God in quiet and in rest
 I may thee see, or do my heartè breste."

eyes

*pray I
 make my h. burst*

145. But in effect, and shortly for to say,
 This Diomedè all freshly new again
 Gan pressen on, and fast her mercy pray;
 And after this--the soothè for to say--
 Her glove he took, of which he was full fain,
 And, finally, when it was waxen eve,
 And all was well, he rose and took his leave.

*to beg her favor
 truth
 very glad
 evening came*

146. The brightè Venus followed and aye taught
 The way where broadè Phoebus down alight,¹
 And Cytherea her car-horse overwraught
 To whirl into the Lion if she might,
 And Signifer his candles showeth bright,
 When that Criseyde unto her beddè went
 Within her father's fairè brightè tent;

*and showed
 the Sun had set
 C. reached over (or urged on)
 belt of the zodiac*

A quick collapse

147. Returning in her soul ay up and down
 The wordès of this sudden Diomedè,
 His great estate, and peril of the town,
 And that she was alone, and haddè need
 Of friendè's help, and thus began to breed
 The causes why—the soothè for to tell—
 That she took fully purpose for to dwell.

Turning / constantly

His high rank

*truth
 decided to remain*

¹ 146: This is a roundabout way, dear to Chaucer, of saying that the evening star (Venus) had gone down after the Sun, and the moon (Cytherea) and the stars had risen full when Criseyde went to bed.

148. The morrow came, and ghostly for to speak,¹ *truly*
 This Diomede is come unto Criseyde;
 And, shortly, lest that you my talè break,
 So well he for himselfen spoke and said,
 That all her sorè sighs adown he laid; *laid (to rest)*
 And, finally, the soothè for to sayn,
 He reft her of the greatest of her pain. *relieved her*
149. And after this the story telleth us
 That she unto him gave the fair bay steed
 The which he once had won of Troilus,²
 And eke a brooch (and that was little need)
 That Troilus' was, she gave this Diomede,³ *the better*
 And eke the bet' from sorrow him to relieve, *a pennant (made) from*
 She made him wear a pencil of her sleeve.
150. I find eke in the stories elsèwhere,
 When through the body hurt was Diomede
 Of Troilus, then wept she many a tear *Of = By*
 When that she saw his widè woundès bleed,
 And that she took to keepen him good heed, *to nurse*
 And for to heal him of his woundès smart,
 Men say — I n'ot — that she gave him her heart. *I don't know*
151. But truly the story telleth us
 There madè never woman morè woe
 Than she when that she falsèd Troilus;
 She said: "Alas ! for now is clean y-go *completely gone*
 My name in truth of love for evermo',

¹ 148.1: *ghostly for to speak*: Different editors and glossators explain this phrase with differences in detail but agreeing that it seems to mean "to tell the truth".

² 149.3: According to Benoit, Diomede had captured a horse from Troilus in battle, had presented it to Briseyda / Criseyde, and had asked for it back when he in turn lost his own horse.

³ 149.5: The brooch is, presumably, the one mentioned below (V, St. 238) where we are told that Troilus had given it to her on the morning she left Troy.

For I have falsèd one the gentilest
That ever was, and one the worthiest.

152. "Alas! of me unto the worldè's end
Shall neither be y-written nor y-sung
No goodè word, for these books will me shend;
O rollèd shall I be on many a tongue;
Throughout the worldè shall my bell be rung,¹
And women most will haten me of all;
Alas, that such a case me should befall!

attack

153. "They will say, inasmuch as in me is,
I have them done dishonour, welaway!
Al' be I not the first that did amiss,
What helpeth that to do my blame away?
But since I see there is no better way,
And that too late is now for me to rue,
To Diomedè algate I will be true.

alas!
Although

repent
at least

154. "But Troilus, since I no better may,
And since that thus departen you and I,
Yet pray I God so give you right good day,
As for the gentilestè — truly —
That e'er I saw to serven faithfully,
And best can ay his lady's honour keep,"
(And with that word she burst anon to weep).

you & I separate

always

155. "And certès you ne haten shall I never,²
And friendè's love that shall you have of me,
And my good word, all should I liven ever;

certainly

if I should

¹ 152.1: The meaning of the line seems clear enough, even if it is hard to translate into modern English. The ringing of the bell may signify a number of negative things: the public announcement by a town crier of her infidelity; the knell for one who has died; the ringing of the bell to excommunicate by "bell, book and candle", or, stretching a little more, even the outcast leper's bell, which figures so strongly in Henryson's sequel.

² 155.1: "And certainly I shall never hate you."

And, truly, I would right sorry be
 For to see you in adversity;
 And guiltèless I wot well I you leave,¹
 And all shall pass, and thus I take my leave."

I know

156. But truly how long it was between
 That she forsook him for this Diomede,
 There is no author telleth it I ween,
 Take every man now to his bookès heed,
 He shall no termè finden, out of dread,
 For though that he began to woo her soon,
 Ere he her won yet was there more to doon.

I think

*time period
 he = Diomede
 to be done*

157. Ne me not list this silly woman chide,
 Farther than that the story will devise;
 Her name, alas! is publishèd so wide,
 That for her guilt it ought enough suffice;
 And if I might excuse her in some wise,
 For she so sorry was for her untruth,
 I-wis, I would excuse her yet for ruth.

I don't want to rebuke

*her unfaithfulness
 Indeed / pity*

Meanwhile Troilus looks out for her from the walls of Troy

158. This Troilus, as I before have told,
 Thus driveth forth as well as he hath might,
 But often was his heartè hot and cold,
 And namely that ilkè ninthè night
 Which on the morrow she had him behight
 To come again; God wot full little rest
 Had he that night; nothing to sleep him lest.

manages

*that very
 promised
 God knows
 cared*

159. The laurel-crownèd Phoebus with his heat
 Gan in his course, ay upward as he went,
 To warm of the east sea the wavès wet,

*God of sun
 ever higher*

¹ 155.6: Presumably *guiltless* applies to Troilus, though its placing makes that uncertain.

And Nisus' daughter sung with fresh intent,¹
 When Troilus his Pandare after sent,
 And on the wallès of the town they played,
 To look if they can see aught of Criseyde.

*sent for
 passed the time*

160. Till it was noon they stooden for to see
 Who that there came; and every manner wight
 That came from far they saiden it was she,
 Till that they couldè knowen him aright:²
 Now was his heartè dull, now was it light;
 And thus bejapèd, stooden for to stare
 Aboutè naught, this Troilus and Pandare.

every person

*deluded
 for nothing*

161. To Pandarus this Troilus then said:
 "For aught I wot before noon sikerly
 Into this town ne cometh not Criseyde,
 She hath enough to do hardily
 To twinnen from her father, so trow I;
 Her oldè father will yet make her dine
 Ere that she go; God give his heartè pine!"

I know / certainly

*to escape / I guess
 eat midday meal
 misery*

162. Pandare answered: "It may well be, certáin,
 And forthy let us dine, I thee beseech,
 And after noon then may'st thou come again."
 And home they go withouten morè speech,
 And came again; but longè may they seek
 Ere that they finden what they after gape;
 Fortune them both y-thinketh for to jape.

And therefore

F. intends to make fools of

163. Quod Troilus: "I see well now that she
 Is tarried with her oldè father so

¹ 159.4: The allusion is apt: the daughter of Nisus looking down from the walls of her father's fortress, fell in love with the enemy Minos, and betrayed the city to him. She was turned into the bird here mentioned. A version of the story is in Chaucer's **Legend of Good Women**, 1894 ff.

² 160.4: They think that everyone they see moving is Criseyde until they can see the person more closely. Troilus's spirits go up and down with every hope and disappointment.

That ere she come it will nigh even be. *evening*
 Come forth, I will unto the gatè go;
 These porters be uncunning evermo', *gatekeepers are stupid*
 And I will do them holden up the gate *make them keep open*
 As naught ne were, although that she come late."¹

164. The day goes fast, and after that came eve,
 And yet came not to Troilus Criseyde.
 He looketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greve, *grove*
 And far his head over the wall he laid,
 And at the last he turned him, and said:
 "By God I wot her meaning now, Pandare; *I know*
 Almost i-wis all newè was my care."²

165. "Now doubtèless this lady can her good; *knows what is right*
 I wot she means to riden privily; *I realize / incognito*
 I commend her wisdom, by my hood;
 She will not maken people nicely *foolishly*
 Gaure on her when she comes, but softely *Gape*
 By night into the town she thinketh ride; *intends to*
 And, dear brother! think not long t'abide. *to wait*

166. "We have naught elsè for to do i-wis; *indeed*
 And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me, *believe me*
 Have here my truth, I see her! Yond she is! *yonder*
 Heave up thine eyen man. May'st thou not see?"
 Pandarus answered: "Nay, so may I thee; *No, as I live!*
 All wrong by God: what say'st thou man, where art? *art (thou)*
 What I see yond afar is but a cart."

167. "Alas ! thou sayst right sooth," quod Troilus,
 "But hardily it is not all for naught *surely*
 That in mine heart I now rejoicè thus;

¹ 163.7: *As naught ne were*: A difficult phrase which may mean "as if there were no reason not to keep it open," or "as if there were no war on." Neither seems altogether satisfactory.

² 164.7: "Indeed my worries almost came back."

It is against some good, I have a thought,
 Wot I not how, but since that I was wrought
 Ne felt I such a comfort dare I say.
 She comes to-night, my life that durst I lay."

*It's a good sign, I think
 was born*

I dare bet

168. Pandare answered: "It may be, well enough."
 And held with him of all that e'er he said,
 But in his heart he thought, and soft he laughed,
 And to himself full soberly he said:
 "From hazelwood, where Jolly Robin played
 Shall come all that that thou abidest here;
 Yea, farewell all the snow of fernè year."

And agreed

*From never-never land
 all you wait for
 yesteryear*

169. The warden of the gates began to call
 The folk which that without the gatès were,
 And bade them driven in their beastès all,
 Or all the night they must bileven there;
 And far within the night, with many a tear,
 This Troilus gan homeward for to ride,
 For well he sees it helpeth not t' abide.

stay

And late in

to wait

170. But natheless he gladded him in this:
 He thought he mis-accounted had his day,
 And said: "I understood have all amiss,
 For thilkè night I last Criseyde saw
 She said: `I shall be here, if that I may,
 Ere that the moon, O my dear heartè sweet,
 The Lion pass out of this Ariete,'¹

*took comfort
 miscalculated*

171. "For which she may yet hold all her behest."
 And on the morrow to the gate he went,
 And up and down, by east and eke by west,
 Upon the wallès made he many a went;
 But all for naught; his hope always him blent,

keep her promise

a turn

blinded

¹ 170.6-7: "Before the moon, leaving Aries, passes into Leo." These were in fact her words in IV, st 228. He thinks he might have miscalculated by a day.

For which at night in sorrow and sighs sore
He went him home withouten any more.

172. His hope all clean out of his heartè fled,
He n'as whereon now longer for to hang,
But for the pain him thought his heartè bled,
So were his throès sharp and wonder strong;
For when he saw that she abode so long
He wist not what he judgen of it might,
Since she hath broken what she him beight.

has nothing

his pangs

stayed

he didn't know

promised

173. The third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixthè day
After those dayès ten of which I told,
Betwixen hope and dread his heartè lay,
Yet somewhat trusting on her hestès old;
But when he saw she would her term not hold,¹
He can now see no other remedy
But for to shape him soonè for to die.

promises

prepare himself

Troilus gradually loses hope

174. Therewith the wicked spirit, (God us bless!)
Which that men clepe the woodè Jealousy,
Gan in him creep in all this heaviness,
For which, because he wouldè soonè die,
He n' ate nor drank for his meláncholy,
And eke from every company he fled.
This was the life that all this time he led.

call the mad J.

he wanted to

175. He so defet was that no manner man
Unnethès might him knowen where he went,
So was he lean and thereto pale and wan,
And feeble, that he walkèd by potent,
And with his ire he thus himselfen shent;
But whoso askèd him whereof him smart,

disfigured

Scarcely

and also

with help

disappointment / tortured

what ailed him

¹ 173.5: "But when he saw she was not going to keep her promise."

He said his harm was all about his heart.

176. Priam full oft,¹ and eke his mother dear,
His brethren and his sisters, gan him frayn
Why he so woeful was in all his cheer,
And what thing was the cause of all his pain.
But all for naught; he n'ould his cause explain,
But said he felt a grievous malady
About his heart, and fainè would he die.

*ask
behavior*

would gladly

Troilus's dream

177. So, on a day he laid him down to sleep,
And so befell it that in sleep him thought
That in a forest fast he walked to weep
For love of her that him those painès wrought,
And up and down as he that forest sought,
He mett he saw a boar with tuskès great
That slept against the brightè sunnè's heat;

one day

caused

*He dreamed
slept in*

178. And by this boar, fast in her armès fold,
Lay kissing ay his lady bright Criseyde,
For sorrow of which, when he it gan behold,
And for despite, out of his sleep he braid,
And loud he cried on Pandarus, and said:
"O Pandarus! now know I crop and root;
I n'am but dead; there is no other boote.

constantly

rage / he woke

*top to bottom
as good as dead / cure*

179. "My lady bright, Criseyde, has me betrayed,
In whom I trusted most of any wight;
She elsèwhere hath now her heart apaid;
The blissful goddès thorough their greatè might
Have in my dream y-showèd it full right:
Thus in my dream Criseyde have I behold;"
And all this thing to Pandarus he told.

*person
set*

¹ 176.1: Priam, king of Troy, was Troilus's father.

180. "O my Criseyde! alas! what subtlety,
 What newè lust, what beauty, what science,
 What wrath, of justè cause, have you to me?
 What guilt of me, what fell experience,
 Hath from me reft, alas! thine ádverténcé? ¹
 O trust! O faith ! O deepè ássurance!
 Who hath me reft Criseyde, all my pleasance?

trickery
knowledge
what just anger
bad
robbed / love

181. "Alas ! why let I you from hencè go?
 For which well nigh out of my wit I braid;
 Who shall now trow on any oathès mo"?
 God wot I weened, O lady bright Criseyde,
 That every word was gospel that you said:
 But who may bet' beguile, if that him list,
 Than he on whom men weenen best to trist?²

went
trust any oaths more
God knows I thought

better / he chooses
think most trustworthy

182. "What shall I do, my Pandarus? Alas!
 I feelè now so sharp a newè pain,
 Since that there is no remedy in this case,
 That bet' were it I with mine handès twain
 My selfen slew than alway thus to 'plain,
 For through the death my woe should have an end,
 Where every day with life myself I shend."

better / two

I destroy

Pandarus rebukes him and gives him advice

183. Pandarus answered and said: "Alas the while
 That I was born! Have I not said ere this
 That dreamès many a manner man beguile?"

many kinds of men

¹ 180: The syntax of this stanza is a little confusing. The first two lines "O my Criseyde ... science" and line 4 go with line 5 thus: "O my Criseyde! Alas! what subtlety / What new lust, what beauty, what knowledge (*science*) / ... What guilt of mine, what bad experience, / Has robbed (*reft*) me alas! of thy loving attention (*advertence*)?" Line 3 interrupts the normal order; it means "What real cause have you to be angry with me?"

² 181.6-7: "Who can better betray people, if he wants, than the one whom people think most trustworthy?"

And why? For folk expounden them amiss.
 How dar'st thou say that false thy lady is
 For any dream, right for thine ownè dread?
 Let be this thought: thou cans't no dreamès read.

*For = because of
 Accept this:*

184. "Paraunter where thou dreamest of this boar,
 It may so be that it may signify
 Her father, which that old is and eke hoar,
 Against the sun lies, on point to die,
 And she for sorrow 'ginneth weep and cry,
 And kisseth him, where he lies on the ground:
 Thus shouldest thou thy dream aright expound."

*Perhaps
 and white-haired
 in the sunlight*

185. "How mightè I then do," quod Troilus,
 "To know of this, yea, were it ne'er so lite?"¹
 "Now says't thou wisely," quod this Pandarus.
 "My rede is this, since thou cans't well endite,
 That hastily a letter thou her write,
 Through which thou shalt well bringen it about
 To know a sooth where thou art now in doubt."

*little
 advice / write
 the truth*

187. "Thou hast not written her since that she went,
 Nor she to thee; and this I durstè lay,
 There may such causè be in her intent,
 That hardely thou wilt thyselfen say
 That her abode the best is for you tway.
 Now write her then, and thou shalt feelè soon
 A sooth of all. There is no more to do."

*dare lay (a bet)
 Her delay
 perceive
 The truth*

188 . Accorded be to this conclusiõn
 (And that anon) these ilkè lordès two,
 And hastily sits Troilus adown
 And rolleth in his heartè to and fro
 How he may best describen her his woe,
 And to Criseydè, his own lady dear,

*Agreed
 promptly / same 2*

¹ 184.1-2: "What can I do, then, to find out even a little about this?"

He wrote right thus and said as you may hear:

After two months Troilus writes her a letter

189. "Right freshè flower, whose I have been and shall
 Withouten part of elsèwhere service,¹
 With heart and body, life, lust, thought, and all,
 I, woeful wight, in every humble wise
 That tongue can tell or heartè may devise,
 As oft as matter occupieth place,
 Me recommend unto your noble grace.

i.e. eternally
(I) recommend myself

190. "Liketh you to witen, sweetè heart!²
 As you well know, how longè time agone
 That you me left in aspre painès smart,
 When that you went, of which yet bootè none
 Have I none had, but ever worse begone
 From day to day am I, and so must dwell
 While it you list, of weal and woe my well.³

in sharp bitter p.
no relief
worse off

191. "For which to you with dreadful heartè true
 I write, as he that sorrow drives to write
 My woe, that every hour encreaseth new,
 Complaining as I dare or can indite
 And that defacèd is, that may you wite
 That tearès which that from mine eyen rain,⁴
 That woulden speak if that they could, and 'plain.

filled w. dread

write
may know

¹ 189.2: "Without serving any other lady."

² 190.1: "May it please you to hear ..." A standard opening for a personal letter in Chaucer's day. Apparently much of the rest of the letter also contains conventional tropes.

³ 190.7: "While it pleases you, O my source (*well*) of joy and pain."

⁴ 191.5: Presumably it is the letter that is "defaced" with the rain of tears.

192. "You first beseech I, that your eyen clear
 To look on this defoulèd you not hold,¹
 And o'er all this that you, my lady dear
 Will vouchèsafe this letter to behold,
 And by the cause eke of my carès cold
 That slay my wit, if aught amiss m'astart,
 Forgive it me, mine ownè sweetè heart!

*And also because
 if a' thing wrong escapes me*

193. "If any servant dares or ought of right
 Upon his lady piteously complain,
 Then ween I that I ought to be that wight,
 Considered this, that you these monthès twain
 Have tarried where you saidè, sooth to sayn,
 But ten days that you would in host sojourn.
 But in two monthès yet you not return.

any lover / can rightly

*I think / that man
 Considering / two*

*stay among the enemy
 you have not r.*

194. "But for as much as me must needès like
 All that you list,² I dare not 'plain no more,
 But humbly, with sorrowful sighès sick,
 You write I mine unresty sorrows sore,
 From day to day desiring evermore
 To knowen fully, if your will it were,
 How you have fared and done while you be there.

(To) you I write / restless

195. "The whose welfare, and heal eke, God encrease
 In honour such, that upward in degree
 It grow always so that it never cease;
 Right as your heart ay can, my lady free,
 Devise, I pray to God so may it be.
 And grantè it that you soon upon me rue
 As wisly as in all I am you true.

health

(may) it grow

*Desire
 take pity*

As surely / (to) you

¹ 192.1-2: "I first beg you not to consider your bright eyes clouded (*befouled*) by seeing this (letter)"

² 194.1-2: "But because I am obliged to be pleased by (*me must needs like*) all that you like (*list*)..."

196. "And if you liketh knowen of the fare (wel) fare
 Of me, whose woe there may no wight describe,
 I can no more, but chest of every care, ¹ can (say)
 At writing of this letter I was alive,
 All ready out my woeful ghost to drive, unhappy spirit
 Which I delay and hold him yet in hand
 Upon the sight of matter of your send. sending, message

197. "Mine eyen two, in vain with which I see,
 Of sorrowful tearès salt are waxen wells; have become
 My song in 'plaint of mine adversity,
 My good in harm, mine ease eke waxen hell's, in(to) / has become a hell
 My joy in woe, I can say now naught else in(to)
 But turned is (for which my life I wary) I curse
 Every joy or ease in his contráry. ² in = into

198. "Which with your coming home again to Troy
 You may redress, and more a thousand sithe, times
 Than e'er I had, increasen in me joy;
 For was there never heartè yet so blithe
 To have his life as I shall be, as swithe as soon
 As I you see, and though no manner ruth no kind of pity
 Commoven you,— yet thinketh on your truth. Move you / yr promise

199. "And if so be my guilt has death deserved,
 Or if you list no more upon me see, if you wish
 In guerdon yet of that I have you served In return
 Beseech I you, mine ownè lady free, noble
 That hereupon you wouldè write to me

¹ 196: *chest of*: container of, i.e. full of. This stanzas is, apparently, a tissue of medieval letter-writing conventions. It appears to mean: "If you want to know how I, whose sorrow no one can describe, am getting on, I can only tell you that I could not be more troubled. I am alive but ready to take my life, and I delay only in hopes of a letter from you."

² 197.4-7: "My good (is turned) into harm, my ease into hell. ... Every joy and ease is turned into its opposite--for which I curse my life." The ME spelling of rhyme words for lines 2, 4, 5 was: *welles, helle is, ellis*

For love of God, my rightè lodè-star,
That death may make an end of all my war.

guiding star

200. "If other cause aught doth you for to dwell,
That with your letter you me recomfòrt,¹
For though to me your absence is a hell,
With patience I will my woe comport,
And with your letter of hope I will disport:
Now writeth, sweet! and let me thus not 'plain;
With hope or death deliver me from pain.

*endure
take comfort*

201. "I-wis, mine ownè dearè heartè true!
I wot that when you next upon me see,
So lost have I my heal and eke my hue,
Criseyde shall not can knowen me;
I-wis, mine heartè's day, my lady free!
So thirsteth aye mine heartè to behold
Your beauty, that unneth my life I hold.

*my health & color
not be able to*

barely

202. "I say no more, al' have I for to say
To you well morè than I tellen may;
But whether that you do me live or die,
Yet pray I God as give you right good day.
And fareth well, O goodly fair fresh May!²
As you that life or death me may command,
And to your truth ay I me recommend.

although

you make me

I always

203. "With healè such, that but you givè me
The samè heal, I shall no healè have.
In you lies, when you list that it so be,

healing

¹ 200.1-2: "If any other reason makes you stay, assure me in your letter."

² 202.5: *may*: perhaps here means "maiden", hardly appropriate in any strict sense for a widow who has also been Troilus's lover for three years. It may mean just "young woman" or possibly the month of May, a metaphor for her youthful freshness.

The day in which me clothen shall my grave;¹
 In you my life, in you might for to save
 Me from dis-ease of all my paines smart:
 And fare now well, my ownè sweetè heart!"

le vostre T."

(is) power to

Yours, Troilus

Criseyde's disappointing replies

204. This letter forth was sent unto Criseyde,
 Of which her answer in effect was this:
 Full piteously she wrote again, and said
 That all so soon as that she might i-wis
 She wouldè come, and mend what was amiss;
 And, finally, she wrote and said him then
 She wouldè come, yes, but she n'istè when.

indeed

knew not

205. But in her letter maden she such feast
 That wonder was, and swore she loved him best,
 Of which he found but bottomless behests.
 But, Troilus, thou may'st now east and west
 Pipe in an ivy leaf if that thee lest:
 Thus goes the world. God shield us from mischance,
 And every wight that meaneth truth advance!²

protestations

empty promises

whistle in the wind

206. Inceasen gan the woe from day to night
 Of Troilus for tarrying of Criseyde,
 And lessen gan his hope and eke his might,
 For which all down he in his bed him laid;
 He n'ate, nor drank, nor slept, nor word he said,
 Imagining ay that she was unkind,
 For which well nigh he waxed out of his mind.

*Thinking always / unfaithful
 nearly went mad*

207. This dream, of which I told have eke befor,

¹ 203: *In you lies...*: "It rests with you, whenever you wish, to (decide) when I shall be buried in my grave."

² 205.7 "And every person who wishes to advance the truth."

May never come out of his rémembrance;
 He thought ay well he had his lady lorn,
 And that Jove of his highè purveyance
 Him showèd had in sleep the significance
 Of her untruth and his disáventure,
 And that the boar was shown him in figúre;

*had indeed lost his l.
 providence
 bad fortune
 as metaphor*

Troilus consults his sister Cassandra, the prophetess

208. For which he for his sister Sibyl sent,
 That callèd was Cassandra all about,
 And all his dream he told her ere he stent,
 And her besought assoilen him the doubt
 Of the strong boar with tuskès stout;
 And, finally, within a little stound
 Cassandra gan him thus his dream expound.

*S = the prophetess
 finished
 asked her to resolve
 time*

209. She gan first smile, and said: "O brother dear,
 If thou a sooth of this desirest know,
 Thou must a few of oldè stories hear,
 To purpose, how that Fortune overthrown
 Hath lordès old; through which, within a throw,
 Thou well this boar shalt know, and of what kind
 He comen is, as men in bookès find.

*the truth
 short time
 what family*

210 "Diana, which that wroth was and in ire
 For Greekes n'ouldè do her sacrifice,
 N'incense upon her altar set afire,
 She, for that Greekès gan her so to despise,
 Wreaked her in a wonder cruel wise.
 For with a boar as great as ox in stall
 She made up-fret their corn and vinès all.

*angry & furious
 Because G. wouldn't
 Nor burn incense
 Avenged herself
 tear up*

211. "To slay this boar was all the country raised,
 Amongès which there came this boar to see,
 A maid, one of this world the best y-praised;
 And Meleager, lord of that country,
 He lovèd so this freshè maiden free,

called to arms

That with his manhood, ere he wouldè stent,
This boar he slew, and her the head he sent;

before he was done

212. "Of which, as oldè bookès tellen us,
There rose a contek and and a great envy.
And of this lord descended Tydeus
By line, or elsè oldè bookès lie,
But how this Meleager gan to die
Through his mother, will I you not tell,
For all too longè it were for to dwell." ¹

strife

by his m's action

213. She told eke how Tydeus — ere she stent —
Unto the strongè city of Thebes,
To claimè kingdom of the city went,
For his fellow, daun Polynices,
Of which the brother, daun Eteocles, ²
Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength;
This toldè she by process, all by length.

before she (C) had done

214. She told eke how Hemonides astart
When Tydeus slew fifty knightès stout;
She told eke all the prophecies by heart,
And how that seven kingès with their rout
Besiegeden the city all about,
And of the holy serpent, and the well,
And of the furies, all she gan him tell. ³

escaped

army

215. Of Archemoris' burying, and the plays,

funeral games

¹ Chaucer might well have exercised the same discretion by omitting the following stanzas up through 216 (and a Latin paraphrase, which has here been moved to an appendix); they "dwell" too long on material largely irrelevant to the story of T&C, and serve to slow up the progress of the tale.

² 213: Eteocles refused to let his brother Polynices take his turn as ruler of Thebes. Polynices and his six allies, including Tydeus, attacked: the Seven against Thebes.

³ 214: At this point in most manuscripts there is a Latin paraphrase of the **Thebaid**, book by book. See Appendix.

And how Amphiorax fell through the ground,
 How Tydeus was slain, lord of Argayes,
 And how Ypomedon in little stound
 Was drowned, and dead Parthenope — of wounds,
 And also how Capaneus, the proud,
 With thunder-dint was slain, that crièd loud.

short time

216. She gan eke tell him how that either brother,
 Eteocles and Polynices also,
 At a skirmish each of them slew other,
 And of Argia's weeping and her woe,
 And how the town was burnt she told eke tho;
 And so descended down from gestès old
 To Diomede, and thus she spoke and told:

*then
 old stories*

Like everyone else, Troilus does not believe her

217. "This ilkè boar betokens Diomede,
 Tydeus' son, that down descended is
 From Meleager, that made the boar to bleed,
 And thy lady, where so she be i-wis,
 This Diomede her heart has and she his.
 Weep if thou wilt, or leave, for out of doubt,
 This Diomede is in and thou art out."

this very boar

wherever / indeed

218. "Thou sayst not sooth," quod he, "thou sorceress,
 With all thy falsè ghost of prophesy!
 Thou weenest been a great divineress;
 Now see'st thou not this fool of fantasy
 Paineth her on ladies for to lie? ¹
 Away!" quod he, "there Jovè give thee sorrow!
 Thou shalt be false, paraunter, yet to-morrow. ²

truth

spirit

You think you're

fanciful fool

exerts herself

may Jove

¹ 218.4-5: Troilus turns from Cassandra to rebuke himself for even consulting her, and then returns to accuse her of lying about ladies. Cassandra's fate is never to be believed no matter how right she is. *thou* in line 4 refers to Troilus himself while *thou* in .3 referred to Cassandra.

² 218.7: "You'll be (proved) wrong by the outcome tomorrow."

219. "As well thou mightest lien on Alceste *lie about*
 That was of creäturès, but men lie, *unless men lie*
 That ever were, [the] kindest and the best,
 For when her husband was in jeopardy
 To die himself but if she wouldè die, ¹ *Unless she*
 She chose to die for him and go to hell
 And starved anon, as us the bookès tell." *And died then*

220. Cassandra goes; and he with cruel heart
 Forgot his woe for anger of her speech, *anger at*
 And from his bed all suddenly he start,
 As though all whole him had y-made a leech ² *physician*
 And day by day he gan enquire and seek
 A sooth of this with all his fullè cure; *The truth / attention*
 And thus he driveth forth his áventure. ³

The death of Hector and the beginning of the end for Troy

221. Fortune, which that permutation *change*
 Of thingès hath (as it is her committed
 Through purveyance and disposition *providence & appointment*
 Of highè Jove,⁴ as regnès shall ben flitted *kingdoms ... moved*
 From folk to folk, or when they shall be smitted), *stricken*
 'Gan pull away the feathers bright of Troy
 From day to day, till they be bare of joy.

¹ 219: Admetus, husband of Alceste, would escape death if either of his parents or his wife was willing to die for him.

² 220.4: "As if a physician (*leech*) had cured him (*had y-made him whole*)."

³ 220.7: Either "he endures (ME *drieth*) his fate" or "he pursues (ME *driveth*) his business." The same line occurs at the end of Book I.

⁴ 221.1-5: Jove (Jupiter) has given to Fortune, under Providence, control over worldly change such as the transfer of kingdoms (*regnes*) from one people to another, or their destruction. The subject of 'gan (.6) is *Fortune* (.1) which was earlier portrayed as spinning a wheel but is here seen as plucking off the victim's feathers.

226. And often times he was in purpose great
 Him selfen like a pilgrim to disguise
 To see her; but he may not counterfeit
 To be unknown of folkè that were wise,¹
 Nor find excuse aright that may suffice,
 If he among the Greekès knowen were,
 For which he wept full often many a tear.

227. To her he wrote yet often times all new
 Full piteously — he left it not for sloth —
 Beseeching her, that since that he was true,
 That she would come again and hold her troth:
 For which Criseyde upon a day for ruth,
 (I take it so) touching all this mattér
 Wrote him again, and said as you may hear:

keep her promise
pity

Criseyde's Letter

228. "Cupid's son, example of goodlihead,
 O sword of knighthood, source of gentleness!
 How might a wight in torment and in dread
 And heal-less, as send you yet gladness?
 I heartless, I sick, I in distress
 Since you with me nor I with you may deal,
 You neither may I send nor heart nor heal.²

a person
unhealthy or unhealed
disheartened
meet

229. "Your letters full, the paper all y-plainted
 Conceivèd hath my heartè's pietee;
 I have eke seen with tearès all depainted
 Your letter, and how you requiren me
 To come again, which yet ne may not be,

complaining
Has stirred my h's pity

¹ 226.3-6: He could not disguise himself well enough to deceive perceptive people, or think up a good enough story if he were to be caught in disguise among the Greeks.

² 228.7: "I can send you neither comfort (*heart*) nor cure (*heal*)" since, as she has said, she herself is so sick at heart.

But why, lest that this letter founden were,
No mentïon ne make I now for fear.¹

230. "Grievous to me, God wot, is your unrest,
Your haste, and that the goddès' ordinance
It seemeth not you take it for the best,
Nor other thing is in your rémembrance,
As thinketh me, but only your pleasance;
But be not wroth, and that I you beseech,
For that I tarry is all for wicked speech.

*God knows
decision*

pleasure

The reason I delay

231. "For I have heard well morè than I wend
Touching us two, how thingès have y-stood,
Which I shall with dissimuling amend;²
And, be not wroth, I have eke understood
How you ne do but holden me in hand;
But now no force; I cannot in you guess
But allè truth and allè gentleness.

knew

*angry
you only deceive me
no matter*

232. "Comen I will, but yet in such disjoint
I stand as now, that what year or what day
That this shall be, that can I not appoint;
But in effect I pray you as I may
Of your good word and of your friendship ay,
For truly while that my life may dure
As for a friend you may in me assure.

difficulty

I cannot say

*always
may last*

233. "Yet pray I you on evil you ne take
That it is short which that I to you write;
I dare not where I am well letters make,
Ne never yet ne could I well endite.
Eke great effect men write in placè lite.

don't be offended

*write
great matter / little space*

¹ 229.6-7: She says she cannot give the reason for her delay lest the letter be incepted.

² 231-3: Having accused Troilus of thinking only of his own pleasure, she uses her real obsession with malicious rumor (*wicked speech*) to pretend that she has heard stories about them both that she will have to put right by lying (*dissimuling*), and has even heard stories about his infidelity.

Th' intent is all, and not the letter's space,
 And fare now well; God have you in his grace!
 Le vostre, C."

length

yours, C

234. This Troilus the letter thought all strange
 When he it saw, and sorrowfully he sighed;
 Him thought it like the kalends of a change;¹
 But finally he full ne trowen might
 That she ne would him holden what she hight,²
 For with full evil will list him to leave³
 That loveth well, in such case, though him grieve.

*could not fully believe
 keep / promised*

235. But natheless, men say that at the last,
 For any thing men shall the soothè see,
 And such a case betid, and that as fast,
 That Troilus well understood that she
 Was not so kind as that her ought to be;
 And, finally, he wot now out of doubt
 That all is lost that he has been about.

*in spite of e' thing / truth
 happened*

*knows
 worked for*

Finally Troilus learns the truth

236. Stood on a day in his meláncholy
 This Troilus, and in suspiciõn
 Of her for whom he weened for to die,
 And so befell that throughout Troyè town,
 As was the guise, y-borne was up and down

thought he would

the custom

¹ 234.3: *Kalends* was the beginning of the month in the ancient Roman calendar. Hence her letter seems to mark the beginning of a change.

² 234.4-5: Probably the meaning is: "he couldn't really believe that she would break her promise." The double negative (*ne ... ne*) is a little ambiguous here.

³ 234.6: Any of the three modern equivalents of ME *leve* will make some sense here. The meaning of the couplet appears to be that only with reluctance (*evil will*) will someone who deeply loves (another) believe / grant / leave, in such a case, although it hurts him.

A manner coat armóur, as says the story,
Before Deiphebe, in sign of his victóry.¹

T's brother

237. The whichè coat, as telleth Lollius,²
Deiphebe it had y-rent from Diomedè
The samè day; and when this Troilus
It saw, he gan to taken of it heed,
Avising of the length and of the breadth,
And all the work; but as he gan behold,
Full suddenly his heartè gan to cold,

had torn

became cold

238. As he that on the collar found within
A brooch that he Criseyde gave that morrow
That she from Troyè mustè needès twin
In rémembrance of him and of his sorrow,
And she him laid again her faith to borrow
To keep it ay; but now full well he wist
His lady was no longer on to trist.³

depart

gave her solemn pledge

always / knew

be trusted

239. He goes him home, and gan full soonè send
For Pandarus. And all this newè chance
And of this brooch he told him ord and end,
Complaining of her heartè's variance,
His longè love, his truth, and his penáncè;
And after Death, withouten wordès more,
Full fast he cried, his rest him to restore.

beginning & end

fickleness

suffering

for death

240. Then spoke he thus: "O lady mine, Criseyde!
Where is your faith, and where is your behest?"

promise

¹ 236.6: "coat armor" like that captured by Deiphebus, was a cloth garment, often decorative, worn over armor.

² 237.1: Lollius is the author from whom Chaucer says he got the story of Troilus & Criseyde. No such author has been found.

³ 238.2-3: "A brooch that he had given to Criseyde on the morning she had to leave Troy." No such gift is mentioned in the account of that morning earlier in Book V. But see V, st. 149.

Where is your love? Where is your truth?" he said.

"Of Diomedè have you now all this feast?

Alas ! I would have trowèd at the least

That since you would in truth not to me stand,

That you thus n'ould have holden me in hand.

attention, pleasure

have thought

wouldn't have deceived

241. "Who shall now trow on any oathès mo' ?

Alas ! I never would have weened ere this

That you, Criseydè, could have changèd so,

Ne but I had a-guilt and done amiss.

So cruel weened I not your heartè, i-wis ¹

To slay me thus. Alas, your name of truth

Is now fordone, and that is all my ruth.

trust / more

have thought

Unless I were guilty

ruined / regret

242. "Was there no other brooch you list to let

To feoffè with your newè love," quod he,

"But thilkè brooch that I with tearès wet

You gave as for a rémembrance of me?

No other cause, alas ! ne hadden ye

But for despite, and eke for that you meant

All utterly to showen your intent,

could have used

To present to

that same

Gave you

243. "Through which I see that clean out of your mind

You have me cast, and I ne can nor may

For all this world within mine heartè find

To unlove you a quarter of a day.

In cursed time I born was, welaway!

That you that do me all this woe endure,

Yet love I best of any creäture.

alas!

244. "Now God," quod he, "me senden yet the grace

That I may meeten with his Diomedè,

And truly, if I have might and space,

Yet shall I make, I hope, his sidès bleed:

Now God," quod he, "that oughtest taken heed

May God send me

¹ 241.5: "I had not thought (*weened*) your heart was indeed so cruel."

To further truth, and wrongès to punice,
Why n'ilt thou do a vengeance of this vice?

punish

245. "O Pándare! that in dreamès for to trust
Me blamed hast, and wont art oft t'upbraid,
Now may'st thou see thyself, if that thee list,
How true is now thy niecè, bright Criseyde.
In sundry formès, God it wot," he said,
"The goddès showen bothè joy and teen
In sleep, and by my dream it is now seen.

*ready to rebuke
if you wish*

and grief

246. "And certainly, withouten morè speech,
From hencèforth, as farforth as I may,
Mine ownè death in armès will I seek,
I reckè not how soonè be the day;
But truly, Criseyde, my sweet may!
Whom I have ay with all my might y-served,
That you do thus I have it not deserved."

*lady
always*

247. This Pandarus, that all these thingès heard,
And wisté well he said a sooth of this,
He not a word again to him answered
For sorry of his friend's sorrow he is,
And shamèd for his niece hath done amiss,
And stood astonèd of these causes tway
As still as stone; one word ne could he say.

knew / truth

stunned by

248. But at the lastè, thus he spoke and said:
"My brother dear! I may do thee no more;
What should I say? I hate i-wis Criseyde,
And God wot I will hate her evermore;
And that thou me besoughtest do of yore,
Having unto mine honour nor my rest
Right no regard, I did all that thee lest.

what you asked me

all that pleased you

249. "If I did aught that mightè liken thee
It is me lief, and of this treason now,
God wot that it a sorrow is to me,

*might please you
I'm glad*

And dreadéless, for heartè's ease of you,
 Right fain I would amend it, wist I how.
 And from this world Almighty God I pray,
 Deliver her soon! I can no morè say."

*to ease your heart
 V. gladly / if I knew how*

250. Great was the sorrow and 'plaint of Troilus,
 But forth her coursè Fortune ay gan to hold,
 Criseydè loves the son of Tydeus,
 And Troilus must weep in carès cold:
 Such is this world, who so it can behold;
 In each estate is little heartè's rest;
 God leve us for to take it for the best !

*kept her steady course
 i.e. Diomedè*

God grant

251. In many a cruel battle, out of dread,
 Of Troilus this ilkè noble knight
 (As men may in these oldè bookès read)
 Was seen his knighthood and his greatè might,
 And dreadéless his ire both day and night
 Full cruelly the Greekès ay a-bought,
 And always most this Diomedè he sought.

certainly

*anger
 constantly felt*

252. And often times I findè that they met
 With bloody strokès and with wordès great,
 Essaying how their spearès weren whet;
 And God it wot with many a cruel heat
 Gan Troilus upon his helm to beat:
 But natheless Fortúne it naught ne would
 Of other's hand that either dien should. ¹

*Testing / sharp
 rush*

253. And if I had y-taken for to write
 The armès of this ilkè worthy man,
 Then would I of his battailès endite.
 But for that I to writè first began
 Of his love, I have said as I can.

*had undertaken
 military feats
 write*

¹ Fate had not decreed that either of them should die at the hands of the other.

His worthy deedès, whoso list them hear,
Read Dares: he can tell them all y-fere.

whoever wants to

254. Beseeching every lady bright of hue,
And every gentil woman, what she be,
That, al' be that Criseyde was untrue,
That for that guilt she be not wroth with me.
You may her guilt in other bookès see;
And gladlier I will writen, if you lest,
Penelope's truth and good Alceste.

*whoever she is
although
not angry*

if you like

255. I say not this all-only for these men,
But most for women that betrayèd be
Through falsè folk. God give them sorrow, Amen!
That with their greatè wit and subtlety
Betrayen you. And this comveveth me
To speak, and in effect you all I pray,
Beware of men and hearken what I say.

moves me

256. *Go, little book, go little my tragedy, (To be moved to point after 265 ??)*
Where God thy maker yet ere that he die
So send me might to make some comedy.¹
But, little book, no making thou n'envy,
But subject be to allè poesy,
And kiss the steps where as thou seest pace
Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, Stace.²

*maker, he = Chaucer
give me strength
making = poetry*

walk

¹ 256: Chaucer, the *maker*, i.e. the author of this "little book", hopes that God (a different Maker) will grant him the chance to write some comedy before he dies. The "Go, little book" is a formula for poetic closure derived probably from Ovid and other classical sources, and occurs also in Boccaccio, though Chaucer seems to have been responsible for its small vogue in England.

² 256.7: In this modest protestation, Chaucer nevertheless puts himself in important company: with Virgil, author of **The Aeneid**; Ovid, author of **The Art of Love** and **Metamorphoses**; Homer, author of **The Iliad** and **The Odyssey**; Lucan, author of **The Pharsalia**; Statius, author of **The Thebaid**. Most of

257 . *And, for there is so great diversity
In English, and in writing of our tongue,
So pray I God that none miswritè thee,
Nor thee mis-meter for default of tongue;¹
And read where so thou be, or elsè sung,
That thou be understood, God I beseech;
But yet to purpose of my rather speech.²*

thee = his poem

wheresoever

Troilus dies in battle. His view of earthly things from heaven

258 . The wrath, as I began you for to say,
Of Troilus the Greekès boughten dear,
For thousandès his handès maden die,
As he that was withouten any peer,
Save Hector in his time, as I can hear;
But welaway! (save only Goddè's will)
Despitously him slew the fierce Achil.

caused to

alas!

A . slew him (Troilus)

259. And when that he was slain in this mannér
His lightè ghost full blissfully is went
Up to the hollowness of the eighthè sphere,
In converse letting every element,³
And there he saw, with full avisèment,

spirit

leaving below

clear vision

these authors are also mentioned by Boccaccio in the envoy to his **Filocolo**.

¹ 257.3-4: "And I pray God that no one miscopy you, or write you out unmetrically because of the deficiency of his dialect" (since there is the "diversity" in written English just mentioned).

² 257.7: "But to get to what I wanted to say."

³ 259.4: Troilus's soul is taken up to the heaven of the eighth sphere. *in converse letting*: the meaning of this phrase is obscure; it is generally glossed: "leaving below" or "leaving behind". Notice that his death got precisely one line: 25.7. At least he was, like Hector, killed by the hero Achilles. Stanzas 259-261 are missing from some MSS.

Th'erratic stars, hearkening harmony,¹
With soundès full of heavenish melody.

260. And down from thencè fast he gan advise
This little spot of earth that with the sea
Embracéd is, and fully gan despise
This wretched world, and held all vanity
In réspect of the plain felicity
That is in heaven above; and at the last
Where he was slain his looking down he cast.

look closely at

total happiness

261. And in himself he laughed right at the woe
Of them that wepten for his death so fast,
And damnéd all our works that follow so
The blindè lust the which that may not last,
And shouldeñ all our heart on heaven cast;
And forth he wentè, shortly for to tell,
Where as Mercúry sorted him to dwell.

*so hard
And rebuked*

Who should

assigned

The narrator's comment

262. Such fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,
Such fine hath all his greatè worthiness,
Such fine hath his estate royál above,
Such fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse.
Such fine hath this false worldè's brittleness!
And thus began his loving of Criseyde
As I have told, and in this wise he died.

Such an end

263. O youngè, freshè folkès, he or she!
In which that love up groweth with your age,
Repaireth home from worldly vanity,
And of your hearts up casteth the visage

boy or girl

Turn back

¹ 259.6: The *erratic stars* are the planets, and Troilus is listening to the music (*hearkening harmony*) of the spheres, in which the planets revolve.

To thilkè God that after his image
 You made, and thinketh all is but a fair
 This world that passeth soon as flowers fair,

just a show

264. And loveth Him, the which that right for love
 Upon a cross, our soulès for to buy,
 First starved, and rose, and sits in heaven above;
 For He n'ill falsen no wight, dare I say,
 That will his heart all wholly on Him lay,
 And since He best to love is, and most meek,
 What needeth feignèd lovès for to seek?

*to redeem
 First died
 won't deceive anyone
 to Him devote*

265. Lo here, of pagans' cursed oldè rites;
 Lo here, what all their goddès may avail;
 Lo here, this wretched worldè's appetites;
 Lo here, the fine and guerdon of travail
 Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, of such rascail;
 Lo here, the form of oldè clerkès' speech
 In poetry, if you their bookès seek.

*end & reward of work
 set of rascals
 ancient authors*

256. *Go, little book, go little my tragedy,
 Where God thy maker yet ere that he die
 So send me might to make some comedy.¹
 But, little book, no making thou n'envy,
 But subject be to allè poesy,
 And kiss the steps where as thou seest pace
 Virgil, Ovid, Homer, Lucan, Stace.²*

*(These 2 stanzas are moved from 256-7 above)
 maker, he = Chaucer
 give me strength
 making = poetry*

walk

¹ 256: Chaucer, the *maker*, i.e. the author of this "little book", hopes that God (a different Maker) will grant him the chance to write some comedy before he dies. The "Go, little book" is a formula for poetic closure derived probably from Ovid and other classical sources, and occurs also in Boccaccio, though Chaucer seems to have been responsible for its small vogue in England.

² 256.7: In this modest protestation, Chaucer nevertheless puts himself in important company: with Virgil, author of **The Aeneid**; Ovid, author of **The Art of Love** and **Metamorphoses**; Homer, author of **The Iliad** and **The Odyssey**; Lucan, author of **The Pharsalia**; Statius, author of **The Thebaid**. Most of

257. *And, for there is so great diversity
In English, and in writing of our tongue,
So pray I God that none miswritè thee,
Nor thee mis-meter for default of tongue;¹
And read where so thou be, or elsè sung,
That thou be understood, God I beseech;
But yet to purpose of my rather speech.²*

thee = his poem

wheresoever

266. O moral Gower, this book I direct
To thee, and to thee, philosophical Strode,³
To vouchèsafe, where need is, to correct,
Of your benignity and zealès good.
And to that soothfast Christ, that starved on rood,
With all my heart of mercy ever I pray;
And to the Lord right thus I speak and say:

To be good enough

faithful C.who died on the cross

The narrator's final prayer

267. Thou one and two and three, etern alive ⁴

these authors are also mentioned by Boccaccio in the envoy to his **Filocolo**. The transposition of these 2 stanzas improves the ending just a little.

¹ 257.3-4: "And I pray God that no one miscopy you, or write you out unmetrically because of the deficiency of his dialect" (since there is the "diversity" in written English just mentioned).

² 257.7: "But to get to what I wanted to say."

³ 266.1-2: The poet Gower, and the Oxford philosopher Strode, were friends of Chaucer. The request to correct his copy is probably a conventional compliment, but in the days before a writer had the opportunity to correct the final printer's page proofs, his work was at the mercy of every scribe who chose or was employed to copy it, so the request might not have been a mere gesture. For Chaucer's awareness of this, see stanza 257 just above, and for his exasperation at his own scribe Adam, see his short comic poem execrating Adam's errors.

⁴ 267: The prayer is to the Holy Trinity, the three persons of the one God who reigns eternally: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The first three of these lines are a translation of Dante's *Paradiso* 14.28-30.

That reignest ay in three and two and one,
Uncircumscribed, and all may'st circumscribe,
Us from visible and invisible foes
Defend; and to Thy mercy everyone
So make us, Jesus, for thy mercy digne
For love of Maid and Mother thine benign. ¹
Amen.

ever
Unbounded

worthy

Here ends the book of Troilus and Criseyde

¹ 267.7: "Make us worthy of thy mercy, for love of your benign maiden-mother," the Virgin Mary. *Digne* here has to be pronounced "dine".

Appendix

In most manuscripts the following summary of the Thebaid occurs after stanza 214 above

ARGUMENT OF THE TWELVE BOOKS OF STATIUS'S **THEBAID**

Associat profugum Tideo primus Polynicen.
 Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundus.
 Tertius Hemoniden canit et vates latitantes.
 Quartus havet reges ineuntes proelia septem.
 Mox furie Lenne quinto narratur et anguis.
 Archemori bustum sexto ludique leguntur.
 Dat Graios Thebes, et vatem septimus umbris
 Octavo cecidit Tideus, spes, vita Pelasgis.
 Ypomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopeo.
 Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur.
 Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres.
 Argeiam flentem narrat duodenus et ignem.

Translation -

Book I associates Tydeus and the exiled Polynices.
 Book II: Tydeus as ambassador and the ambush [intended by Eteocles to kill him].
 Book III: Hemonides (Maeon) and the prophecies of doom.
 Book IV: The seven kings going into battle.
 Then in Book V we are told about the Lemnian furies and the serpent
 Book VI: We read of the cremation and funeral games of Archemorus.
 Book VII delivers the Greeks to Thebes and the prophet (Amphiarus) to the shades.
 Book VIII: Tydeus falls, the hope and life of the Pelasgians.
 Book IX: Hippomedon dies with Parthenopaeus.
 Book X: Capaneus, struck by a thunderbolt, is destroyed.
 Book XI: The brothers [Eteocles and Polynices] fatally wound each other.
 Book XII describes the grief of Argia and the funeral pyre [of Polynices].