

Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde

TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

by

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

Book I

Book I

Proem

1. The double sorrow of Troilus to tell,
 That was the son of Priam, King of Troy,¹
 In loving how his áventurés fell *fortunes*
 From woe to weal, and after out of joy *sorrow to joy*
 My purpose is, ere that I part from you.
 Thesiphoné,² thou help me to endite *write*
 These woeful verses that weepen as I write
2. To thee clepe I, thou goddess of tormént, *I call*
 Thou cruel Fury sorrowing ever in pain:
 Help me that am the sorrowful instrument
 That helpeth lovers (as I can) to 'plain. *complain*
 For well sits it, the sooth for to sayn, *it's suitable, truly*
 A woeful wight to have a dreary fere, *sad person ... sad companion*
 And to a sorrowful tale a sorry cheer. *manner*
3. For I, that god of Love's servants serve
 Ne dare to Love for mine unlikeliness³
 Prayen for speed, al should I therefore starve. *for success / die*
 So far am I from his help in darkness.
 But nathelees, if this may do gladness
 To any lover, and his cause avail,
 Have he my thanks, and mine be this travail. *labor*

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

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

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

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

Remember past sorrow

made you suffer

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

ability to

unlucky

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

And pray also

harmed

ask

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

pray also

ay = always

power

honor & pleasure

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

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

And how that she forsook him ere she died.

before

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

well known

*Towards Troy
besieged / nearly / ceased*

*abduction of Helen to avenge
took / trouble*

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

Now, it happened

*priest who was called
in knowledge*

*was called
Lord (god) Phoebus*

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

*calculation
also*

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

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

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

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

*& living
(they) wanted revenge*

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

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

skin & bones

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

*difficulty
 unaware
 anguish*

*knew not / to do
 and without...
 dared confide*

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

*indeed
 In my judgement
 surpassing everyone*

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

*nearly
 long dress of b. silk*

begged

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

afflicted

*at once
 go ...
 ...To the devil
 as long as you like*

18. "And all th'honoúr that men may do you have
 As far forth as your father dwelléd here
 You shall have, and your body men shall save,
 As far as I may aught enquire or hear."

*may give you
 As if
 your person / respect*

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

- And she him thankèd with full humble cheer. *manner*
 And oftener would, if it had been his will,
 And took her leave, and home, and held her still. *and (went) home*
19. And in her house she abode with such meinee *retinue*
 As to her honour needè was to hold
 And while she dwelling was in that city
 Kept her estate, and both of young and old
 Full well beloved, and well men of her told, *spoke of her*
 But whether that she children had or no,
 I read it not; therefore I let it go. *read (in Boccaccio)*
20. The thingès fallen, as they do of war, *in war*
 Betwixen them of Troy and Greekès oft:
 For some days boughten they of Troy it dear,
 And oft the Greekès founden nothing soft
 The folk of Troy. And thus Fortúne aloft ¹
 And under eft gan them to wheelen both
 After their course, ay while that they were wroth. *In their turn / angry*
21. But how this town came to destruction
 Ne falleth not to purpose me to tell, *Not my business to*
 For it were here a long digressiõn
 From my mattér, and you too long to dwell. *delay*
 But the Trojan gestès, as they fell, *(accounts of) events*
 In Homer or in Dares or in Dyte
 Whoso that can may read them as they write. ²
22. But though that Greekès them of Troy in shut,
 And their city besieged all about,
 Their oldè usage wouldè they not let, *would not relinquish*
 As for t' honouír their goddès full devout; *devoutly*
 But aldermost in honour, out of doubt, *foremost*
 They had a relic hight Palladion, *called*
 That was their trust aboven every one.

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

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

23. And so befell, when comen was the time
 Of April when clothéd was the mead *meadow*
 With newè green (of lusty Ver the prime) *start of vigorous Spring*
 And sweetè smelling flowers white and red --
 In sundry wisè showéd (as I read) *various ways celebrated*
 The folk of Troy their óbservances old,
 Palladioné's feasté for to hold.

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

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

26. As was Criseyde, as folk said everyone
 That her behelden in her blacké weed; *dress*
 And yet she stood full low and still alone
 Behind the other folk in little brede *space*
 And nigh the door, ay under shamé's dread, *always fearing a slight*
 Simple of attire and debonair of cheer *& quiet in manner*
 With full assuréd looking and mannér.¹

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

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

But gan to praise and lacken whom him lest.¹

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34. Forthy, example taketh of this man, *Therefore*
 You wisè, proud and worthy folkès all
 To scornen Love, which that so soonè can *(not) to scorn*
 The freedom of your heartès to him thrall. *enslave*
 For e’er it was, and e’er it shall befall, *e’er: ever, always*
 That Love is he that allè thing may bind,
 For may no man for-do the law of Kind *undo; of Nature*

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

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

37. Now since it may not goodly be withstood, *withstood*

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

² 36: Standard notion in medieval romance of the effects of love.

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

strong (virtuous) in nature.

breaks; advise

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

And leave / on the side

return

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

*jesting
 about everyone there*

*Whether
 by chance / a crowd*

rested

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

*became stunned
 better / admiring way
 lived
 to see*

original joking manner

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

*size
 proportioned*

*in appearance
 very manner*

rank / nobility

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

² 38.7: "Because I began it, I will return to it."

42. To Troilus right wonder well withall
 Gan for to like her moving and her cheer,¹
 Which somdeal deynous was, for she let fall
 Her look a little aside in such mannér
 Askances: "What! May I not standen here?"
 And after that, her looking gan she light,
 That never thought him seen so good a sight.
- bearing
 somewhat haughty*
- As if to say:
 her looks brightened(?)
 It seemed he'd never*
43. And of her look in him there gan to quick
 So great desire and such affection,
 That in his heartè's bottom gan to stick
 Of her his fixed and deep impression;
 And though he erst had porèd up and down,
 He was then glad his hornès in to shrink.
 Unnethè wist he how to look or wink.²
- spring up*
- first sized (her) up*
44. Lo, he that let himselfen so cunning,
 And scornèd them that Lovè's painès drye,
 Was full unaware that Love had his dwelling
 Within the subtle streamès of her eye,
 That suddenly him thought he feltè die,
 Right with her look, the spirit in his heart.
 Blessèd be Love, that folk can thus convert!³
- who had thought himself
 endure*
- (So) That*
45. She, this in black, liking to Troilus
 Over all thing, he stood for to behold;
 Nor his desire, nor wherefore he stood thus,
 He neither cheerè made nor wordès told,⁴
 But from afar (his manner for to hold),
 On other things his look sometimes he cast
 And eft on her, while that the service last.
- this (woman) / pleasing to
 stopped*
- openly showed nor said
 (usual) manner*
- And sometimes*

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

² 43.7: "He hardly knew whether to look or close his eyes."

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

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

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

reason
angry
Good for him !

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*to urge
 immediately
 fight against*

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

*meaning
 wants to hear*

CANTICUS TROILI²

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

wicked / it seems

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

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

When every torment and adversity
That comes from him may to me savoury think,
For ay thirst I the more that I it drink.¹ *seem sweet
ever*

59. “And if that at my ownè lust I burn,
From whence comes my wailing and my 'plaint?
If harm agree me, whereto 'plain I then?
I n'ot ne why unwearly that I faint.
O quickè death, O sweetè harm so quaint,
How may of thee in me such quantity
But if that I consent that it so be ? *joy, desire
complaint
agrees with / complain
I don't know
living / so strange
How can there be
Unless*

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

opposite directions*

61. And to the god of Lovè thus said he
With piteous voice: “O lord, now yourès is
My spirit, which that oughtè yourès be.
You thank I, lord, that have me brought to this;
But whether goddess or woman, y-wis,
She be, I n'ot, which that you do me serve,”³
But as her man I will ay live and starve. *indeed
I don't know
live & die*

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

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

² 60.7: "I die of heat when it is cold, of cold when it is hot."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*nearer
 I imagine

 always
 Helen or Polyxena*

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

*Eke = And

 would take pity
 health & color
 unless you take pity*

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

no young fancies (?)

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

But arguments to this conclusion:

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

may live

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

fell = terrible

*marched or rode
stayed*

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

to rage

*to please h. / by his fame
succeeded*

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

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

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

felt sick

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

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

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

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

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

*mad / for constantly
man*

dared he not

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

complain

*once jested
caught*

always accustomed

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

known, but ever

wisdom

whom L. does not want to help

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

would to God

*fixated on
even if she*

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

*For if / spread about
made fun of*

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

More than that fool of whose folly men rhyme.

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

never man so firmly

*gladden me
promise me*

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

called constantly

*Till nearly / drowned
complaint
thought about*

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

trouble

*misfortune
gaunt (with fear)*

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

make us pack up our merriment

81. These wordès said he for the nonès all,
That with such thing he might him angry make,
And with an anger do his sorrow fall
As for the time, and his couráge awake.
But well he wist as far as tonguès spake¹
There n'as a man of greater hardiness

for the occasion

reduce his sorrow

*But he knew
was not / courage*

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

Than he, ne more desiréd worthiness.

he = Troilus / honor

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

chance / accident

of = by

*certainly
distress*

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

*if you think
don't mock*

*don't wish to tell you
angry*

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

nearly melts / pity

between

Know you not

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

share

truth

To share woe as well as joy

at once

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

*God grant
since it pleases you*

*well I know
you think
Now, listen*

¹ 83.4: "Much more than anything that the Greeks have done."

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

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

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

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

91. "A whetstone is no carving instrument,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

fully happy, I guess

because of the other
wise man

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

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

hurt

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

shepherdess

indeed

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

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

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

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

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

*pains me
perhaps I can advise*

*I know well
wants to*

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

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

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

*confide
plainly / reason*

*rebuke
nobody can prevent
till he wants to*

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

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

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

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

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

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

increase
And don't try to

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

complain
truth to tell
bad fortune

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

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

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

came to
eyes / (so) that
a fit

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

touch

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

ceased
Because

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

behaved
stick
beaten
write

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

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

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

advice
my trouble

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

you know no other c.

seek remedy t. don' try

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

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

pity

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

Not (if I worked) as hard

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

she pleases / & slave

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

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

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

ceases at all

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

Perhaps

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

do you know?

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

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

*At once
for love of me
to succeed quicker*

and blushed

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

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

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

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

*the source**nearly*

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

*named**Love has blessed you**of good breeding*

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

*Of her rank? of her goods?**all the better to increase*

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

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

not call it luck

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

*her other virtues
 And therefore
 nothing / reputation*

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

But I'm glad

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

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

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

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

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

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

*against fever chills
 enough (clothes)
 lay awake*

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

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

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

*I myself am a lover
 mockeries*

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

And I shall nevermore, while that I live." ¹

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

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

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

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

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

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

² 135.5: "May god want nothing except to see you relieved"

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

*in spite of
 but if = unless
 ruin*

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

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

*Divine or human
 Therefore*

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

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

And unless

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

*always
 To take pains*

keep a secret so that

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

a good opinion in m. mind

best support, I believe

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

*scholars
 offend most*

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹ 145.3: "Became, shall we say, `untormented' by woe."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I swear to God

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

*knowest
 "he" = P.
 God reward*

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

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

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

152. This Pandare then, desirous for to serve
 His fullè friend, then said in this mannér: *dear*
 "Farewell, and think I will thy thanks deserve.
 Have here my truth, and that thou shalt well hear."
 And went his way, thinking on this mattér
 And how he best might her beseech of grace,
 And find a timè thereto, and a place.
153. For every wight that has a house to found
 Ne runneth not the work for to begin
 With rakel hand, but he will bide a stound *rash / wait a time*
 And send his heart's line out from within *plumbline ?*
 Alderfirst his purpose for to win. *First of all / to gauge*
 All this Pandárus in his heartè thought
 And cast his work full wisely ere he wrought. *planned / before going to work*
154. But Troilus lay then no longer down
 But up anon upon his steedè bay,¹ *promptly / warhorse*
 And in the field he playèd the lion. *battlefield*
 Woe was that Greek that with him met that day.
 And in the town his manner thenceforth ay *always*
 So goodly was, and got him so in grace *favor*
 That each him loved that lookèd in his face.
155. For he became the friendliestè wight *person*
 The gentilest² and eke the mostè free, *most generous*
 The thriftiest and one the bestè knight *worthiest*
 That in his timè was, or mightè be.
 Dead were his japès and his cruelty, *jibes*
 His highè port and his mannér estrange, *haughty & scornful manner*
 And each of them gan for a virtue change.³ *each of these (faults)*
156. Now let us stint of Troilus a stound *stop (talking) / a while*
 That fareth like a man that hurt is sore, *acts*
 And is somedeal of aching of his wound *somewhat*

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

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

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

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

*Much relieved but not healed
the instructions*

accepts his fortune

Here ends Book I

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